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Social Justice, Skill Formation and Australian Youth Work Practice

ROB WHITE

Youth work in Australia today is in crisis. It is a crisis of many dimensions and many causes. It is a crisis grounded in the history of youth work; it is a

crisis stemming from government initiatives in the youth affairs field; it is a crisis of confusions in the philosophies of youth work; it is a crisis of immediate youth work practice. The crisis of youth work is symptomatic of a general lack of vision in Australian society, of the deepening economic crisis affecting more and more young people, and of the rise of a state which is ever more authoritarian and regulatory in nature.

In this paper I want to explore contemporary developments in the youth affairs field in Australia. My intentions are twofold. First, to critically evaluate the policies and ideologies currently gaining prominence in the youth affairs field. Secondly, to draw out the implications of recent changes in government orientation for the practice of youth work. Broadly speaking, my central aim is to attempt to distinguish 'rhetoric' and 'reality', and to provide some direction as to where youth work ought to be headed, in contrast to the politically stagnant and largely unfocussed practices apparent in some youth work circles.

The paper is organised around a series of headings which signal an alternative perspective to that of 'official' views of the key issues of concern to youth workers. Although primarily focussed on contemporary trends in the youth affairs field, the critique provided is informed by an appreciation of the historical factors which have led to the present impasse in youth work. Without knowing where we have been, it becomes difficult to know where we are going. With respect to this, it is crucial that more analysis of youth work itself be undertaken. To date, very little in the way of published or readily accessible information is available on the practice of youth work in Australia¹. A number of articles and books have come out in more recent years, but these have generally focussed on young people rather than youth work². It is clear, however, that a reliance on 'oral tradition' is simply not good enough if youth work is to develop any sort of political coherence in its philosophy and practice.

At the same time, it is apparent that the critical edge apparent in the heady days of the late 1960s and 1970s has lost much of its gloss in the grey times of the present. With new people, from a variety of class and educational background and with many different motivations and perspectives, entering into youth work all the time, it is now more vital than ever that the radical essence of

progressive youth work be recaptured and strengthened. The flame of idealism and the practice of social activism is too precious and important to

be allowed to be snuffed out by New Pragmatist thinking and manipulation. The challenge ahead for youth workers is to meet the crisis head-on, with integrity of purpose the benchmark of personal evaluation, and progressive ideals the guide in the struggle for fundamental social justice.

Social Justice as Ideology

In 1983 the Australian Labor Party, headed by new leader Bob Hawke, put forward the hope that all sections of the Australian community could work together, sacrifice together, and together pull Australia out of the depths of recession. In February, 1987 the Prime Minister's message was still that 'we shall ask all sections of the Australian community to show the common restraint and share the common burden for the common national purpose'. To highlight its commitment to 'equity' and 'fairness', the ALP established a new 'Social Justice Secretariat' during 1987/88. A strategy and development paper was to emphasise once again that 'Social Justice is the Labor Party's reason for existence' and that this should be the major strategic objective of Labor in government. At the State level, in Victoria and South Australia, similar social justice strategies and secretariats were also established as a means to publicise the concern of these ALP Governments with creating a fairer society.

The very existence of 'social justice' publicity machines and secretariats, and the release of review documents and budget papers under the title of 'social justice', should itself cause one to wonder about the nation's state of affairs if the Labor Party has to develop specialised units to tackle the problem. After all, if the overall policies of the ALP were genuinely informed by a social justice perspective, then why would extra attention be needed, and organisational bodies subsequently put into place, to deal with the inequalities and social divisions in Australian society? Is the problem really simply one of the public perceptions that the government is not doing enough? And, yet, why do so many people refer to the ALP as being more 'liberal' than the Liberals? And how come young working class people seem to be so ungrateful for the 'social justice' they are receiving?

If social justice is measured in terms of the distribution of community resources, then the sad conclusion must be that the ALP in government has done very little indeed to bring about a fairer society. Certainly it is the case that,

politically, the Hawke Government is in many ways indistinguishable from its opponents on the other side of the parliamentary benches. In a nutshell, official politics in Australia is now more than ever of the politics of pragmatism - what works is what will be done as long as the media and big business continue to grant their approval.

The key issues of the day? The list is the same for mainstream parties of either political stripe: privatisation of state assets; the introduction of user-pays principles into areas such as education; the farming out of government functions to private agencies and contractors; the more selective allocation of state resources through means-testing and tighter regulation of benefit provision; the deregulation of the labour market, accompanied by stronger measures designed to curb the potential power of unions; a renewed interest in law and order campaigns; and a translation of state responsibilities into private, 'family' responsibilities.

The key indicators of social well-being today? For workers and their families: a rise in the consumer price index by 64 per cent between 1982 and 1988, while wage rises have been restricted to 22 per cent over the same time period; a decline in the position of female wage earners relative to male wage earners, particularly under the two-tier system of wage determination; a rise in the percentage of total tax revenue paid by wage and salary earners from 55 per cent in 1964/65 to 72 per cent in 1984/85; a much greater proportion of weekly income going to the tax office, due in part to tax 'bracket creep'; a real rise in the number of individuals in poverty to over two million people.³

For the rich and the corporate sector: an increase in the number of millionaires to well over 30 thousand individuals; a reduction in the top marginal tax rate from 60 per cent to 49 per cent to 39 per cent; a shift in taxation relating to wealth and capital gains which has seen Australia go from being ranked second among 23 OECD countries in 1965 in the proportion of its total tax collected from these sources, to last on the list by 1985; one-tenth of the population now owns over 60 per cent of all wealth in Australia.⁴

For young working class people: the introduction of a lower intermediate unemployment benefit rate for 18 to 20 year old; the abolition of the under-18 employment benefit; all allowances currently available to young people being set below the poverty line, a fact compounded by the costs associated with housing; an increased waiting period for benefits, which is imposing severe financial strains on families; the introduction of a graduate tax; the introduction of activity tests and parental income tests in benefit procedures; the deferral of indexation of the Job Search Allowance and the intermediate unemployment benefit.⁵

This is social justice? Certainly the Hawke Labor Government's notion of 'equity' does not stand up well when its punitive and miserly efforts on the welfare front are contrasted with the dramatic polarisation of wealth that is occurring in Australian society.

We should be wary, then, of any claims by the government that it is doing all it can in the way of social justice. We also need to be sensitive to how the government, through

recent policy directives and programme innovations, is attempting to implement and at the same time displace any resistance to its pragmatist politics. This issue is of particular importance to youth workers today.

Since 1983 the Hawke Labor Government has developed a series of measures designed to grapple with the visible effects of economic hardship and unemployment on young people. From an initial concern with unemployment (and job creation), the Government has shifted its focus to the supposed unemployability of young people. In policy terms this was reflected in the creation of programmes such as the Australian Traineeship Scheme in 1985 and in efforts to increase school retention rates. Further pressure was placed on young people to actively participate in education, training and job searching in 1987 when major changes were made to benefit structures. For example, the unemployment benefit for under-18 year olds was abolished; in its stead a Job Search Allowance of \$25 (approximately £12.50) a week up to a means-tested \$50 (approximately £25.00) a week was established, accompanied by activity tests and closer surveillance of benefit recipients.

In 1988, concern with its electoral image (i.e. that the ALP had forsaken its traditional social democratic values in favour of a more conservative economic and political agenda), and growing public scepticism over the Prime Minister's electoral promise that by 1990 there would be no child living in poverty in Australia, led to a concerted media campaign on the theme of the Government's concern with social justice. As part of this campaign, a Review of the Government's Youth Strategy was announced in October 1988. The review was conducted in the light of the four main aims of the Government's social justice strategy. These were to achieve:

- a fair distribution of economic resources;
- equality of civil, legal and industrial rights;
- fair and equal access by all to essential community services;
- the opportunity for all to participate in personal development, community life and decision-making.

The main force behind the youth strategy review was Peter Duncan, the Commonwealth Minister for Employment and Education Services. According to Duncan, 'The Hawke Government is committed to the fundamental principle of social justice, that is the development of a fairer, more prosperous and more just society'. Nevertheless, the Minister was obliged to qualify this statement by adding that:

I know it's been said that until recently many people have felt that economic considerations have been our first priority instead of social justice. I do not accept that as a serious criticism because you can only hope for moves towards social justice when the nation's economy is healthy.⁶

In real terms, however, economic health has been viewed in Canberra power circles in an economic rationalist manner, one which revolves around private sector interests and regressive tax and wage policies. For the new

direction proposed for youth policy, this meant that social justice was to, in effect, be limited to a form of residual welfarism.

The 1989 Budget, for instance, maintained the thrust of Government policy in education, training and job searching, but also had a strong welfare component.⁷ The release of the Human Rights Commission Report, *Our Homeless Children*, in early 1989 exposed the depths of homelessness in Australia - estimating that there were between 40,000 and 70,000 homeless young people across the country. In response, the Budget allocations for youth services were weighted in the direction of such measures as creating more accommodation places, raising the Youth Homeless Allowance (YHA) by \$7.50 (approximately £3.75) a week, reducing the waiting period for the YHA, providing counselling services to encourage young people to return home, and providing additional funding for co-ordination of accommodation and other services.

The residual nature of the Government's youth policy is implied in official statements to the effect that its concern is to provide a safety net for those young people in need. Little is said about dealing with the structural issues which underpin the creation of such need in the first place. It is also evident in state efforts to render the welfare system as a whole more selective in its allocation of resources, while simultaneously doing little to address inequality created as a result of market forces in the private sector. Expressed concern about a fair distribution of economic resources as translated into practice has tended to mean alleviation of the more visible and extreme case of poverty (through welfare payments and programmes), rather than redistributive policies that even-out community resources and provide more equity at the level of life style and life chances.

We shall return to the question of social justice as this relates to youth work shortly. For the moment, my concern is to first explore the impact of the Government's policy initiatives in the areas of education and training and how these have affected the activities and general orientation of youth work in Australia.

Skill Formation is not Empowerment

Along with social justice a key government buzzword is that of skill formation.⁸ The idea here is that the reason why young people are not getting jobs is because they don't have the right skills, or the right work attitudes, or the right training, or enough education, or education of the right kind. With some 18 people vying for each job advertised, the logic of this position is, needless to say, somewhat flawed. Not to mention the impact of part-time paid work, the position of women and non-English speaking migrants, the re-training of already employed skilled and semi-skilled male workers etc., on the structure of the overall labour market. Nevertheless, the strategy of getting young people into some kind of training or educational programme does make sense from the state's point of view, especially if it helps to keep young people off the streets, and places them under some kind of institutional control.

And what of the content of this training and schooling? In

effect, education has been transformed under the rubric of skills formation into a narrowly conceived vocationalist type of training. For school students, the maintenance of a two-tier educational system, divided into private fee-paying schools and state schools, means that social divisions will be deepened rather than reduced by policies stressing the importance of education in the competition for jobs. Just as significantly, a two-tier curriculum programme within the school context itself will further widen the gap between different categories of students. This is because higher retention rates, woefully inadequate resources, concerted pushes for standardised testing and the rationalisation of programmes is feeding the polarisation of those students streamed toward the academic curriculum, and those simply provided with a minimalist type of education, one based upon minimum pass requirements and the provision of basic practical and life skills. It is the latter students who will have the least cultural capital, the least amount of curriculum currency, in the race for labour market and further education credentials. In essence, it is social control, rather than education, which is the major underlying objective of contemporary state educational policies.

Those young people involved in training programmes, such as the Australian Traineeship Scheme, are no less vulnerable to manipulative policies sold under the high sounding rhetoric of 'Towards a Skilled Australia'. The overtly vocationalist orientation of government training programmes - and we can also include here the paternalistic Job Search Training types of programmes - often involve more than simply the provision of training in specific technical skills. A major concern is to instil in young people the 'right attitudes' to portray social and behaviour attributes as work skills. Behaviour modification is the name of the game, and selling motivation and self-discipline as part of the skill requirement of the job must be music to the ears of many a prospective employer. Not only do they receive cheap, often subsidised labour, care of the state, but they are in a position to select and take advantage of a more docile, obedient workforce, one well schooled in compliant behaviour through the advice and training they receive in 'character development'.⁹

The idea of skills formation may seem at least superficially attractive because of its connections with the notion of empowering young people. Empowerment, a fairly nebulous concept in its own right, is sometimes used simply to refer to the process of giving young people an opportunity to gain access to new skills and facilities, and to fostering a sense of confidence and self-worth in the individual. But will skill formation give young working class people more power? As a generalisation, it can be said that if empowerment is seen in terms of opportunity then at a collective level the answer must be no. Certainly some young people will be assisted in getting paid work through participation in training. The majority of such young people however will not, especially if the number's of young people in training programmes continue to increase. Even those young people who do move on to find paid work will nevertheless be disadvantaged, from the point of view of

having received very little in the way of 'fighting' skills or of gaining a sense of the rights and collective power of workers acting in solidarity with each other.

For the rest, those who serve out their time in a training scheme, questions need to be asked as to how and in what ways they may or may not have been empowered. A lot here depends on the structure and content of the training provided. More precisely, in terms of empowerment being seen as relating to the struggle over power, will such young people have been exposed to practices and ideas that situate their position and circumstance in wider class, gender or ethnic terms? Will the emphasis on individual adaptation and survival, competition and personal success, be challenged in a training scheme? Will the collective nature of their situation be drawn out, the importance of shared interests and collaboration highlighted? Will the necessity for struggle, not as young people, but as members of the working class, as women, as members of a particular ethnic group - relations that one cannot simply 'grow out of' - be placed on the agenda? Empowerment, to be meaningful, must be social in nature. The individual who is empowered leaves behind them the bulk of their peers, their families, their friends: in this instance empowerment does not represent a change in the structure of circumstance, only a personal resolution of problems arising from circumstance.

Skillshare and the Entrepreneurial Spirit

So where do youth workers fit in with respect to the government's social justice and skills formation strategies? To answer this partly depends upon what kind of youth work one is talking about - training, streetwork, refuge work, support and accommodation, recreation and leisure, pastoral care, etc. - whether or not one is working directly for a government agency or a non-government organisation. While recognising this diversity in location and practice, it can be said that the framework for working with young people is nevertheless intimately and ultimately shaped by the framework established by the state. In both government and non-government agencies there are a number of constraints on what a youth worker can or cannot do. In the latter case, for example, this often relates to financial dependence upon state grants. To guarantee continued government funding there are great pressures to present a respectable face to the public and to take a non-antagonistic attitude to government policy. Always looking over one's shoulder at the real and perceived threat of having funding cut off, or being subject to bureaucratic censure, means that inevitably a tightrope has to be walked between rejecting, or finding an accommodation with, the political and economic policy imperatives of the government in power.

At the present time some of these imperatives revolve around the issue of training. As part of the restructuring of government priorities in this area, the very nature of much youth work has been radically altered. This has been done under the aegis of Skillshare. The restructuring process in this instance has involved both an organisational change, and the introduction of new concepts used to rationalise or justify the kind of youth work practice deemed acceptable

in the present climate.

Under Skillshare the role of youth workers is to be sharply circumscribed, the number of workers reduced overall, and (under the terms of the newly integrated programme - collapsing the Community Youth Support Scheme, Community Volunteer Programme and the Community Training Programme into one scheme), a much more directly vocationalist approach to be adopted. There will be less room for local innovations, and far less scope for non-vocational and support services to be provided. The top-down policy approach of the New Pragmatists in Canberra is further reflected in guidelines stressing employment/education achievement outcome objectives and evaluations, and in moves to ensure national uniformity and standardisation of programmes as dictated by the central authorities.

The position and actions of youth workers vis-a-vis the introduction of Skillshare is instructive and is a concrete illustration of the crisis besetting the field today. When the Fraser Government attempted to disband the CYSS in 1981, a national campaign by CYSS workers and their supporters prevented this from happening.¹⁰ In 1988, however, the response was markedly different. In a clever tactic, the government did not formally or directly attack CYSS - it integrated it into a larger programme, thus achieving its demise through the backdoor, under the direction of a 'left' Minister. The lack of collective action to protect CYSS has been mirrored in the unseemly scramble of individual projects to plug into the new system as quickly as possible. The result saw the pitting of CYSS workers against each other in bitter rivalries for restricted funding, a competition replete with projects trying to outdo each other in signalling their adherence to government guidelines and skill formation rhetoric. Whose interests are in the end being served in this instance? Are young people the winners? Are youth workers in general the beneficiaries? Is the new programme really so good as to prompt such a manic response on the part of youth workers from around the country? Were there no other options except to join the fray? If this is an example of youth worker solidarity and adherence to principles of empowerment, then woe betide those young people targeted for skill formation types of empowerment.

Given the more restricted orientation of youth work under the terms of Skillshare, what is to be the philosophical base for youth work practice? In addition to appeals to skill formation as a guiding rationale, a term which is also finding increasing popularity among some people is that of entrepreneurial or enterprise skills. There is some irony in this insofar as, for many youth workers, it is precisely their entrepreneurial skill in applying for and getting government grants which will enable them to continue to function as paid workers in the field.

The enterprise skills model differs somewhat from the skills training model in that, on the surface, it is less directive and involves more input from the young people involved. While still exhibiting many of the problems identified in the previous section, this model also carries with it other kinds of problems and dangers specific to its

framework.

The enterprise skills model is often sold on the grounds that it involves young people designing and conducting projects of their own interest within their own community. It is easy to see how supporters of such a model would also more than likely favour such things as local employment initiatives as a means of creating jobs. On a national scale, such projects will not be able to do very much to alleviate the wider problems associated with unemployment and poverty. They are also of a 'make-work' nature, leaving little for the young person after a particular project is completed. More fundamentally, the very terms of the model - 'enterprise', 'entrepreneurial', etc. - reinforce particular values and ideologies. Individual achievement, success and failure, personal initiative, and the risks and rewards of 'Doing It Yourself' are the cornerstone concepts of the model. It is not hard to extrapolate from this ideas such as self-blame and notions of personal deficiency, and to foresee lowered self-esteem as the result in the case of those young people who do not graduate on to bigger and better things in the real world of business competition and entrepreneurial spirit.

But, it is argued, such model-based programmes also often make it clear that the aim is not to produce a profit, but to carry out a particular endeavour. Where does this leave the young person then? Will it improve their objective financial and job chances? In what ways, and to whose benefit? Will such endeavours threaten the livelihoods of workers already struggling to make ends meet in a particular occupational area? Do they constitute a ready means to substitute unpaid labour for something that should be a Commonwealth, state or local council responsibility? A number of questions need to be asked and seriously evaluated regarding the practical and ideological consequences of such approaches to youth work.

Managing the discontent

Not all youth work involves training and skill formation oriented programmes. Indeed, a large proportion of youth work deals with young people at the margins of society and is more closely related to government policy concerns in the areas of welfare, accommodation and health support services. Similarly, the aims and objectives of streetwork do not fit easily under the skills formation umbrella. In all of these instances the primary concern is with immediate service provision. Given the role of the state in providing welfare on a residual basis - that is, as a form of safety net for those unable to secure paid employment in the marketplace - this is often the area of work that governments refer to when they speak of 'social justice'. The focus is on alleviating poverty, not creating equality; helping the disadvantaged, not redistributing wealth.

For the sake of brevity, some of the problems with a welfarist approach to youth work can be summarised as follows: providing a non-directive type of service, because each individual has the right to make up their own mind as to what they do without undue guidance from outsiders; from the other side, the persistence of patronising attitudes, where decisions are always made by those in power for the sake of those who are relatively powerless, even

where this may mean deciding beforehand what a young person's rights are; buying into official terminology and constructions of the problem so that talk of the 'disadvantaged' becomes part of the commonsense view, one implicitly linked to a lucky/unlucky explanatory framework, or one where the concept of working class has disappeared completely from the picture; seeing problems in individualistic terms only and trying to seek solutions to personal alienation by utilising so-called empowerment techniques as part of the service; managing lobbying efforts for resources in such a way as to ensure that conflict resolution is nevertheless sustained as a central objective regardless of the outcome of the process; and providing individualised definitions of the problem and of the solution, thereby ignoring strong working class traditions of solidarity and group activity.¹¹

If the problems confronting young people are structural in nature, if unemployment for example is not the fault of individual young people, then strategies need to be devised which will change the system in a more fundamental manner. Tinkering with programmes and playing around with personalised services will not do much to stop the revolving door syndrome of youth work, just as jumping on the training or skills formation bandwagon will do little to improve the overall situation of young working class men and women.

Historically, the role that youth workers have been called upon to play in the context of society as a whole is basically that of 'soft cop'. They are not there to instigate change; they are there to manage the discontent arising from rapid social, economic and political changes at all levels. Having the best intentions in the world does not change the fact that, without a strong and clearly defined political base, much youth work will be stuck in the charity or 'child-saving' mould. This is further fostered by different degrees of emphasis placed in the field on volunteerism and professionalism.

In the first instance, youth work is often tied up with notions of altruism and providing a 'helping hand'. Attention is directed to what the youth worker can do for someone, providing their labour and compassion 'for free', in efforts to assist the young person deal with material and personal deficiencies (e.g. lack of food, shelter, spiritual guidance, etc.). The focus is centred on individuals' problems and on service provision. By way of contrast, political activism around social change objectives is rarely seen as volunteer work, even though this too involves unpaid labour, and in many cases likewise stems from altruistic motives. The question of legitimacy is crucial here. For volunteers are also usually under pressure from paid staff to be respectable and respected by the key power brokers, be they government, management committees or potential donors to the cause. Less concern is shown over the fact that the need for volunteers in the first place is due to existing economic arrangements and state welfare policies.

In the second instance, the 'professionalised' youth worker is also under pressure to maintain a respectable facade. After all, they are trained and have the expertise to carry

out a particular kind of job.

The concern therefore becomes that of providing a detached occupationally-oriented (rather than politically-oriented) form of youth work practice. Ideas of conflict and struggle are anathema to the 'professional approach' to youth work. After all, one's career and future job prospects depend upon not jeopardising one's position by upsetting the powers that be. Conforming to the requirements of the job means getting young people to conform to the requirements of the youth worker. When empowerment is referred to, this means getting young people involved in institutionalised or formalised representative bodies of participating in proper networks. Assisting in the setting up of student councils may be on the agenda; helping out with the student strike is not.

While participation may be engaging, and providing a helping hand rewarding, neither does much in the way of changing the overall situation. For every young person assisted in some way, there will be many more left standing in the queue. Playing by the existing rules of the game not only sanitises the problem by relegating it to a matter of 'proper' intervention by caring and professional staff, but it also can run counter to and further marginalise the activities of those who see youth work as a political process which necessarily involves conflict and dissent.

Organising Them means Organising Us

It is time to break down the notion that youth work is solely about young people. It is not. It is about society as a whole, it is about youth workers, and it is about the struggles, oppressions and exploitation of particular categories and classes of people.

Youth workers today are caught up in a whole range of institutional and work constraints, both real and imaginary. Under these conditions it can become easy to forget about the more progressive reasons and ideals for doing youth work. When the day-to-day grind and tensions wear one down it can be hard to think beyond the immediate moment, the immediate conflicts and the immediate stresses. And yet it is more important than ever that youth workers reflect upon what they are doing and why. For the issues of housing, income support, police harassment, unemployment and so on will not go away. Nor will instances of burn-out and emotional drain on the part of workers disappear. Things are certainly not going to get any better in the foreseeable future for either youth workers or young working class people.

It has been said at various times by some youth workers that it is up to young people themselves to get political. The fact that youth workers often feel too vulnerable or overworked to put the concept into practice, and thus refrain from taking action themselves, does not really inspire confidence in such a perspective and certainly does not provide much direction for those young people who may wish to be politically active. In this regard, the process of political education begins at home. Although recent public opinion polls indicate a broad disillusionment by young people concerning politics, and the alienation of working class young people in particular from the political process, it would seem that much of the consciousness

raising that is required must begin with the workers in the youth affairs field if any sort of social change strategy is to be developed.

There is always an apparent contradiction between service provision and political action. This is often translated in practice to mean that nothing can be done about the latter while the former takes up the bulk of one's time, energy and resources. Given the magnitude of the problems faced by young people and youth workers alike, perhaps it is time to confront the contradiction, to take the necessary risks, to think in a bigger way about the problems besetting society in general. In these wider terms there are several strategies that youth workers could think about as possible ways to overcome their present dilemmas. These include:

- mobilising young people through service provision itself, with the aim of pushing for greater social justice in the form of concrete reforms, or dealing with specific instances of injustice and defending the rights of young people in particular situations;
- recognising that youth issues are broader social issues which reflect the state of society as a whole, youth workers taking it upon themselves to become more involved in organising political campaigns;
- not advocating on behalf of young people or groups of young people, but instead providing them directly with the knowledge and explanations that they need about things such as bureaucratic processes and social issues, and actively encouraging young people to make their own choices as to where and in which campaigns they might wish to actively join in;
- forging links with existing political groups and movements, and in particular activist youth groups such as, in Australia for example, Resistance (a country-wide socialist organisation), which are already engaged in the struggle for social change and social justice and which may provide ready allies in specific campaigns as well as the benefits of experience in political theory and action;
- in light of their major importance in the overall scheme of things, actually building 'campaign work' and 'thinking time' into the job, so that every second of the day is not spent on service provision or putting out the constant bushfires;
- joining or being active with relevant union bodies (e.g. the Australian Social Welfare Union) and local networks of youth workers, and using these organisations as forums for the discussion and actual planning of concrete strategies and campaigns.

It is very easy today to lapse into cynicism when confronted with the particular ways in which social justice and skills formation have been construed by the Labor Government in Australia (and for that matter, the Thatcher Government in Britain). Likewise, it is easy, sometimes too easy, to simply shrug one's shoulders and say that the issues are too big, the state is too powerful, and there is nothing I can do about the situation. On their own, one person can indeed do very little to bring about social change. Collectively, and in alliance with other people such as unionists, political activists and those activists in the social movements, young

people and youth workers can make a difference. Alternatively, given the continued rightward swing in the political realm and the impact of this on all of our lives, can we really afford not to take part in the wider struggle for progressive social change?

The concept of empowerment, before it became part of the official discourse of the youth affairs field, had its origins in the struggles of people in the Third World to seize power for themselves, to act in concert to overcome diversity, poverty, repression and oppression. For working class young people in Australia, who are presently at the centre of very similar processes and circumstances, there is much to be learned from the examples of neighbourhood activists in South Africa, in the Philippines and in Latin America who are tied into national projects for change. 'Empowerment' in this context also means 'liberation', and surely this is at the core of the present struggle for a different kind of future, one that is free from the hardships and heartbreaks of contemporary Australia. If social justice, social equality and social rights are well and truly the goal, the pragmatic concepts and practices have to be abandoned as central features of youth work practice; short-term palliatives shunned as ends in themselves; and political action put first and foremost on the youth work agenda. It is time that youth workers collectively made their voices heard; for deadening silence only masks the seething brutality of a society that no longer cares about the future of its young. The authoritarian and bureaucratic nature of current state reforms is certainly in crying need of a strong, active, and vocal response from the grassroots. For it is not only the future of young people which is at stake.

Notes

1. In addition to articles published in State-based non-government agency newsletters, the main sources of information on Australian youth work include: B. Bessant (ed) (1987), *Mother State and Her Little Ones: Children and Youth in Australia 1860s-1930s*, Melbourne, Phillip Institute of Technology Press; J. Ewen (1983), *Youth in Australia: A new role and a new deal for the 80s*, Melbourne, Phillip Institute of Technology Press; D. Maunders (1984), *Keeping Them Off The Streets: A history of voluntary*

youth organisations in Australia 1850-1980, Melbourne, Phillip Institute of Technology Press; and M. White (1983), *Youth Work and the Law*, Sydney, George Allen and Unwin.

2. See for example, S. Dyson and T. Szirom (eds) (1983), *Leaving School: It's Harder for Girls*, Melbourne, YWCA; J. Walker (1988), *Louts and Legends: Male youth culture in an inner city school*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin; R. White (1989), *No Space of Their Own: Young People and Social Control in Australia*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press; B. Wilson and J. Wyn (1990), *Shaping Futures: Youth Action for Livelihood*, Sydney, George Allen and Unwin; and P. Wilson and J. Arnold (1986), *Street Kids: Australia's Alienated Youth*, Melbourne, Collins Dove.
3. P. Browne (1987), '1981-1986: Poverty on the Rise', *Australian Society*, April: 34-35; G. Davidson (1988), 'Don't expect the tax cuts to be fair', *Australian Society*, August: 13-52; and reports in *Direct Action* and the *Australian Guardian*.
4. P. Raskall (1987), 'Wealth: Who's Got It? Who Needs It?', *Australian Society*, May: 21-24; G. Davidson (1988), 'Why we should all be interested in a wealth tax', *Australian Society*, November: 36-37; and reports in *Direct Action*.
5. See R. White, *op. cit.*
6. Peter Duncan (1988), *Social Justice for Australian Youth*, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, p.3. See also Commonwealth Youth Bureau (1989), 'Aims, Issues and Directions', Review of the Government's Youth Strategy, Information Paper No. 1, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service.
7. For critical discussion of Australian 'youth policy' see R. White *op. cit.* and M. Presdee and R. White (1987) 'Australian Youth Policies in the 80s', *Youth and Policy*, No. 21: 1-6. Information on the 1989 Budget and young people is published in two Commonwealth Government documents, *The Federal Government's Strategy for Young Australians and Towards Social Justice for Young Australians: 1989-90 Budget*, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service.
8. An extended discussion of the government's perspective on 'skill formation' is presented in a 1987 Budget Paper, *Skills for Australia*, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service.
9. R. White *op. cit.* For similar analysis regarding the situation in Britain, see also D. Finn (1987), *Training Without Jobs: New Deals and Broken Promises*, London, Macmillan Education; and S. Walker and L. Barton (eds) (1986), *Youth, Unemployment and Schooling*, Milton Keynes, Open University.
10. See J. Freeland (1985), 'The CYSS Campaign: An example of collective action against cuts in services' in R. Thorpe and J. Petruchenia (eds), *Community Work or Social Change? An Australian Perspective*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
11. For extended discussions of these issues see R. White *op. cit.*, Chapter 6.

The Youth Training Scheme: The Panacea of the 1980s, the liability of the 1990s?

LINDA MCKIE

Introduction

In this article it is argued that the rapid policy changes in the sphere of youth training, which took place in the 1980s, whilst increasing participation in training had the effect of changing the nature of what was commonly understood by the term. What began largely as a panacea for youth unemployment, and a prong in the Government's economic policy, is now acting in areas such as the North East to further restrict the access of school leavers to employment. The employment is often in low paid, un or semi-skilled sectors which bear little relation to the training schemes undertaken. Research conducted in Co. Durham demonstrates that the scheme serves to reproduce labour market inequalities. An examination of the training and employment biographies of individual YTS supervisors provides a mirror reflecting the future of their YTS trainees.

In the next decade the scheme will become a regional one, continuing to exist in areas of above average unemployment. As school leavers become sought after in such regions and the South East, the remains of the scheme will continue to depress income levels for young people in regions in which YTS continues to be the major destination for young school leavers. Business interests have demonstrated little commitment to funding and developing youth training so for the Government, continued commitment to YTS will necessitate a growing level of expenditure and administration. So, the article concludes, the YTS, for different reasons, becomes a liability for all concerned:- the trainees, the supervisors, scheme managers and Government.

Some Contradictions of the Youth Training Scheme

training: to bring a desired standard of efficiency or condition or behaviour . . . by instruction and practice; to undergo such a process: to teach and accustom (a person) to do something.

The dictionary definition of the word training demonstrates the manner in which the content and process of training are ultimately subjective in nature. A statement of intent, a series of guidelines and a stated programme of monitoring may profess to be the activities and outcomes of a training course but it is within the actual process of training that the dichotomy between the stated and the reality of a training programme becomes evident. Every Youth Training Scheme is in nature and contrast the product of a number of variables ranging from the organisational setting, to the history in training (if any) of that organisation and the background of trainees and trainers.

But it is in the inter-relationship between trainer and trainee that much of this dichotomy can be identified.

The fundamental premise of the YTS is stated as being; the need to develop and maintain a workforce which is flexible and adaptable and has the capacity to transfer the skills within minimum retraining to new and changing areas of employment bought about by increasingly rapid technological advance. (MSC, 1982a, p.1)

The meanings attributed to such terms as flexible, adaptable, skill and retraining remain unstated in any clear sense. The guidelines and the YTS programme design present a series of parameters but the Training Agency appears to balk at any suggestion of clear definitions emphasising instead what it sees as the 'advantage in constructing schemes to include groupings that span occupational boundaries.' (ibid)

Certainly a national training programme cannot be too rigid. It must allow for the differing contexts of training:- the state of local labour markets and the nature and interests of trainees. However by emphasising a broad based scheme the Training Agency is encouraging (actively or otherwise) diverging interpretations of the guidelines for YTS.

Stringer and Williamson (1987, p.36) describe the manner in which training management has shifted from statutory arrangements as epitomised by the inception of industrial training boards in 1964 to the voluntary but centrally controlled arrangements of schemes such as the YTS. This was a major shift in policy which must be characterised as radical rather than incremental. Stringer and Williamson (ibid) identify a series of events which gave sharp rise to such a radical shift in policy. Certainly the recession and a sharp rise in unemployment presented the Government with a politically sensitive problem. But the disarray of business and union groups, in the face of recession, left a gap perceived by Government. This was filled by a central body regulating voluntary arrangements, namely the Manpower Services Commission (now the Training Agency).

The North East is as diverse as any region in the United Kingdom. Areas of relative prosperity exist alongside the multiple deprivations experienced by many communities (Northern Region Council's Association 1986). School leavers complete education with fewer qualifications than those in other regions (Northern Region Council's Association, 1986, p.31). Despite MSC measures, the number of young unemployed (16-18) in the region remained at

just under 30,000 between 1982-6. The economy of County Durham has shifted from a relatively buoyant mining and manufacturing economy to one dominated by services (Durham County Council 1983, p.1). The service sector is often characterised by low paid, insecure and often seasonal employment (Cockburn, 1987, p.5). This may be the main constituent of the job market in which trainees might compete for employment. Yet areas of skill shortages exist (Trade Union Studies Information Unit, 1988, p.10-12); for example in computing, machinist work, technical and management services. These are jobs that necessitate training in a particular process and often require documentary evidence of recognised qualifications obtained.

For Government the central control of local activity in the 1990s, as epitomised in the inception of Local Enterprise Councils, will not bring with it a release from administrative and direct grant support. British Oxygen withdrew from Employment Training (Guardian, 6th November 1989) arguing that the scheme 'encouraged low skilled, low standard training' (ibid).

One indication of the low level of involvement of industry and business is the number of school leavers gaining positions as YTS employees. The number of YTS employees in the Northern region remains at one third of the level in the South East at approximately 6% of all trainees (Trade Union Studies Information Unit, op. cit., p.2).

Education, Training and Employment

The relationship between education, training and employment has long been a controversial one (Williams, 1961, p.163). There have been periods in history when policies in the sphere of education and training would promote the notion that education and training should be more accessible and available simply for their own sake, e.g. the instigation of the Industrial Training Boards as a result of the 1964 Industrial Training Act and the establishment of educational priority areas in 1968 (Finch, 1984, p.85 and Stringer and Richardson, 1982, p.25).

During the last twenty years the balance has swung to a predominantly instrumental one. Education is perceived by dominant groups as preparation for employment (Finch, op. cit., p.44). Training is viewed as fundamentally linked to employers' needs rather than enhancing an individual's level of qualification. The effects of such shifts and the resultant narrowing of the definition of such concepts as education and training, are largely felt by young working class school leavers (Finn, 1987, p.190).

One noticeable assumption during this period has been that the 'correct' relationship between education, training and employment has to be achieved via changes in education and training (Brown, 1984, p.97, Finn, 1987, p.118). The organisation of employment and structure of occupations are regarded as immutable despite the intense documentation of the dramatic changes and regional differentiation in labour markets (MacArthur & McGregor, 1986; Mac Innes, 1987; Purcell, Wood, Waton & Allen, 1986). It appears ironic to note that the debate concerning education and employment, which reached a new found intensity during the 1970's, paid relatively little attention

to the future of employment and the organisation of private capital. Rather the debate focused upon so called failures in the education system to relate adequately to societal and, in particular, the economy's needs (Watts, 1983, p.27)

The Present Government's unwillingness to challenge national and international shifts in the private sector has resulted in the promotion of policies which necessitate behavioural responses from the school leaver and the unemployed e.g. lowering expectations and pay levels (Robinson & Saddler, 1985, p.110 and MacInnes, op. cit., p.135). The high participation rates in programmes such as the YTS, which offer restricted access to recognised qualifications, and neither secure conditions nor established rates of pay are an indication of the individual response in the face of few alternatives.

Classic forms of training have long played a critical role in gaining access to the better rewarded, higher status points in the occupational order (Penn, 1984, p.129). It was the entry to training which proved to be a critical process in securing the more stable situations in the labour market (Hawkins, 1984, p.50). The skilled are less likely to experience lengthy periods of unemployment. However acquiring the definition of a skilled worker requires the attainment of recognised qualifications. It is important to highlight the manner in which training has played a central role in the creation of inequalities, along the occupational order (Hawkins, op. cit., p.59).

The concept of skill was often linked to a concept of craft mastery (Braverman, 1974, p.443; Thompson, P., 1983, p.92). A linkage with what Braverman terms 'class mastery' is evident in many definitions of the concept of skill. It is also apparent, as Beechy contends, that a concept of socially defined occupational status operates. Sectors of work have undergone dramatic technological change. They cannot be classified in any classic or contemporary sense as skilled. Yet they maintain the exclusiveness, for example, the print workers (see Cockburn, 1986). So the term skill is a socially constructed concept but one which is reinforced by economic considerations (Beechy, 1982, p.63).

Young People Entering a Changing Labour Market

The post war labour market was a buoyant one for school leavers. But it was also a divisive one. In 1950 only 33% of boys and 8% of girls entered apprenticeship training (Roberts, 1984, p.26). Not only was access severely restricted but also demarcated by gender, race and educational qualifications. The girls entered hairdressing, the boys predominantly building, construction and engineering trades.

In 1959 Michael Carter examined the school-work progression and unearthed an acute awareness on the part of young people of the situation concerning access and restrictions to certain area of work. This, the young people indicated, was resultant from their limitations rather than restrictive employment practices. Whilst securing employment was relatively easy it was only addressed shortly before leaving school and something with which the available public services, in particular the Youth Employ-

ment Service, were presumed to have little to offer. The conferring of social standing from occupations was defined as an apprenticeship for boys and for girls in declining order: office work, shop work and factory work. Entry to an apprenticeship and office work necessitated the possession of 'O' level or equivalent academic qualifications. There was a correlation between educational attainment and entry to a high status job or apprenticeship (Carter, 1963). Such levels of awareness are a reaction both to perceptions of the structure of employment, gender, race and class relations and the closed nature of areas of education and work to many school leavers.

Willis, (1977) and Corrigan, (1979) demonstrate the manner in which working class children opt out of the academic forms of education in preference to their own initiation into working class jobs i.e. unskilled jobs. As Parkin points out, such 'shaping' is not a linear process but one in which many deny themselves opportunities because they perceive certain avenues not to be accessible to them, i.e. social closure. Situations in the labour market are translated into equivalent social boundaries (Parkin, 1971, p.62).

The links between poor educational attainment, family circumstance, locality and restricted access to training were factors evident in post-war transitions to labour markets (Casson, 1979, p.10). In fact the development of more formal and bureaucratic recruitment and staffing policies by public sector and many private sector employers was to add a further formal tier to the divisions created by the 'new' tripartite education system introduced with the 1944 Education Act. It was the ultimate irony that a welfare state borne out of concern for the problem of idleness and ignorance and in a spirit of concern for all should further and formally restrict the access of working class school leavers to training and employment (LeGrand, 1982, p.76).

In their respective studies Cockburn (1987, p.46) and Coffield, Borrill and Marshall (1986, pp-80-85) identify an urgent need by the young people they met for employment. The young people in the studies living at either end of the country - London and Newcastle - identified the common equation of a wage equalling independence and hence adulthood as one they wished to work towards. It was not the nature of employment that concerned them but the financial incentive and reward of work. YTS trainees, often leaving school with fewer qualifications than their peers who remain, are placed in a suspension between the 'degradation and boredom of being unemployed and the exploitation and boredom of the dead end jobs that have traditionally been allotted to the young working class' (Cockburn, op. cit., p48). Many view the allowance as a positive incentive to enter the YTS.

The Development of Government Policy on Training

Until 1962 Government actions and policy did not foresee a role for the state in addressing skill needs and access to training. In 1958 a report commissioned to examine existing training arrangements 'Training for Skill - Recruitment and Training of Young Workers in Industry'

concluded that:

... the existing division of responsibility between Government and industry for the education and training of apprentices should be maintained . . . the responsibility of the industrial training should rest firmly with industry

(National Joint Advisory Council, Carr Report, HMSO, 1958).

The Committee found much to criticise in the arrangements for training but did not suggest any radical changes (Williams, 1959, p.24). Rather state intervention lay in the arena of economic management and provision of welfare services. However proposals enacted in the 1964 Industrial Training Act led to the establishment of Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) based on specific industries with the power to raise levies from, and award grants to, firms for training within the industry. By 1971 there were 27 boards covering employers of 15 million workers. Much of the responsibility for actual policy delivery went to the training boards. Boards were comprised of equal numbers of employer and employee representatives from industry, plus educational interests (Stringer and Richardson, op. cit., p.25), that is, a tripartite involvement. This Act presented evidence in the belief that increasing average skill levels would result in a more efficient economy and workforce.

In the early 1960s the youth unemployment rate was not dissimilar to that of adults. This relationship changed and during the early 1970s youth unemployment rose dramatically. Between January 1972 and January 1977 unemployment increased by 45% but for those under 20 it had risen by 120%. The effects on women and ethnic minorities were severe (Sinfield & Showler, 1981, pp.13-17).

The 1973 Employment and Training Act introduced by a Labour Government set up the Manpower Services Commission (MSC, now known as the Training Agency) giving it power to make arrangements for 'assisting people to select, train for, obtain and retain employment, and for assisting employers to obtain suitable employees' (HMSO, 1973, p.2). It became responsible for a wide range of services and institutions ranging from the industrial training boards and skill centres to job centres.

The commission was formed of an executive composed of equal number of trade union and employer representatives. This act resulted in greater centralised control weakening previously autonomous groups. In particular the levies raised by the ITB's were now restricted by a levy-grant exemption system which relieved small firms from commitment whilst making the ITB's more dependent on direct support from the Exchequer. The ITB's were now constrained in their ability to intervene when individual employers were experiencing financial constraint (Goldstein, 1984, p.97). Through the Commission, the Government could now implicitly but effectively control training provisions and introduce measures to control unemployment.

Initial policy measures promoted by the MSC sought to maintain existing jobs via a service of subsidies and induce-

ment to employers, e.g. the 1975 Job Creation Programme. Unemployment continued to rise and criticism of the subsidy based policy grew. The policies simply did not alleviate the problems faced by the groups most at risk - the unqualified, unskilled and long term unemployed - and intensified divisions between the unemployed and employed.

The Job Creation Programme came to an end in 1977. Reporting in May 1977 an MSC working party proposed the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) to 'prepare young people for work and different kinds of work experience' (Finn, op. cit., p.11). This programme aimed to provide initially 130,000 places, to accommodate up to 234,000 youngsters a year by 1978. YOP comprised:-

- ★ Work preparation courses ranging from employment induction of two weeks duration to short training courses of three months;
- ★ Work experience ranging from six months on employers' premises, to one year in training workshops or community service.

This programme was restricted to 16-18 year olds who would receive an allowance of £18 per week. With a continuing belief in the cyclical nature of unemployment the emphasis in the programme was upon short periods of work experience with employers. As such YOP was originally designed as a temporary programme with a five year life span.

A dramatic growth in the MSC was taking place. Staffing levels in the MSC reached a peak in 1979 at 26,162 employees. The unemployment industry was in full bloom with continued growth in sight (Coffield, 1984, pp.128-130). The accession of the Conservative Government in 1979 whilst leading to expenditure cuts for the MSC reinforced the notion of placing young people in the workplace. Special programmes accounted for 29% of the MSC's budget in 1979. By 1981 special programmes amounted to 44%. But as an avenue into full-time work, YOP's credibility was continually stretched. In 1978 the proportion of YOP participants getting jobs or returning to education was 70%. By mid 1981 only 44% of participants left for employment or education. In Cleveland, south of Co. Durham, only 16% of YOP participants found employment in 1980-81 (Roberts, op. cit., p.85). The situation was similar for Co. Durham leavers.

A scheme intended as a cure was 'aggravating the problem under treatment' (Roberts, op. cit., p.9). Young People wanted work; the Government wanted a reduced register of unemployed. The MSC's established structure of Area Boards to approve and monitor its special employment measures was strained by the massive level of applications and continual criticism of schemes in operation. Made up of nominees from the TUC, employers and to some extent, the voluntary sector it presented a consensual framework on the policy of YOP. By 1981 that consensus showed signs of breaking down. Young school leavers were being excluded from the labour market and redefined as trainees. For the TUC, in particular, this posed a challenge to strongly held perceptions of their role of representing employees rather than trainees. With the intro-

duction of the Youth Training Scheme the TUC redefined its role and became involved in setting up and monitoring the scheme. Along with the CBI and voluntary sector groups the TUC decided to participate in centrally led and radical shifts in training policy.

The Introduction of the Youth Training Scheme

The period between 1981-1983 was one of great activity for all those concerned with youth unemployment and training. It began with the publication of the New Training Initiatives and ended with the inception of the YTS.

In May 1981 the MSC (1981) published a consultative document entitled 'The New Training Initiative'. This document was to have a profound effect on training policy paving the way for massive state intervention in an area of economic activity evidently under resourced and under valued by the private sector.

The report argued that changes in the labour market and the introduction of new technology were challenges not being met by employers or what was described as an inflexible apprenticeship system. Training, the report claimed, was perceived by many employers as a disposable overhead dropped at the first sign of lowering profit margins. The international basis of trade and competition necessitated an investment in training which was evidently not taking place. Training was crucially linked to economic regeneration. The report opened up a debate which could not have come sooner for a Government beleaguered by political controversy the origins of which were directly linked to levels of youth unemployment.

In 1979 the Conservative Party was elected to Government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher. This victory was to mark the shift in Conservative Party policy and explicitly denote the breakdown of any post-war consensus concerning the role of the state in addressing social and economic problems (Johnson, 1986, p.144). The election was fought by Conservatives under the slogan 'Labour isn't working' a direct assertion to increasing unemployment and continued economic problems as epitomised by the 'Winter of Discontent' (MacInnes, op. cit., p.XI).

The economic problems facing earlier Governments had their origins in a long term decline caused by the inability of the private sector to invest in industry or take anything other than a short-term perspective in financial and structural planning (Gamble, 1981, p.52; Massey & Megan, 1982, p.222; MacInnes, op. cit., p.166). The severe recession of the 1970s, triggered off by the oil crisis in 1973 gave rise to the restructuring of employment and a process of change in the divisions of labour in society (Purcell and Wood, 1986, p.3). Brown (1984b, p.320) suggested that the pace of change was a rapid one resulting in the adaptation of patterns of work with which we had been familiar for nearly two centuries. Change may not be threatening or degrading. Change in the workplace may lead to liberation of workers from repetitive, boring and even dangerous tasks associated with certain sectors of employment. But change occurring in tandem with sharp increases of unemployment can and does increase the vulnerability of the worker and the school leaver. The

Thatcherite Government had worked with the slogan 'pricing people into jobs' making it clear that higher unemployment levels were a necessary evil both to lower wage levels and expectations (MacInnes, op. cit., p.163). Yet a substantial (employed) minority continue to make rapid progress in income levels and life style.

Putting into practice a doctrine that requires radical shifts in attitudes and actions can be a haphazard affair for Government. The increasing power of administration (Taylor-Gooby and Dale, 1981, p.201) has grown with the multiplying functions of Government (Johnson, 1986, p.217). Hence the growth in Quangos - a series of quasi-governmental bodies of which the Training Agency is the largest. The Conservative Government found a key role for the MSC in legitimating the role of the state and paid employment in society by managing the YTS. The solution was novel: a quango cannot directly be attributed to growth in Government hence the ability of Government to continue the rhetoric of anti-statism and yet implicitly direct policy. Initiating radical change in training policy with massive state intervention was planned to take place in a manner which circumvented the conservatism of much of the administration and private sector. The novelty did not end there for the state was now entering into partnership with the business, industrial and voluntary agencies willing to organise projects on its behalf to alleviate the social and economic threats posed by youth unemployment.

The period between 1981-1983 was one characterised by a tremendous flurry of activity both inside Government and the Houses of Parliament and within the many groups concerned with the management of youth unemployment and training. Fear of the consequences of youth unemployment (of riot, violence, drugs and crime) were expressed in the media and in Parliament (McKie, 1989, pp.46-50).

By the summer of 1983 some 200,000 Mode A places were set up. This was in keeping with Government preference that up to 300,000 of the envisaged 460,000 trainees would receive training on employers' premises (Hansard, Vol. 36, Col. 309, 2.2.83).

Direct experience of the workplace and an understanding of its disciplines combined with a range of basic skills may not necessarily enable them to go off and earn their living straight away, although many of them will, but it will give them a foundation that their predecessors have mostly had to do without.

(Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Employment)

Tebbit's argument was that the scheme would reflect the structure and social relations of the workplace. The hierarchical organisation, the motivation of extrinsic rewards (gaining employment) and the fragmentation of tasks reflects the structure of employment (see Bowles and Gintis, 1976).

The fact that the Government financed this process is indicative of the private sector's unwillingness to undertake the main investment in labour or labour reproduction.

It was the Government that incurred the costs of social investment and consumption to allay the manifest social problems resulting from the workings of a capitalist economy in the process of restructuring (O'Connor, 1973, p.6).

Working on and Participating in the YTS

The following sections present an analysis of data collected during the latter half of the 1980s from eight YTS schemes in the North East. Eight supervisors were observed at work. They also completed a questionnaire concerning their employment, training histories, their job content, conditions and salary.

Semi-structured interviews took place with trainees on seven schemes as they progressed through the YTS. Consideration was given to their arrival on the YTS, experiences during the scheme and progress from the YTS.

The Supervisors

Lockwood (1966, p.15) suggests that each employee is located in a market situation and work situation. The market situation is defined as the:

Economic position narrowly conceived, consisting of source and size of income, degree of job security, and opportunity for upward occupational mobility.

An examination of the current market situation of YTS supervisors and trainees can suggest not only their employment/training security, or otherwise, but that of the scheme as a whole. However, as the YTS is a relatively new scheme (and like all Government employment policies, liable to change) the market situation of the supervisors is closely linked to their training and employment histories and the effect of the YTS on those histories and labour market divisions within the training sector. Similarly past experiences also gave rise to expectations amongst individuals and groups within the network of the YTS. Lockwood identified the importance of such relationships within the workplace:-

the set up of social relationships in which the individual is involved at work by virtue of his (sic) position in the division of labour (ibid).

It is within the workplace that various dimensions of income and economic inequality are evident. Less tangible inequalities relating to the content of work, the kind of social relationships which people are involved in at work, and to the exercise of power can also be identified (Wedderburn and Craig, 1974, p.114). Such is the importance of work in our society that 'these inequalities permeate many other aspects of an individual's life' (ibid). In this analysis of the work of YTS supervisors and trainees Lockwood's concepts of the work and market situations form the basis for ordering data analysis.

A major problem with many discussions of social history is that it can leave no room for and assign no weight to, individual, or group experience, meaning and action (Brown, 1984b, p.317). Not all school leavers experienced unemployment in the early eighties. Others made use of periods of unemployment to develop hobbies and skills. Likewise adults living in a region of above average

rates of unemployment suffered but many acted to maximise their situation in and out of employment. Nevertheless high unemployment rates restrict opportunities (Sinfield, 1981, p.114) and individual responses must be placed in that context. Table 1 illustrates the salary levels and related conditions in which supervisors were working. The dramatic economic changes of the eighties clearly had a profound effect on the job career paths of younger supervisors, for example George and Fred. George had left school at 16. When I met him he had worked for a year at Direct Training as a welding supervisor. Despite the fact that he had no formal training in welding or fabrication skills he was responsible for training seven school leavers.

He also covered for the woodwork and car mechanic supervisors when they were off. Joining the YTS at the age of 22 he had been through a series of building site and plant machinery maintenance jobs. He was not a member of a trade union stating that he never had to be and didn't see any point in it. Working on what was then classified as a Mode B1 scheme (now attracting premium placement subsidy) George looked upon employment in the YTS as the most secure to date. Nevertheless he was paid at a minimum rate for supervisors of £6,135 p.a. in 1985. (The salary differentials quoted for 1985 remain at the same levels in 1989.)

TABLE 1: Employment Conditions of Supervisors 1984-85 (1)

Scheme		Pay p.a.	Contract	Benefits	Self-Assessment of Workplace Conditions (2)	Research's Assessment of Workplace Conditions (3)
PERCY	Dairy Products PLC	(4)	Permanent	Canteen holiday/sick pay pension	Excellent	Good
GEORGE	Direct Training	£6,135	Annual	Canteen	Average	Very Bad
JON	Engineering Training	£8,320	Permanent	Canteen holiday/sick pay pension	Average	Good
WENDY	Retail Training	£6,552	Monthly Renewable	—	Poor	Poor
JOHN	South Local Authority Training	£6,846	Permanent	Canteen holiday/sick pay, protective clothing, tools, pension	Good	Good
MORRIS		£7,800	Permanent			
LIZ	Special Needs	£10,000	Permanent	Canteen holiday/sick pay pension	Good	Good
KEN	Technology Training	£6,800	Annual	Canteen holiday/sick pay	Average	Average
FRED	Workshop Training	£6,135	Annual	Canteen	Poor	Very Bad

1. Whilst these figures were obtained in 1985, the pay differentials remain the same.
2. Supervisors were asked in the questionnaire to rank their physical working conditions as a scale of five points ranging from excellent to very bad. Excellent was defined as well resourced, furnished and adequately heated conditions whilst very bad was defined as damp, cold, poorly resourced and inadequate conditions.
3. Utilising the criteria cited above I assessed the physical working conditions experienced by supervisors during the period of research.
4. Percy did not wish to state his salary. It would be fair to assume that he was paid more than the lower points received by others as he was employed by a national firm in a key role as health and safety officer.

By comparison Fred had found it comparatively easy to move through seven jobs in sixteen years of employment. If he experienced unemployment it was largely through choice. Fred left school at 16 with nine CSE's. He held parts I and II of the City and Guilds Radio and Television Repair Award. For fourteen years he moved through a series of television and audio visual technical jobs. On average he spent just over two years on each job moving on as he got 'fed-up'. Two years prior to joining the YTS he attempted to change his career path by joining the police force. This he found 'too restricting' and he left eighteen months after completing his training. At this point the constant changes in employment and economic recession caught up with him. Now he could not move easily back into his path of audio-visual work. After several months of unemployment he was desperate for a job. The sole worker in a household of another adult and two young children he decided to look outside his normal area of work and applied for the post as the YTS supervisor. He was genuinely surprised to get the job as he had not worked in a training capacity with young people. However his skill training was the deciding factor. He didn't mind the nature of the scheme, as Mode B1 provision, or the drop in pay. It was a job and Fred felt sure that once the recession ended he would find employment elsewhere. As a member of the National Institute of Radio and TV Engineers, his employment pattern demonstrated the relatively stronger labour market situation of the qualified with highly regarded qualifications as opposed to unqualified (Kreckel, 1980, p.530). Fred's age was also a factor. He had left school when unemployment was not comparable with the situation facing George as a school leaver in 1979. For Fred the YTS was a stop gap while for George it was a major step up the employment ladder.

Jon at Engineering Training Ltd. had developed a career in training. On leaving school he completed training with the then National Coal Board in mining engineering. After ten years as a mining engineer he progressed to the role of trainer. His salary, the highest of the skilled trainers, reflected his status as a skilled engineer and trainer. However the coal industry was continually undergoing contraction and restructuring. The first area to experience contraction was the training section. As a consequence in 1970 Jon found himself unemployed. He found employment with Engineering Training Ltd as an instructor. Having spent fourteen years with the training association he enjoyed the respect with which employers viewed Engineering Training. He was still in contact with his coal board colleagues through his membership of the Institute of Mining Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. Over the previous decade he had gained membership of the Institute of Training and Development. Ken of Technology Training had followed a similar career path to Jon, moving into training a decade prior to the YTS. He gained membership of the Institute of Supervisor Management in the late seventies. Ken joined an information technology training centre (ITEC) the high status centres funded by the Department of Trade and Industry and the MSC. He remarked that he brought the supervisory skills of the

private sector into the YTS because he thought the scheme could work. However his salary level reflected the lower level of funds available to schemes predominantly supported by the public sector.

John and Morris working at South Local Authority were both time served bricklayers and apprentice masters. Their employment histories were closely linked to the Authority. Morris had served his apprenticeship with the Authority and had progressed through the craft section to the role of apprentice master. The YTS brought with it the opportunity for a further move and promotion. Morris had set out from school wanting a skilled high status job and progression into training was a step in that direction. John's prospects also rose with the introduction of the YTS for he was promoted to apprentice master and Morris moved into the position of scheme co-ordinator. Both were strong supporters of trade unions. Their salary levels at £7,800 p.a. and £6,864 p.a. respectively, reflect both their qualifications and the security afforded them by employment.

Liz, working on the special needs scheme, had obtained a series of teaching qualifications relevant to the work of the scheme. In fact she had initiated the scheme at her college of further education as a method of 'making full use of my qualifications'. Active in her union she had developed her career in teaching as a lecturer in a Further Education college and she liked to talk of 'teaching' as opposed to 'training'. Liz pursued a career in a job normally associated with a female area of work. Similarly Wendy of Retail Training Ltd had spent her working life in serving and caring jobs; in female ghettos of employment:- shop work, bar work, clerical work. Wendy moved as she could and as was necessary in order to support herself and her son. A move into full-time work in a supervisory role was a positive step up the occupational order. Wendy did not perceive herself as being 'trained' or pursuing a career in any specific area of work. She enjoyed working with people and YTS encouraged that. For Wendy her labour market position was resultant from her family situation. Wendy's work was crucial to her family:- her son and herself. Whilst it was not marginal to her family her labour market situation reflected a marginality. Working on the YTS, despite the relatively low pay and the insecurities of working in a scheme with managing agents determined to exploit the YTS for their own ends, was actually a positive step up the occupational order.

Percy of Dairy Products PLC was waiting for early retirement in 1984. At the age of 55 he had achieved the post of health and safety officer in the local office of a national food processing industry. Percy had worked his way up from the factory floor during a career in the food processing industry. His ten years with a national firm had been productive with the YTS being an additional, and in his eyes, burdensome duty. Percy had no wish to belong to a trade union arguing that such groups set out to cause trouble in the workplace.

Gender, age and qualifications possessed, were variables affecting previous employment histories and progression on to the YTS. Expectations of work on the YTS differed

accordingly. For Fred the YTS was stop gap. He knew that his youth and qualifications would ensure another job once the depressed labour market eased slightly. In contrast the YTS was for Wendy and George the step up the occupational ladder from low paid, gender defined jobs with little prospects. In fact Fred left YTS within a year for a job relevant to his qualifications. Wendy and George moved into more secure posts on YTS schemes. The qualified trainers, e.g. Jon, moved into YTS as a natural progression in their career path. Their strong market situations were illustrated in their relatively secure and straightforward employment histories and reflected in their salary and employment conditions on the YTS.

The Trainees

I couldn't tell anyone about the attack. I went all weekend sick with worry. When I came in here on Monday it just seemed right to tell Wendy.

This trainee working on the Retail Training Ltd scheme had been raped one Friday evening. It was not until the Monday morning that she told Wendy (her supervisor) and went to report the incident to the Police with her. Why tell Wendy and not her friends or family? Because the trainee argued, 'she listens and doesn't tell you off'. This trainee received a tremendous amount of support from Wendy. Wendy had identified with the plight of the trainee stating that 'it could have been a kid of mine', and the trainee responded to this. The trainee had felt isolated, 'at fault' and dirty. It was to her YTS supervisor she turned to for help, fearing the intolerant attitudes of parents and adults. Coffield, Borrill and Marshall (1986, p.183) noted in their study the hostility and lack of understanding of adults. In this situation it was fear of hostility and intolerance which led the trainee to seek an adult 'friend' outside her family and neighbourhood. This, plus the nature of the incident, led her to a sympathetic female adult, namely Wendy. Yet to challenge openly a supervisor required a strong commitment to a particular issue or foolhardiness. 'You're on interview here for the year. If you want to get a job at the end you've got to keep your head down' (Mark, trainee, South Local Authority). The pressure on trainees in schemes linked to employment 'to keep quiet' was readily voiced. Some trainees spoke of those getting the available jobs as 'the licks; the ones that did whatever they were told'. However certain supervisors were perceived as 'wanting to help' and of offering assistance even after trainees left schemes.

The trainees who got extra assistance in job hunting were generally the amiable ones - the trainees with what were perceived as the right attitudes and dress. Alan had wanted to undertake electrician's training at Engineering Training Ltd. However an eye test revealed he was colour blind. He could not continue in electronics because of the need to distinguish the colour of wires. Jon, the supervisor, arranged a transfer to computing. Alan was extremely grateful but drew a lot of resentment from the trainees refused a place for their first preference in a specialisation, namely computing. David spoke for several trainees when he contended that this 'wouldn't have happened except he's a lick always playing up to the supervisor'.

But many schemes were battle grounds. For example a series of discipline problems at both Retail Training and Workshop Training did affect trainees' views of supervisors and vice versa. The resultant friction often denied the concern felt by certain supervisors for trainees. For example Wendy avidly defended a trainee accused of stealing on placement and almost lost her job. The trainee subsequently admitted theft.

Views on supervisors were related to the role, if any, the supervisor played in supporting or disciplining a trainee. Trainees were aware of a 'pay off' between good behaviour and possible job opportunities. But they also spoke of the support and friendship a supervisor could provide. Daren told me of the time his supervisor, George, spent time with him teaching him to use a metric ruler. 'No teacher would have done that'. Yet for every positive view there was a negative one expressed. The prejudices of supervisors, their perspective on discipline and their attitudes towards the power dynamic of the supervisory role affected relations. After all, as one trainee commented 'going through school teaches you one thing - to sus out the teacher as a friend or foe'.

Leaving the YTS was a stressful time for all trainees no matter what their destination. They could be leaving to start a job or face unemployment. It was a time of great emotion for all concerned. Potential destinations were:-

1. Employment
 2. Return to full-time education
 3. Unemployment
 4. A further scheme before entitlement to YTS ceases
- Many trainees were apparently aware of restrictions in potential destinations prior to joining the scheme:

I went for two interviews. But I chose this scheme. Here you get a change to go out on placement. There's always a chance you'll get kept on while there.

(Angela, trainee, Retail Training Ltd)

Only South Local Authority could directly offer employment to the YTS leavers. Few trainees had such opportunities although many aspired to joining the 'good schemes'. The term good schemes was commonly defined as a scheme most likely to lead to a job.

The schemes within the study illustrated a complex pattern of destinations. Tables 2 and 3 indicate the high percentage of trainees that left Dairy Products (100%, n=4), Engineering Training Ltd (71%, n=69) and South Local Authority (91%, n=68) for employment. At Retail Training and Workshop Training a high proportion left for unemployment 30% (n=23) and 22% (n=12) respectively. The former are schemes located in business, local authorities and new technology.

Two other statistics of note are:

1. the proportionally high number that transferred to other schemes from Engineering Training Ltd (15, i.e. 15%) and Retail Training Ltd (15, i.e. 20%);
2. the recurring nature of disciplinary factors in accounting for a small proportion of leavers on virtually all schemes. In the former case Engineering Training Ltd made it clear to trainees that they were 'on approval' and those not

TABLE 2: Destination of YTS Leavers from Schemes in Study 1984/85

	Dairy Products PLC		Direct Training		Engineering Training Ltd.		Retail Training Ltd.		Special Needs		South Local Authority		Technology Training		Workshop Training	
Entered Employment	4	100%	32	76%	69	71%	30	40%	1D	7%	68	91%	17	47%	29	54%
Returned to Full-time education	—	—	—	—	4	4%	2	2.5%	3	20%	1	1%	8	22%	—	—
Registered Unemployed	—	—	7	17%	5	5%	23	30%	4	27%	—	—	6	17%	12	22%
Transferred to other schemes	—	—	—	—	15	15%	15	20%	1	7%	4	5%	—	—	—	—
Left for Disciplinary reasons	—	—	2	5%	3	3%	4	5%	2	12%	2	3%	5	14%	13	24%
Other reasons	—	—	1A	2%	2B	2%	2C	2.5%	4D	27%	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE 3: Destination of YTS Leavers from Schemes in Study 1985/86

	Dairy Products PLC		Direct Training		Engineering Training Ltd.		Retail Training Ltd.		Special Needs		South Local Authority		Technology Training		Workshop Training	
Entered Employment	3	75%	30	74%	72	74%	33	44%	2	22%	65	89%	20	51%	25	47%
Returned to Full-time education	1	25%	—	—	3	3%	3	4%	3	33.5%	2	3%	6	15%	4	8%
Registered Unemployed	—	—	10	24%	8	8%	20	27%	—	—	—	—	10	26%	15	28%
Transferred to other schemes	—	—	—	—	12	12%	13	17%	1	11%	6	8%	—	—	—	—
Left for Disciplinary reasons	—	—	1	2%	3	3%	5	7%	3	33.5%	—	—	3	8%	8	15%
Other reasons	—	—	—	—	—	—	1C	1%	—	—	—	—	—	—	1E	2%

Source: Questionnaires administered to Scheme Managers, Autumn, 1984 and 1985.

Notes: Occupancy rates vary by Scheme and year. As a result figures do not equate with number of approved places. A. Direct Training 1984/85: 1 left due to pregnancy. B. Engineering Training 1984/85: 1 left as a young offender. C. Retail Training 1984/85: 2 left area; 1985/86 1 left due to pregnancy. D. Special Needs: 1984/85: the 1 trainee who left for employment went to a part-time job, 4 others left because scheme was 'too like school'. E. Workshop Training 1985/86: 1 trainee left area.

considered suitable would be assisted to transfer elsewhere. A steady number of trainees left Retail Training as on joining the scheme they discovered it was not what they wanted. In particular the heavy emphasis on four different work experience placements, as a focus for the programme, concerned a number of trainees. As a result they transferred to other schemes.

The disciplinary factor was a recurring theme, particularly evident at Workshop Training. The main reasons for disciplinary action concerned abusive behaviour and stealing. However the definition of disciplinary problems varied greatly. At South Local Authority poor time keeping and failure to attend college were considered serious problems. At Direct Training and Workshop Training such problems were considered minor in nature. Trainees at these schemes recounted tales of violence between trainees and supervisors and the wilful destruction of equipment as behaviour likely to elicit disciplinary action. These trainees demon-

strated a low self esteem. Many rebelled quite vocally; others became violent. No matter how many changes were made in the composition of trainees the atmosphere of desperation and dejection continued on these schemes. To illustrate the progression of trainees to un/employment from the YTS four case studies are presented (see Table 4):

1. John, trainee, Direct Training, a Workshop based scheme.
2. Carol, trainee, Retail Training Ltd, a consortium scheme in the retail trade.
3. Howard, craft trainee, South Local Authority, a scheme based in the public sector.
4. Marion, trainee, Technology Training, an information technology centre.

John at Direct Training was one of the trainees who left for a labouring job secured through his brother:

TABLE 4: The Analysis of the Employment Destinations of YTS Leavers 1985/86

*EMPLOYMENT		DIRECT TRAINING		RETAIL TRAINING		SOUTH LOCAL AUTHORITY		TECHNOLOGY TRAINING	
JOB WITH PROSPECTS	Apprenticeship	—	—	—	—	30	46%	—	—
	*Word Processing Secretarial and Clerical Work	—	—	3	9%	28	43%	4	20%
	Information Technology Computing	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	10%
JOB WITH FEW PROSPECTS	Bar/Restaurant work	4	13%	10	30%	—	—	2	10%
	Labouring	13	43%	—	—	3	5%	1	5%
	Production Work	6	20%	2	6%	3	5%	8	40%
	* Shop Assistant	7	24%	18	55%	1	1%	3	15%
TOTAL		30	100%	33	100%	65	100%	20	100%

source: Data obtained from schemes Spring 1986.

* I considered the introduction of gender as a variable in this analysis. However gender-orientated patterns of employment were strongly adhered to. Secretarial and shop work were totally female areas of employment. Only in bar/restaurant work was there an indication of a more ambiguous identification of work with gender.

When it got near to the end of this I asked my brother to keep his ears open for anything coming up. He's working with the firm that has the contact to demolish the pit site.

The local pit had closed a year earlier and John found employment helping to demolish any sign of the once focal point of the local economy. John expressed the view that he was 'not trained for much'. He had spent three months on the welding, car mechanics and painting and decorating sections respectively.

I'm just glad to get a job. It might end soon but at least I've got something.

The job did not last long. In fact John returned to the scheme three months later for the Christmas Party and told George, the welding supervisor, that the anticipated six months work lasted just two months. John's story was not an unusual one. An examination of the statistics would suggest a good record of employment for YTS leavers. Yet an analysis of the jobs trainees obtained illustrates the dead end nature of many. The trainees predominantly left for employment in services or labouring. Some went to part-time jobs, others temporary seasonal work. But all these destinations were recorded under the heading of employment. The assumption was too readily made that over 70% of Direct Training trainees left for a full-time and therefore relatively secure job. There was an obvious conflict between the concept of training promoted by the Training Agency and the actual requirement of the local labour market (Buswell, 1988, p.180).

Carol from Retail Training Ltd left the YTS asking Wendy the supervisor:

What will I do?

She did not have a job to go to and joined the third of trainees who left the scheme to register as unemployed. Wendy found it difficult to respond to Carol's question

'what do you say to a young kid facing unemployment. I don't know how I would feel if it was my son'. Carol did get a job. During the Christmas period she was taken on as a temporary shop assistant. That job, whilst low paid and temporary, did much for Carol's self esteem. She enthused about her job but became depressed when reflecting on the temporary nature of it. A year later Carol got a job as a receptionist in a dental surgery. Overjoyed at obtaining a permanent post the low pay was regarded as incidental to the goal - the 'real job'. Carol's expectations were low - 'a job, any job', and gender-orientated - 'something working with people or children'. There was nothing to set Carol apart from her peer group. Towards the end of their year on the YTS Wendy asked a group of trainees to list their preferred area of employment. A selection of the responses are reproduced here. Whilst it was easy to pick out the young man (Response: 1. Advertising firm; 2. Journalism; 3. Butchers) the young women sought retail, clerical and caring work. One young woman suggested a motor mechanics job, slipped in between looking after children and being a hairdresser. There was, however, little support for such a trainee and job wishes were often hidden behind gender stereotypes.

Despite the continued growth in service sector employment trainees from Retail Training faced a precarious future. The insecurity experienced by these trainees stood in sharp contrast to the smooth path into employment of the overwhelming majority of trainees at South Local Authority. Of the 90% who gained employment 75% were employed by the Authority. Howard, a craft trainee was interviewed in the tenth month of the scheme and secured a place on the Authority's craft scheme:-

I was delighted. It was great. I was worried by the interview though. Well, you're on interview for nine months really and it does cause pressure.

TABLE 5: What Job would you like? Trainees, Retail Training, Summer 1985

nanny, beauty therapists hairdresser	Consult like to coats, coat children or old people	Hairdressing Shop Assistant in fashion shop Airport hotel
Hairdresser-Hairdresser Boutique - shop assistant Record Shop - manager	look after children be a motor mechanic be a hairdresser	working for an advertising firm - designing 2. Journalist 3. butcher
Working with children Catering Shop assistant	shop assistant hairdresser NANNY.	
Sublime Sales Sublime Sales Cakes (Baker) Fruit (CASH)	shop assistant Hairdresser office work	Typing & filling Assistant TRAINING & Styling Office work any shop Shop work HAIR Dressing

What Howard did not know was the political controversy surrounding the appointments. Morris, a supervisor, told of the close monitoring they had to undertake of the councils on the interview panel after one councillor consistently favoured his constituents ignoring recommendations from scheme staff. Those who did not secure a place with the Authority received support from supervisors who utilised local contacts to secure jobs for trainees. Supervisors viewed this as a crucial measure of their success and assisted trainees accordingly.

Despite the apparently high career currency of those trained in information technology trainees at Technology Training fared badly in terms of employment. About half the trainees left for employment and the analysis of jobs secured indicated that few obtained anything relevant to their training. One trainee left to pack egg boxes, one went to a dairy stacking crates and delivering milk, another went to a components factory. Marion got a job as a word processor operator at a local solicitors firm. Like many of the women on the scheme (approximately one third of trainees) she spent much of the year on the office practice section. Whilst they were filling the acceptable role for women working with new technology they all benefited as they gained employment in areas relevant to their training. Marion was pleased with her year on YTS and her job. She remarked that the 'boys didn't do so well but then there aren't the jobs here for them'. The analysis of destinations of Technology Training leavers begged the question, how far are local labour market situations considered in the national policy-making process? (MacArthur and MacGregor, 1986, p.225).

Discussion

A series of other studies including Cockburn (1987), Carter (1963) and Gollan (1937) chart the exploitation and boredom of the dead end jobs that have been classically allotted to the working class young. Yet the trainees wanted to enter employment. Despite the fact that many of the jobs open to them had few or no prospects they preferred receiving a wage to the continuation of 'training' schemes.

The selection process was critical in setting the scene for further job prospects. As Huw Beynon wrote in his study of employment in a multinational company - the Ford car Company - 'everybody wanted to go to Ford's but not everybody was allowed in. Ford had the pick of the labour market' (Beynon, 1984, p.101). So it was within the YTS and South Local Authority had the pick of trainees.

One question posed by the analysis of the destination of the YTS leavers is the relevance of the training offered to the labour market facing young people. MacArthur and MacGregor (1986, p.254) question the validity of national training programmes lacking a regional dimension. The creation of ITECs as part of a national policy located in areas without prior analysis of labour markets led to false hopes and expectations amongst trainees. Ultimately much of the YTS training was 'training' in isolation of job prospects.

Once on the YTS a series of variables, all intertwining to channel trainees in particular directions for employment became evident:

1. the **resourcing** levels varying according to Training Agency payments and backup resources available;
2. the **organisation** of the programme both dependent upon resources but also directly related to commitment (or otherwise) of scheme management and supervisors on the YTS;
3. the **relations** between supervisors and trainees were critical in defining the trainees' experiences of the YTS and further indicated to them what their future in the labour market was likely to be;
4. the **sector** in which training was conducted.

In short the divisions between schemes were complex. From the data presented it was evident that trainees at South Local Authority and Engineering Training Ltd had the best opportunities to achieve a recognised qualification and a job with prospects. They also had access to forms of occupational welfare such as subsidised meals, equipment and access to other benefits (Titmuss, 1974, p.139). Standing in direct contrast was the situation of trainees on Retail Training Ltd and Workshop Training. On these

schemes trainees faced a strong possibility of leaving the YTS for unemployment.

Titmuss (op. cit., p.30) argued that the use of a typology provided a means of creating 'some order in all the disorder and confusion of facts, systems and choices'. In order to achieve some order a typology of YTS schemes based ultimately on the destination of YTS leavers, is presented:-

1. 'Jobs with prospects': the aristocracy of schemes directly offering employment and recognised training to school leavers. Entry to schemes linked to educational qualifications. (South Local Authority, Engineering Training Ltd).
2. 'What Job?': schemes linked to marginal areas of labour markets. Schemes from which trainees have difficulty in securing recognised training, qualifications and hence a job. Trainees are stigmatised by their very involvement in these schemes. Placements (if available), family and friends are major sources for temporary employment. (Direct Training, special Needs, Workshop Training).
3. 'Job with little prospects': schemes linked to increasingly segmented labour markets. Schemes in which trainees rely heavily on work experience placements as a means of gaining entry to low paid, insecure, often temporary and part-time work. The year on the YTS delays their entry to the jobs always allocated to the young working class school leavers in a peripheral, fragmented labour market. (Dairy Products PLC, Retail Training Ltd, Technology Training).

Progression from the YTS to un/employment is a complex process and the categories presented must be treated with care. However they do present a static point from which the situation of YTS leavers, in these schemes, can be evaluated. Raffe's (1984, p. 14) examination of the data derived from a sample of 1,421 Scottish school leavers who left in the summer of 1983 concluded:-

Except for highly specified training, employers recruiting in the youth labour market have usually judged education and training courses not on their content or quality rather than the types of young people believed to enter them.

These findings tally with the results of this study. Both studies identify a complex pattern of hierarchy evolving with employers reluctant to recruit from those schemes deemed lower status. Raffe concludes that in 1984 YTS was an unemployment led option which would only become a preferred option if other opportunities were restricted (ibid). By 1988 the YTS was the only option for school leavers upon state assistance during unemployment and/or job searching.

The future of trainees is reflected in the past YTS supervisors. The 'trainers' are employed on the aristocracy of schemes while the 'supervisors' work elsewhere on YTS. So the use of the word training in defining YTS, as a whole, is at best an incorrect usage. At worst it is a term employed as a cover presenting a respectability to a scheme which in the North East predominantly concerned with managing unemployment whilst inculcating a work ethic neces-

sary for acceptance of the dead end jobs on offer to the majority of trainees. By incorporating diverse schemes in the YTS a transition occurred incorporating units previously involved in training into a new level of collective organisation (Parsons, 1969, p.349). But that organisation does not promote training in the classic sense employed by Gollan (1937) and Carter (1963). The existence of guidelines for the YTS presented a series of norms which the outsider might assume to present an ordering of the schemes. This was clearly not the case. Nevertheless the YTS has become an integral part of the school work transition institutionalising a complex series of inequalities linked to the process selection onto YTS.

The Future: Is the YTS Scheme the liability of the 1990s?

The Government now both controls and finances policy in a manner unforeseen prior to the economic and political crisis of the 1970s and 1980s. However the basis of that state direction and control differs vastly from the post-war conception of government responsibility for economic and social well being (Johnson, 1987, p.144). the notion that the role of Government is to steer the economy, guaranteeing full employment and a steady rise in individual and collective prosperity (ibid) has been replaced by the reaffirmation of theories of individual responsibility, thrift and self-help. After all this is the home of laissez-faire ideology and questions concerning the cost and effectiveness of welfare policies are of long standing. The current ideology concentrates on ends, for example, efficiency, effectiveness, rather than means, suggesting a change in the values and criteria by which the objectives of the welfare policies are judged (Johnson, 1986, p.143).

The introduction of the YTS marked the beginning of a shift in training policy with the aim of achieving particular goals based on laissez-faire ideology. Those goals involve a shift in policy to meet employers' needs whilst lowering the expectations of individuals in an attempt to 'open up' labour markets. The words flexibility, adaptability and transferability now inculcate policy documents in all sectors of training, both youth and adult schemes. The YTS constituted a testing ground for the broad training strategy based upon **central control of local activity**. Policy dictates are operated on a contractual basis by local agents. Public subsidy finances the private actions of the many small and other companies attempting to deliver training programmes.

Today the YTS is a scheme which affects virtually all school leavers in the Northern Region (MSC, 1986, p.33). Demographic trends will affect the YTS in regions of economic activity such as the South East. Increasingly employers in areas of growing labour shortage circumvent YTS recruiting young workers direct from school, thus reversing the trend of an increased duration in transition from school to work and suggesting a switch to youth wages rather than training allowances.

The YTS both perpetuates and creates divisions in the labour market and yet in regions such as the North it offers hope of access to an area of routine action (Giddens, 1981, p.154) namely the workplace. The behavioural

response of individuals to training policies per se, that is, active participation is not surprising. Reviewing training policy in 1989 the shift to behavioural response basis of all policies is evident. As the Government continues to fund a scheme (which some would not term a training scheme) and business largely refuses to willingly participate in training YTS must be a liability for a Government concerned to control public expenditure and promote private activity. However the scheme is a continued liability to the future of Northern school leavers. Their futures remain, like those of their supervisors, determined by their education attainments, gender, race and socio-economic origins.

Footnote:

Please note that the names of supervisors, trainees and schemes have been changed.

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The Concept of Effectiveness in relation to Youth Work

DAVE WATTS

of criteria that justify what they have already done . . . (Cameron, 1980)

Introduction

This paper attempts to investigate what *effectiveness* might mean when applied to youth work; the difficulties presented when trying to evaluate a service with blurred or nonexistent objectives; and what measures of effectiveness might be defensible.

The Objectives of Youth Work

If agreement cannot be reached as to what actually constitutes the evaluation criteria, then it is logical to assume that considerable difficulty would be incurred in any attempt to assess the relative effectiveness of an organisation - or a set of organisations. (Steers, 1975).

A visitor from Mars, on taking a guided tour of youth centres, could be forgiven for assuming that the mission of youth work is to provide a sort of warm, well-lit street corner where young people can hang about. The provision of refreshments, discos, table-tennis and the occasional ice-skating trip would also seem to be crucial to the youth work process.

Despite this, when youth workers get together they talk about personal growth, education about relationships, social education, health education, sports coaching, building character, instilling a sense of a social responsibility, group work, counselling, political education, outdoor education, music and drama, anti-sexist and anti-racist work, non-building-based youth work, careers guidance, participation in decision-making . . .

Many local authorities have no policy statements about their youth services at all, and of those that do many make frequent recourse to vague phrases such as 'social education' (the most common), 'personal growth' and 'development of character'.

Weick's 'Educational Organisations as Loosely Coupled Systems' (Weick, 1979) could have been written about youth work. Youth services would be recognised by Weick as organised anarchies, staffed by an assortment of fugitives from other trades and professions, who share no particular ethos or ethic about what the objectives of youth work should be. Thus Person X is mainly interested in coaching youth football teams, Person Y wants to engage young people in radical politicisation, and Person Z wants to reduce vandalism. All these can be termed 'social education' - because the term is essentially meaningless - and when a policy statement is written desperate attempts are made to validate all the existing activities.

. . . they evaluate their organisation on the basis

The politics of local education authorities make it necessary

to produce a document sufficiently bland to be endorsed by elected representatives of widely differing perspectives without too much argument.

This model - of the youth services as an umbrella for all sorts of well-meaning, often valuable, but incoherent work with young people - was very attractive in the liberal pluralist 1960s and 1970s, but could look fragile, muddled and inadequate when viewed, in the cold blue light of the current Government's perspectives on the role of education. Whilst the Secretary of State has so far shown little interest in the youth service, perhaps because it only consumes a tiny sliver of resources compared to schools, further and higher education, it would seem prudent to prepare for the glare of the searchlight. (Since I wrote that in early 1989 the searchlight has indeed been pointed at the youth service, with the national conference on youth work curriculum and even organisation like the Further Education Unit getting in on the act!)

A brave (if simplistic) attempt was made by Stephen Butters (1978) to characterise the widely different views of what 'social education' was taken to mean by the youth service, inventing the notion of the social education repertoire:

1. A social integrationalist phase up to the 1930s. Mission: character-building. There was increasing concern about juvenile delinquency.
2. Cultural pluralism, 1930s-1970s. Mission: cultural adjustment - helping young people to 'fit in' to society.
3. Structural functionalism, late 1960s-1970s. Mission: community development. A government-commissioned report, *Youth & Community Work in the 70s*, set youth work in a community development/action context.
4. An overtly political strand, based on interest-group conflict theory. Mission: institutional reform. This mode has appeared spasmodically throughout youth work's history.
5. 'A potentially realisable Radical Paradigm for youth work with working class communities', grounded in radical sociology. Mission: self-emancipation. Butters claimed that youth workers should traverse a critical break from the modes above to enter the last phase.

The view of Butters was that these phases had been moved through more-or-less historically, which seems to me foolishly simplistic. Reducing for example these perspectives to statements I have often shown these to youth

workers on courses and asked them which they identified with most comfortably:

(a) Society is fine as it is. The purpose of youth work is to help young people fit into it.

(b) Society is broadly OK, but needs minor adjustments here and there. The purpose of youth work is to help young people be responsible democratic citizens so that these minor changes can be made.

(c) Society has serious problems. The purpose of youth work is to help young people critically appraise the system and to learn how to change it.

(d) Society is rotten and corrupt and the 'democratic process' is unable to change it. The purpose of youth work is to help young people to overthrow society's structures. The tidy sociological Butters view seems to be that youth workers, as a body, have moved at least through the first three. Any course I have ever run has always contained representatives of each of the four political perspectives, who all manage to coexist under the youth service umbrella. No wonder an anodyne catchall phrase like 'social education' is so useful.

Some Models of Organisational Effectiveness and their potential value in the evaluation of youth work

Behavioural Process

In the tradition of Bentham, Mill & Locke - 'the greatest benefit for the greatest number' - Rawls (1971) and Keeley (1978) proposed social justice models. It would certainly be interesting to discover how many youth workers and teenagers in youth clubs considered the allocation of resources and distribution of power in their organisation to be 'fair'. It is unlikely that girls elbowed off the pool table by boys practising to be macho would perceive their situation as 'fair'.

A disadvantage of the equity model is that youth clubs are inextricably bound up in general LEA allocation and administrative procedures. An evaluation using this model would be measuring to a large extent the effectiveness of the authority as a whole and would be of little illuminative merit.

However because the vast majority of youth workers are part-timers, for whom 'job satisfaction' tends to be more important than salary, attention to social justice is particularly important. An enhanced work performance from a part-timer is more likely to depend on perceptions of the fairness of the organisation, because issues such as promotion prospects, pay rises or increased responsibilities tend to have little or no relevance to the part-time worker.

Goal-Based Approaches

Cameron's (1980) three criteria that a goal model possesses a relevant framework for analysis when organisational goals are clear, consensual and measurable illustrates the evaluative dilemma for youth work. As outlined in the 'Objectives of Youth Work' section it would fail all three, and so the goal model's value in evaluating youth work practice would be severely limited. In a youth service where the staff had consensually agreed its priorities, however, the model could well have merits.

Individualistic Perspectives

Thomas Greenfield (1980) questioned whether an organisation was a socially real system with its own life, or a construction from peoples' perceptions of social reality. This second, phenomenological, view has its attractions given the loosely-coupled nature of youth services. Again, the heavy reliance on part-time workers makes a phenomenological model attractive, as their perspectives are coloured by the limited contact with the organisation as a whole, and the small portion they see is the 'organisation' to them.

Managerial Operations

Models from the industrial world about the efficiency of procedures and structures may be of use in understanding how the organisation 'works' but I suspect would be of little value in assessing the effectiveness of the youth work ultimately delivered by the system. One of the characteristics of organised anarchies (see below) is that the relationship between input and output is tenuous, so measuring the effectiveness of administrative or managerial procedures would not necessarily be related to the quality of the youth work that resulted.

Multiple Constituency Approaches

Cameron's observations (1980) about the difficulties of evaluating organised anarchies are very illuminating in the context of trying to evaluate the effectiveness of youth work. He argues that several of the other models on this list just do not work when applied to organised anarchies, and suggests restricting the analysis to a specific referent and do what Karl Weick calls 'a fine-grained analysis of a limited aspect of the organisation'.

Cameron's 'six critical questions' are worth examining in the context of youth work:

1. 'What domain of activity should be the focus of the evaluation?' Little attempt has been made to empirically determine some defensible dimensions of youth work practice. Some of the least contentious might be:

(a) the satisfaction experienced by youth club members; their parents; the youth workers; the local community.

(b) the development of members - some immeasurable and others, like success in sports events, more quantifiable.

(c) effect on local community life; reduction of vandalism, or annoyance caused by motor cycles arriving at the youth centre.

(d) personal and professional development of the youth workers.

(e) ability to acquire resources from the LEA, community, members, sponsorship.

(f) organisational health - 'the benevolence, vitality and viability in the internal processes and practices at the institution'. (Cameron, 1981)

Cameron's point is simply that it would be foolish to attempt an evaluation of an entire youth organisation's operation in one go. It *would* be feasible to investigate, say, changes in teenagers perceptions of gender roles or the effect of a new coach on the performance of a basketball team - Weick's 'fine grained analysis' of one aspect of the work.

2. 'Whose perspective, or which constituency's point of

view should be considered?' Any evaluation reflects the values of a particular constituency. The perspectives of youth club members, their parents, the local community, the staff, the local authority officers and employers would all be pertinent, and would be very different. The effect of the poll tax or community charge (depending on your politics) will be to focus public attention on what value for money they obtain from the services they pay for, so attempting to measure parental support might be a prudent public relations move for a youth centre.

3. 'What level of analysis should be used?' Individual young people and staff? Particular centres? The whole organisation? I suspect that youth work in most LEAs and voluntary organisations is so loosely coupled that any analysis above individual centre level would be fraught with ambiguities.

4. 'What time frame should be employed?' Youth work is naturally developmental in nature, and growth in young people is obviously not apparent overnight. On the other hand, the population of youth centres is transitory (and attendance is voluntary - sometimes on a casual drop-in basis) so the time-frame could not be too long if the data were to be captured accurately.

5. 'What type of data should be used?' Objective or subjective/perceptual? This would depend on the domain as well as on the nature of the enquiry. As part of the tradition of youth work is to accept, and indeed relish, individual perceptual differences, it may be that dealing with subjective data would present less difficulties than might be experienced in other sectors of education.

6. 'What referent should be employed?' What should the indicators be judged against? Cameron lists some possibilities:

(a) Comparative (of another organisation). Memberships and attendances of youth centres have traditionally been compared, and resource allocation is based on it in many LEAs. As Cameron himself points out, however, workers in organised anarchies are liable to point out that their own operation is unique and can't be compared with any other. Self-interest being what it is, they only do this when the comparison shows them in a poor light!

(b) normative (of a theoretical ideal). This is difficult if an ideal standard can't be defined, and few acceptable 'norms' could be constructed for youth work.

(c) goal-centred (where goals attained?). Difficult where goals are confused or not measurable, and again youth work goals are notoriously ambiguous as outlined above.

(d) improvement (have we improved since last year?). This has been used covertly and often overtly in youth work for some time. 'Getting one's numbers up' is a traditional source of job satisfaction for youth workers.

Similarly, trying to measure some characteristic in young people before and after the 'treatment' would be fraught with difficulties. This 'agricultural-botany' model is deliciously parodied by Hamilton et. al. (1977):

An agricultural-botany evaluator is rather like a critic who reviews a production on the basis of the script and applause-metre readings, having missed the performance.

(e) trait (on the basis of static characteristics independent

of performance on indicators). This would need the characteristics of 'effective youth work' to be defined by a 'panel of experts' against which individual pieces of youth work could be judged. The absence of consensus about what the purposes of youth work should be might make this difficult. Cameron (1980) also points out the danger:

The choice of criteria places boundaries around the concept of effectiveness and gives it a specific referent . . . These choices, however, are frequently made on the basis of self-interest, tradition, or personal bias because those making them don't have a clear idea of the pertinent criteria of effectiveness . . . they evaluate their organisations on the basis of criteria that justify what they have already done . . .

Multiple Factor Frameworks

Writers like Miller (1979) and Antia (1976) reject the notion that the effectiveness of institutions can be reduced to a few tidy measurable indices. Miller produced normative lists of aspects of academic enterprise. Antia determined empirically what he called Critical Success Factors, in the context of the performance of a polytechnic.

Again, the lack of clear consensus as to what constitutes 'good' youth work renders this model difficult, although the construction of a list of defensible aspects or factors would be challenging. The multiple factor approach would lead itself perhaps to the assessment of the more mundane aspects of youth work - attendance and retention rates, catering turn-over and so on.

Increasingly, however, local authority youth services are developing policy statements, mission statements and so on, and where these are focussed and clear, it should be possible to derive from them some critical success factors.

Product Outcomes

What does it cost to produce a 'socially educated' young person? I can think of little merit for this model, although there may be strictly limited use when there is an end-product, such as a young person with a Duke of Edinburgh's Silver Award. It might be interesting to compare from the accountant's perspective, for example, the relative merits of spending £x on a full-time youth worker compared to spending the same sum on a range of part-time workers.

System Resource

Yuchtman & Seashore (1967). 'An organisation is effective if it succeeds in attracting the resources it needs to keep going'. This would be an interesting model for voluntary youth organisations, which have to rely on fund-raising, commercial sponsorship, patronage and business enterprise for their survival, although its use for a local authority service is rather limited - for example there are limitations on the extent to which centres are permitted to hire out their premises or engage in other entrepreneurial activities. It is becoming clear that many LEAs are extending the Local Financial Management requirements of the Education Reform Act to youth centres. The system resource model may become disturbingly relevant!

Cameron's example to show the weakness of the systems

resource model (of an underdog sports team which manages to win) has interesting parallels in youth work, where a small rural youth centre with next to no resources is often valued very highly by the local community.

The Youth Service as an Organised Anarchy

It is perhaps worth looking at Cameron's characteristics of organised anarchies to see if they 'fit' the organisation and delivery of youth services.

1. 'Goals ill-defined, complex, changing & contradictory.' Subunits may pursue goals unrelated to general organisation goals. The goals of individual youth centres are often heavily influenced by the interests of the person in charge - be it sports, anti-racist work, participation, outdoor education, discos and entertainment, or 'keep 'em off the streets'. Certainly there are staff at opposite contradictory ends of the 'political' spectrum, with some that believe youth work is about containment and social control, while others see it as being about personal and political liberation from a corrupt system.

2. 'Means-ends connections not clear'. There has never been any evidence (that I am aware of) that increasing resources improves the effectiveness of the youth work it funds. It would be very difficult to establish (or to disprove) that better premises or more staff would produce any measurable improvement on the usual indicators.

3. 'More than one strategy can produce the same outcome'. e.g. teaching methods don't seem to affect how well students learn. This fits youth work perfectly, where similar sorts of 'personal growth' can be stimulated in young people by work as varied as intensive group work, outdoor challenge, involvement in a drama production or a camping trip abroad.

4. 'Little feedback from output to input or feedforward from inputs to outputs'. Information exchange is poor. This is not so true at an institutional level as at the LEA level, where for example results of survey research or of course evaluations are rarely used to inform the planning process.

5. 'Subunits are not tightly connected, so external influences are partitioned among them'. 'Let someone else worry about it.' Trouble-spots are usually contained in a few of the sub-units. The centres delivering youth work are 'loosely-coupled'.

6. 'Widely different criteria of success operate simultaneously in various parts of the organisation'. Again, the different strands of youth work make this very true, so that in one, area health education and participation in decision-making are seen as central and in another, sports coaching and developing rural communities are taken to be the priorities.

7. 'Ambiguous connection between the organisation's structure and its activities'. e.g. rigid structures are imposed on fuzzy processes. Part of the ethic of youth work is a person-centred, personal growth-based, participatory style of working, yet many LEAs' methods of managing youth centres are autocratic, budget-based and strictly top-down.

There are limited aspects of the bureaucratic and collegial models that seem appropriate, but it seems to me that the

organised anarchy framework most closely fits the way youth work is often delivered.

Conclusions

This section attempts to summarise the above and to suggest guidelines when the effectiveness of youth work delivery is being assessed:

1. The work of writers such as Weick and Cameron show that it is perfectly possible to investigate the effectiveness of organisations lacking clear goals and structures.

2. Of the paradigms available, multiple constituency and behavioural models are most likely to be fruitful. These may be usefully be augmented with concepts and techniques from phenomenological frameworks.

3. Variations on the systems resource model should be attractive in evaluating the youth work delivered by voluntary youth organisations. If future legislation extends the Government's school, F.E. and H.E. policies to include youth work it may be of increasing utility in the public sector as well.

Good youth work is often ephemeral, even mysterious, and many youth workers would endorse Maurice Holt's view that:

In a high technology society, it is too easy to be mesmerised by functional analysis and forget that education depends on human perception and understanding.

(Holt, 1981)

Footnote

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Learning from experience - Issues in community and youth work research

**MURIEL SAWBRIDGE and
JEAN SPENCE**

In the latter part of 1987 we commenced a research project into the work experiences of women in full time, LEA funded community and youth

work in the Northern Region. It is now nearing completion and in this article we want to explore some of the central methodological issues which have been encountered along the way. We believe our experience highlights real dilemmas for anyone wishing to embark on research in community and youth work and points out some of the ways research could be facilitated by changes in working practices within employing organisations.

We should point out that what follows is not a reflection of any particular individual or institution, nor we believe on the Northern Region per se. In fact we strongly suspect that we are describing a national scene which stems from the peculiarities of community and youth work as it is currently conceived and organised. What follows seems to us to also be indicative of research methodology in general, raising fundamental questions about the ways and the conditions in which one can arrive at valid evidence in a value laden field of activity with diverse approaches to systems and content.

It is probably best to start with our motivations in launching the research and why we wanted to tackle it in particular ways. As tutors on the community and youth work courses at Sunderland and Durham we were aware that the number of women being trained had over the years increased dramatically partly as a result of recruitment policies operated by the courses but also, and possibly more crucially because they were being given employment and training opportunities by employers. It also seemed that, after qualifications, they were being appointed more easily to jobs.

We started asking the simple question, 'What is the experience of women in the work today, particularly given the heightened profile of anti-sexist practice in community and youth work?' We also wondered how women's terms and conditions of employment compared with those of men, whether they were featuring more prominently in staff teams, and whether they and their employers could detect the kind of differences that we had encountered as a result of more women on the courses.

There were all kinds of other questions we wanted to explore such as the impact of child care and other domestic issues, the degree to which women had career ambitions and the experience of management structures and work practices in general. Fundamentally, we were seeking information about whether or not the apparent increasing

feminisation of the workforce had impacted on the conditions of work.

It is important to note that we were not interested in conducting

a piece of abstract academic research without application to practice. We were clear that the central purpose of the research was to make informed comment which might influence policy regarding the way women (and ultimately men) are employed and supported in their work. In this sense our work was not value free from the start. It also seemed to us that research of this nature is essential if the practice implications of documents such as 'Youth Work With Girls and Young Women' recently published by the DES (Welsh Office) are to move beyond the printed word.

At the same time we were hopeful that our findings might contribute to the wider debate about the kind of conditions which need to exist in the promotion of practices which help women to take a fuller part in the workforce in general. In other words we were seeking to identify what might be anti-sexist practice in employment per se.

Insofar as this research had a purpose in terms of policy outcomes relevant to a particular group, we were conscious that much of our thinking was influenced by a number of philosophers and researchers who argue for a feminist perspective in social science research (Roberts et al 1981, Harding 1988, Stanley and Wise 1985 and Wilkinson et al 1986). Our position is well summarised by Wilkinson who sees feminist research 'as an exploration of womens' own knowledge in a disciplined, scholarly and rigorous way. A female perspective is to be regarded as central to the research, not as an additional or comparative viewpoint', and 'that feminist research is not simply an extension of traditional research in non-sexist ways, and/or including topics or relevance to women; rather it entails a critical evaluation of the research process, in terms of its adequacy in tapping women's experience'.

There is a disjunction, we feel, between doing social science research as an 'objective' outsider and working in a context where the researcher is aware of and part of internal debates and professional concepts. There is need for more debate about research methodology within the context of researcher involvement and research geared to policy and practice. In our case the concept of participation is crucial. It was clear from the early stages that unless we pursued a methodology which took into consideration the level of power and control of women workers as participants we would be unsuccessful in our efforts.

As the project developed it became increasingly apparent

that women and their influence in shaping the research was central and that to engage in a similar process with male employers would be a denial of the relative powerlessness of women in community and youth work today. We believe that without this women workers would not have been so sympathetic to the project. In fact the only time when we encountered suspicion and a degree of anger was when it appeared that we had not considered fully issues of power, control and participation.

Whilst recognising the importance of sensitivity to community and youth work concerns there was and is a tension for us, coming from a social science research background. This background stressed objectivity and neutrality yet we know that our closeness to and involvement in the practice was an important element in our findings. In fact we are firmly of the opinion that it was important that we were 'inside the situation' not only in terms of our connection with community and youth work practice but also because we are also women workers.

This affected the way the research was conceived and conducted. It meant that the distance issues rooted in notions of neutrality and value freedom were a major element in our thinking in a way that would not necessarily trouble researchers who could take such notions for granted. This served to make us more cautious about the way evidence is interpreted.

Another important factor in the research was our relationship to each other and the institutional context in which we work. As tutors on the two full-time, initial qualifying courses in the Region we had co-operated on many projects in the past, not least as co-workers on the editorial board of *Youth and Policy Journal*. The fact that one of us worked in a polytechnic and the other in a university was also an attraction though it proved to present many practical problems. The kind of on the hoof contact that working together daily could offer was not a luxury we enjoyed. On the other hand, the effort of co-ordinating two busy timetables did mean that we were forced to maximise our time. It has left us with questions however about how co-workers organise themselves productively. There seems to us to be a need for experienced co-researchers and writers to share their methodology in the hope of encouraging more collective work.

It was evident early on that there were marked differences in the time allocated and in resources generally given to research in the polytechnic as compared to the university with far more encouragement and legitimation given to it in the latter. It is also the case that these differences pale into insignificance when the reality of teaching on community and youth work courses is taken into account. Here the institutional location was not a factor. The labour intensive nature of the teaching and tutorial processes and the heavy administrative load that comes with this kind of course is a far more important consideration in relation to time available for research. The fact that both courses are geared to non-traditional higher education students only serves to emphasise this point and applied to us equally. We agree with Jeffs and Smith (1988) that there is relatively low productivity in research and publication by

training agency tutors. Our experience in research suggests that there is much to gain both personally and professionally from such work. However until the labour intensive nature of community and youth work training and the time consuming nature of research is fully taken into account at an institutional level it is difficult to see how output can be increased.

In our case the time pressures of work significantly affected what we could achieve, particularly in relation to the scale of the project. Because of delays in receiving vital contact information some of the interviews we intended to conduct couldn't take place without seriously extending the project further. Whereas it had been our intention to present a snapshot of work practices and attitudes, the length of time it took us to do the research (two years instead of one) has led us to produce a series of images over time.

We are confident, however, that these time factors did not seriously challenge the validity of the results. Some of the points made by women during interviews were repeated so frequently that increasing the number of interviews would not have affected the significance of the evidence. In addition, many of the situations we observed and heard about had been in operation for many years and in our opinion would, without a determined change strategy, continue for many years.

Defining the Catchment

Bearing in mind our concerns about participation and the practical realities outlined above it was necessary to make some tough decisions about the catchment of workers we would approach. The first decision was to concentrate on women in full time employment, which leaves out the valuable insights that part time workers could offer. The second decision was to concentrate on workers deemed by Principal Youth Officers to be members of their staff even if the agency in which they worked was a grant aided voluntary organisation.

This of course presents problems on a number of levels not least that some voluntary organisations were 'represented' and others not.

Workers employed in other relevant statutory authorities such as Intermediate Treatment were not included at all and once again, as is so often the case - the voluntary sector proved to be so diverse and inaccessible that we felt forced to operate exclusively through L.E.A. structures.

We were also presented with problems about how far one should interfere with the main methodology in order to ensure overall representation in the regional catchment. In one local authority the response from women workers prepared to be interviewed was surprisingly very low and we were tempted to set up a process to find out why. In the end we decided that it was not appropriate, partly because we were not exploring non response in other areas, partly because we didn't have the time to work out a suitable way of approaching this issue.

However, we have strong suspicions that a key part of the explanation was how we communicated with the women concerned. We did this in writing, expecting the return of reply slips and then only contacting those who replied. It could be that this is alien to the usual communication

methods of many workers or it could be the way in which we presented our ideas about the research.

Consultations with Principal Participants

Attempts at consultation were also problematic. We decided to write to every full time L.E.A. funded woman worker in the Northern Region, explain the purpose of the research and invite them to one of a series of locally based meetings before we finalised the questionnaire. In one local authority we were unable to do this because we were told, that our request for contact addresses and other information (to be used in our research anonymously) was viewed by the authority as confidential. We later learnt that a list of contact addresses of all community and youth work staff for this authority was available to all and sundry in the public library.

Although all the other authorities in the region were able to offer full co-operation, it did highlight to us the need for more consultation with employers particularly in terms of understanding when the least inconvenient time might be in which to seek information. Our requests coincided with the JNC regrading of all staff which we thought might mean that senior staff would have all the latest information at their finger tips but we misjudged the length of time it would take and the sensitivity of that process and would now wish to avoid adding to the burdens of staff at a difficult time.

The consultation meetings that did occur were extremely helpful in the main in extending the list of questions and in fleshing out our reasons for undertaking the research. We were rather nonplussed at one of them to have our motivation in terms of academic advancement questioned and rather pleased to be able to give assurances that neither of us was pursuing the research for higher degree purposes. However, it did serve to remind us of the suspicions that can surround the research process. It also raises questions about the value placed on research by those who gave their time to participate.

The major difficulty we had in the consultation meetings however was in working out how representative those attending were as regards the total female workforce. About 25% of the potential workforce attended the meetings in the larger authorities. Knowing the area as we do we were surprised by some absences from the meetings by women who had registered interest in the research and could only speculate as to the cause. In one authority we are fairly certain it was because of ideological splits about feminism in the workforce and it related to the history of feminist community and youth work in that area. In others it was perhaps more to do with the timing of meetings, workers' priorities and the general pressures of work.

Yet having said this, the issues raised by the women who did attend the meetings were so similar and so often overlapped that we assume that the question of numbers was not the most significant factor. This was borne out by the sympathetic response we received to the interview schedule, which was devised almost completely upon what the women involved in the consultation meetings said were their concerns. Our overall feeling of the consultation process was how necessary it was for achieving a relevant

and significant questionnaire design. In addition, it seemed to encourage a more positive response from the women themselves than might otherwise have been the case. On the other hand, it was extremely difficult to consult in a comprehensive sense and a 25% response rate to consultation meetings might not have been adequate if the research had been dealing with more contentious matters. It has already been mentioned that we did not engage in in-depth consultation processes with employers because of prioritising women workers. Whether in the light of our experience we should have done or could have done without compromising the research is still a subject of debate between us.

Access to and Understanding the Data:

Written Data

We asked all Principal Youth Officers or their equivalent to supply data, all of which was completely anonymous, except for the contact addresses of all the full time women workers deemed by them to be in the employ of the community and youth work section. The anonymous data included the following: job titles, qualifications, length of service and salary grade of all men and women community and youth work staff. All the local authorities except one provided the data at a very difficult time for them and we are very grateful for their co-operation.

We expected this to be the easiest part of the research, but this proved not to be the case. The data presented enormous problems of analysis. Although some, in regard to salary grade, was due to the timing of our research, clashing as it did with the regrading process, this was not the fundamental problem. Salary, job title and qualification data was severely problematic for comparative research purposes. We discovered to our dismay that something in excess of 50 different job titles are used across the region. Most of them seemed to be describing broadly similar jobs but we cannot be absolutely sure that this is the case. Our categorising of these jobs depends to a large extent, once again, upon our prior knowledge.

We are not sure what this must mean within organisations particularly in terms of staff development policy. It clearly presents problems for anyone applying for jobs in the region in trying to assess the difference between, for example, a community education worker and a youth leader. It certainly has implications for any community and youth research at a national level which seeks to standardise data or which involves comparative analysis.

In one instance important parts of the data were not centrally available, being lodged, we understand, with local management committees. Despite good will in relation to its collection it is still not available. As has been said earlier we were in another instance flatly refused access to the data which would have facilitated comparison of gender, age, length of service, qualification and salary.

Similar problems emerge in regard to salary. There is clearly a lot of discretion on the part of employers about salary grade and more confusingly, points on the scale. A lot of this is historical and results from the confused nature of what was and is seen as appropriate qualification. It is also affected by individual judgments about how one post

compares to another. The use of APT, Soulbury, JNC and Burnham codes was difficult for us to understand without considerable in depth work with each local authority. The elaborate scaling within the grades was almost impossible to decipher in the time and resource allocation available to us.

The implications of this for regional and national workforce planning purposes and for staff relations is difficult to calculate. It clearly calls into question the efficacy of national workforce planning surveys such as those conducted by Kuper (1984) and Jardine (1989). Our impressions that the centralised data in local authorities which is the bedrock of workforce planning is limited in its usefulness and requires informed interpretation. We also believe that there are major problems in defining accurate and comparable job descriptions and titles and we are not confident that the new regrading system has ironed out the inconsistencies in the reward system for comparative jobs. What we do know from our interviews with women workers is there is a widespread feeling of unfairness inherent in the salary structure.

Interview Data

The intended method to be employed was via individual interviews with women who had agreed to participate and with all the Principal Youth and Community Officers or their equivalent in the Region. The interviews would be based on open ended questionnaires lasting about two hours and audio taped for reference purposes. All of the interviews were conducted on site in the workers' or officers' own work place, the interviewing load divided equally between us.

At the time of the research two of the areas in the region did not have a clearly defined community and youth work section and there was no suitable person of comparable status and expertise that we could approach. It also proved to be impossible to interview one of the Principal Youth Officers in the time constraints of the research. This meant that we interviewed 6 out of the 9 senior officers and out of a potential catchment of 85 women workers the positive response rate was 57% from which 51% were interviewed. The disparity between the response and interview rate was due to a variety of factors including staff moving out of the area, absence due to illness, maternity leave and holidays and lack of researcher time.

Interviewing women workers

Apart from the well known problems of interpretation of open ended questionnaires another aspect which exercised our minds was whether the division of labour which we operated affected the findings. In fact there proved to be remarkable similarity in experience and findings. The women concerned were open and clearly wanting to use the interview to express issues that seemed long suppressed. Indeed there was a strong feeling of the interviews providing an outlet for the reflection and analysis one would expect from supervision. A number of women, without us soliciting their opinion, said that the interview had been a useful and enjoyable experience, had made them think and most importantly, had given them an

opportunity to talk about things about which they were generally silent.

The ease of the interviews contrasted very strongly with the difficulty of making contact and setting up the research. We are convinced as a result of this experience that a key part of the positive participation in the interviews was the use of open ended questionnaire methods, of a commitment to confidentiality and the fact that we are women. In fact it was hard to separate out in our minds the skills we use in the tutorial and supervisory function that we perform in other areas of our lives and the skills necessary for this research process. The participatory method enabled the interviewer and interviewee to explore issues and extend their thinking. In this sense, good community and youth work practice is in our view entirely compatible with sound action research methodology. The importance of women finding the time and the opportunity to explore issues significant to them as women in the work was also reinforced by our experiences.

Interviewing Principal Officers

All of the officers interviewed were men, most of whom had been in post for over ten years. They were not consulted about the content of the research yet had given unstinting co-operation to the project. Whether this is due to the fact that we are known to them, or because our institutions are respected in the area is difficult to determine. We would have understood any tentativeness on their part. They knew we had been interviewing the women workers for whom they had managerial responsibility. They were also aware of our feminist perspective. Yet at no point did they question our motives. Their understandable keenness for feedback was tempered by total acknowledgement of our need to preserve the confidentiality of the women who participated. The officers we interviewed shared frankly with us the issues as they saw them. In a similar way to the women we interviewed, the officers seemed to use the process to reflect on their work, and in one case recognised his own inconsistency as a result of the interview.

It is evident that interviews based on open ended questionnaires without too much restriction on time limits, have a very clear action component to them. People use them to not only declare their current thinking but to develop and extend their understanding as well. It must also be said that so little time is given to reflection in community and youth work, so much of the work is about doing, that setting time aside to be interviewed is itself a positive process.

Conclusions

There are real concerns in conducting systematic research in community and youth work. There are important issues about who defines what is significant to research. It may well have been the case that if we had consulted employers about the focus of the research they may not have agreed with our priorities, which arose from our own interests and concerns as trainers and feminists. There is also the pressure of teaching on community and youth work courses which makes it difficult for training agency staff, to isolate sufficient time to do research based on lengthy

interviews. How much more difficult must it be for fieldworkers themselves to conduct research. Yet, in our view, it is crucial that insiders do the work. There is perhaps an argument here for evaluation and research to be built more formally into the community and youth work agenda.

There are serious problems about the adequacy of data and the manner in which it is kept and made accessible, not only for research purposes but also, we suggest, for managerial planning and control. If community and youth work is going to be taken more seriously in national policy concerns and if we are seeking a coherent service, improvements in the quality of the information base must be a priority. Whilst we recognise that the situation as it presents itself is a result of local government and the individuality of local services, which we would seek to preserve, some national guidelines for the systematic collection and storing of information would be of great benefit in terms of comparative analysis, planning and a fairer distribution of resources.

The question of participation in research needs closer scrutiny not only in terms of the problems it presents in time allocation and reconciling conflicts but also in terms of its positive contribution to research that had meaning to the participants. It could well be that community and youth work, because it is so far ahead of other helping professions in thinking out the theory and practice of participation could lead the way in the methodological debate necessary. The research issues raised here are, we believe, comparable with those emerging in feminist research. As has been noted earlier, the best practice in community and youth work as articulated in its rhetoric is entirely consistent with feminist practice in the work.

The fact that we are women, researching the experience of women in a profession of which we are members was

a key and essential element in the quality of results we obtained from the interviews. We are convinced that someone outside community and youth work, particularly if they were men would not have been able to utilise the contacts with women workers in the same way.

The action component of the interviews, whereby people appeared to be using them to reflect and extend their thinking and in some instances to work out strategies of action, clearly indicates positive and constructive use of this method. The subsequent complexities of analysing the data from such interviews is problematic but in our view is worthwhile in terms of overall input into the field. It seems to us that the most valid method available must be one which blends good community and adult education methods, rooted in participative practice. This includes actively seeking to involve people in defining the issues to be researched, and extending their knowledge and skills in the process. The task for the researcher is to maintain the relationship between the information received and the information givers. We are currently working on ways of analysing and disseminating the information thus gathered, in a way which will sustain the intent of the research.

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Disadvantaged Youth and the Labour Market: The case of community industry in the lower Clyde area

MARY ANNE HEAFEY and
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Introduction

Waves of sentiment ebb and flow in relation to the problems of the labour market in much the same way as the stock markets move between bear and bull outlooks. The only real difference is that the cycle of change takes less time to move through the stock markets. The 1980s has been the decade of the 'youth problem' in labour market terms, and yet as it comes to an end the crisis has now apparently shifted to employers unable to recruit sufficient school leavers (NEDO, 1988).

Whereas the declining numbers of school leavers will reduce the level of unemployment among young people, assuming no collapse of the labour market in general terms, there may be a limited impact on the most disadvantaged youngsters. Commonly conceptualised as the bottom 10 per cent, this group has always faced problems on entering the labour market, whether in good times or bad. According to Casson (1979) the characteristics of youth unemployment have altered little in the 70 years since the subject was first seriously investigated. Then as now the greatest burden of unemployment was borne by those who were disadvantaged in some way, whether in the form of a physical or mental disability, limited qualifications or difficult home backgrounds.

When the labour market is more buoyant, the group under discussion, may be known as 'the careerless' (Ashton and Field, 1976), exhibiting a high frequency of job changing on entering the labour market, setting a pattern for later working life. This can be viewed as a symptom of extreme difficulty in coping with the working situation. Ashton and Field characterise these youngsters as a group brought up in a world of the present demands of the immediate situation; day to day survival is so important that they are not given the opportunity to consider the longer term consequences of their actions:-

The jobs these youngsters will enter are likely to be routine and fragmentary in nature, perhaps involving boredom and a lack of autonomy and authority. So long as the labour market is good, they may be able to leave a first job quite easily if disliked and find another with relative ease.

(Ashton and Field: 1976 p.47).

In times of recession however, it is this group of young people which is susceptible to prolonged unemployment. Youth unemployment, like adult unemployment, tends to fall disproportionately on particular groups.

For the most disadvantaged youngsters the problems are not just in relation to finding employment. Although the

Youth Training Scheme (YTS) was introduced on a comprehensive basis in 1983 and extended to a two year programme in 1986 it has catered

most effectively for the more advantaged school leavers. Research on YTS suggests that it has found difficulty in catering for a particular group given the dominance of employer-based provision (Lee & Wrench, 1984; Cockburn 1987). These youngsters have been more likely to find themselves in local authority premium provision, community workshops or unemployment.

What is missing from the current debate on trends in the youth labour market is a realisation of the major opportunity presented by the fall in the numbers of school leavers. The increased competition between employers for a shrinking pool of new labour could give the more disadvantaged youngster a greater chance of establishing a secure foothold in the labour market. However, turning the opportunity into a reality is not a straightforward process. There needs to be a concerted and systematic effort to use the window created by demographic change to create secure platforms for disadvantaged young people entering the labour market.

The problem is how best to go about this. Although these youngsters form a distinctive segment of the labour market there is little in the way of systematic research on the nature of their problem or effective initiatives for tackling it. This paper reports on a study carried out in the spring of 1988 in the West of Scotland into the Community Industry (CI) Scheme. CI was set up nationally in the early 1970s to provide training and work experience for disadvantaged young people. The fact that it was established in a period of relative labour market buoyancy is an indicator of the permanency of the labour market problem that these young people face.

The paper begins by providing some details on the operation of CI in the Lower Clyde area, helping to communicate the local flavour of this national scheme. This is followed by a short discussion of the nature of the local economy. The assessment of CI in this locality begins with an analysis of some statistical information on youngsters leaving the scheme during 1986-87. This quantitative analysis is followed by a broad-ranging discussion based on semi-structured interviews with members of staff and a small sample of young people nearing the end of their time with CI in the Lower Clyde area. These quantitative and qualitative assessments lead on to a consideration of changes which need to be made to enhance employability and make the most of the opportunities

which may present themselves.

Aims of the Scheme

CI was first established in 1971, the brainchild of the National Association of Youth Clubs. Its objectives were to provide for young people between the ages of 17 and 19, suffering from a range of personal or social disadvantages having difficulty in finding suitable employment or training opportunities. It currently has around 7000 'young employees'. This figure has remained roughly constant since its inception.

In April 1983 it became a company limited by guarantee and was granted charitable status later the same year. CI central office is headed by a Chief Executive, supported by a small team of executive and office staff. It now operates in a wide range of locations throughout Britain with each area office consisting of a manager and a group of specialist staff (Scheme Consultants). A review system operates in each area to consider the progress of young employees throughout their time with CI. As with YTS Careers Offices are the principal source of recruitment. Local authorities in each area provide accommodation as well as the tools and transport to carry out the job and a grant is administered by the Department of Employment. CI was established in the Lower Clyde area in 1973. It provided for around 150 young people annually. Of the youngsters joining the scheme in the Lower Clyde area in the 1986-7 period, all had educational problems in terms of limited qualifications and the great majority were disadvantaged in terms of other indicators. (See Table 1). Despite their youth, as many as 76 per cent had been previously long term unemployed. These young people then, appear to suffer multiple disadvantages.

TABLE 1:
Percentages of Lower Clyde CI Participants with Specific Disadvantages (%)

Educational Problems	100
Numeracy/Literacy problems	22
Housing and Environment	96
Health/Physical Disability	9
Health/Mental Disability	1
Family Unemployment	48
Family Problems	34
Single Parent Families	41
Criminality	49
Long-term Unemployment	76
Unstable Employment/Training Background	76

Source: *Community Industry Lower Clyde Annual Report, 1988.*

One particular feature of the CI scheme is that youngsters are actually given an employment contract. They are known as young employees as opposed to trainees and the emphasis has tended to be on encouraging good work habits rather than following a strict pattern of training. Rates of pay, however, are roughly equivalent to the YTS allowances. Within the scheme young people work on a

particular project, ranging from painting and decorating, metal workshops, joinery and soft toy workshop to graphics and office work. Work is undertaken usually for local organisations and charities. It must be to the benefit of the community and satisfy the condition that it could not be undertaken without the help of CI.

It should perhaps be stressed that although CI was set up to provide employment experience for disadvantaged young people, this is not the overriding objective. The original objective of CI was to provide a caring environment for these young people, and so create some degree of stability in their lives. In the Lower Clyde area the tendency has been to stress this caring role, by conveying to the youngsters that they are involved and have a contribution to make. With the collapse of the youth labour market in the late 1970s, the percentages of youngsters finding employment after CI went into decline. This together with the increased emphasis more generally on value for money, means a greater stress has been placed within the national organisation on ensuring that youngsters are sufficiently equipped in terms of skills and work experience to attempt a successful entry into employment. In the case-study area, however, a lot of effort still goes into tackling the social dimensions of disadvantage.

Although this partly reflects a particular perspective on how best to meet the needs of disadvantaged young people it may also derive from the very difficult labour market environment in the Lower Clyde area. The two main urban centres within the area are Greenock/Port Glasgow and Paisley. The former is a community dominated traditionally by shipbuilding and heavy engineering which has suffered savage job losses in the last two decades. Although Paisley has a more diversified job base it too suffers from relatively high unemployment. At the time of the study the unemployment rate was around 14 per cent in Paisley and 19 per cent in Greenock/Port Glasgow. These figures can be contrasted with a rate of just over 9 per cent for Britain as a whole.

Labour Market Destinations of 1986-87 Leavers

Bearing in mind the disadvantages of the young people and the high rates of local unemployment, we now turn to consider the labour market positions of those young people leaving CI during 1986-87. Young people were contacted by means of a postal survey and 76 useable returns were achieved, a response rate of around 50 per cent. This can be considered a reasonable success considering the client group and the problems usually associated with postal surveys. At the point of contact the status of former CI participants (as detailed in Table 2) was dominated by unemployment. Around two-thirds were unemployed with the figures slightly higher for the boys relative to the girls. However employment among girls was much higher than that among boys, the difference being a full 22 per cent. Male employment has suffered disproportionately in the decline of the local economic base which was dominated by the traditionally male ship-building and heavy engineering sectors. Recent years have seen an increase in the retail and electronics sectors, both of which tend to employ large proportions of women. However,

information was not available on part-time employment and this may explain partly the difference between boys and girls. It has also to be noted that the sample of girls is relatively small.

TABLE 2:
Status of Former CI Participants at Survey
(Percentages in brackets)

<i>Status at Survey</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Employed	10(18)	8(40)
Unemployed	39(70)	12(60)
Other Schemes	4(7)	—
Other	3(5)	—
	56(100)	20(100)

Source: Postal Survey

For comparative purpose Table 3 shows the results of a post-training survey carried out in broadly the same locality but dealing with European Social Fund (ESF) training for the adult unemployed. The percentages unemployed are lower for the adults but in part at least this reflects the greater significance of self-employment. This is a very restricted option for the young. Indeed, within the sample of adult former trainees only 6 per cent of the under 25s went into self-employment compared to 18 per cent of the over 45s. The higher proportion of females finding work squares with the results for former CI participants.

TABLE 3:
Status at Interview of former ESF Trainees
(Percentages)

<i>Status at Survey</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Employed	31	47
Self Employed	11	5
Unemployed	47	26
Training & Other Schemes	8	11
Other	3	11

Source: McGregor et al. (1988)

The importance of the comparison is that it provides a yardstick against which to assess CI's performance in the Lower Clyde area. Taken in isolation placement rates of 18 per cent for boys and 40 per cent for girls do not look good. Set against the findings for adults, most of whom have already learned relevant skills and gained work experience the CI placement rates are shown in a better light. The fundamental problem faced by both CI and ESF trainees is the depressed state of the local economy in areas like Clydeside.

Returning to the issue of the gender difference in placement rates of former CI participants, this may reflect a greater exposure of the boys to the problem of long-term

unemployment prior to joining CI. Table 4 shows that only 15 per cent of the girls had been out of work for a year or more compared to 38 per cent of the boys. In effect, the incidence of long-term unemployment was well over twice as great among the boys. The issue here is the tendency for longer-term unemployed trainees to find it relatively more difficult to find work once their training course is completed.

TABLE 4:
Length of Unemployment before CI
(Percentages in brackets)

<i>Unemployment Duration</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
0-6 months	14(26)	8(40)
6-12 months	19(36)	9(45)
12 months plus	20(38)	3(15)
	53(100)	20(100)

Source: Postal Survey

Table 5 sets out the relationship between employment status at the time of the survey and length of unemployment experience prior to joining CI. One of the key influences on the proportions finding work is clearly long-term unemployment prior to entering the scheme. Whereas 41 per cent of the short-term unemployed (under 6 months) young people were in a job at the point of contact, the corresponding figures for the longer term unemployed were 18 per cent (6 to 12 months unemployed) and 13 per cent (12 months plus unemployed). This shows the sensitivity of the overall placement rate to the background of youngsters recruited. Low placement rates will often reflect a situation where the young people with the greatest labour market difficulties are recruited. By restriction recruitment to the short-term unemployed youngsters, CI in the Lower Clyde area could readily have raised its placement rates to over 40 per cent.

TABLE 5:
Status at Survey by Unemployment duration
prior to CI
(Percentages in brackets)

<i>status at Survey</i>	<i>Unemployment Duration (months)</i>		
	<i>Up to 6</i>	<i>6-12</i>	<i>12 plus</i>
Employed	9(41)	5(18)	3(13)
Unemployed	12(55)	18(64)	19(83)
Other Schemes	—	4(14)	—
Other	1(5)	1(4)	1(4)
	22(101)	28(100)	23(100)

Source: Postal Survey

Finally in this section, we consider the impact of the type of employment experience provided by CI on the post CI status of young employees. As shown in Table 6 the percentages finding work appear to vary quite strikingly

across different project areas. However the numbers in individual project types are quite small and the resultant percentages need to be treated with caution. Nevertheless the proportion finding work from metal working and joinery projects is almost twice the figure achieved by

young people whose project area was painting and decorating. Similarly the percentage placed from soft toy/knitting projects was more than three times greater than the placement performance of young people from catering projects.

TABLE 6:
Status at Survey by Project Type (Percentage)

Status	Painting/ Decorating	Metalwork/ Joinery	Soft toy/ Knitting	Catering	Stores/ Gardening
Employed	17	32	38	11	29
Unemployed	69	64	50	89	43
Training on other schemes	7	5	—	—	29
Other	7	—	13	—	—
Absolute Numbers	23	22	8	9	7

Source: Postal Survey

The figures suggest that the monitoring of placement rates by project type might be an important means of assessing and updating the employment and training areas offered to youngsters. However, even this seemingly straightforward conclusion needs to be treated cautiously. Firstly, a particular project may achieve good placement rates when the numbers are small, but fail to sustain this if there is more than a marginal expansion in the number of trainees, reflecting the limited number of employment opportunities in the locality. Secondly, the variation in placement rates according to project type may reflect the characteristics of the youngsters working in that particular area. For example the high placement rate from soft toy/knitting projects may partly reflect the fact that this group was dominated by girls, who tended to have a higher employment rate. As noted placement rates were highly sensitive to length of unemployment experienced prior to joining the scheme.

The Role of the Scheme Consultant

The analysis now takes a step backward into a discussion of the experience of CI as viewed by the young people themselves and their trainers, known technically as scheme consultants. It is with the scheme consultants that we begin. The scheme consultant is the key individual in the supervision and training process within CI. They have daily contact with the young people - transferring skills to them, developing personal confidence and social skills, as well as maintaining discipline. A number of issues were explored with these staff using semi-structured interviews. Scheme consultants were selected for interview mainly on the basis of length of service with CI. All of those interviewed had at least two years experience and the majority in excess of five years. They were thus in a position to give considered judgements on the operation of the scheme in the Lower Clyde area. A logical starting point is the background of the scheme consultants.

Background and Training of Staff

The background of the scheme consultants as a group was extremely varied. Some were skilled tradesmen and women; others had been in the public services. Many had little prior

experience of dealing with young people except through family experiences. However, it was quite clear that they held a deep concern for the young people at CI and a feeling that they were doing something very worthwhile. Given this variety of backgrounds it was perhaps not surprising to find that many felt a need for more training. In particular, the initial training given with CI was felt to be inadequate. On average they had undergone an induction period of around two weeks which consisted of spending some time with the office staff, moving around on the different projects and working with more experienced supervisors. More recently, however, the initial training has been extended to an induction period of one month, including study for a City and Guilds certificate, in how to train young people.

The scheme consultants are not ordinary trainers. They have to be teachers, social workers, counsellors and managers. It may then be surprising that they had received little training for these roles. Beyond induction training, scheme consultants were able to enhance their skills on an on-going basis through the medium of staff development days. In the interviews, staff were critical of these but were unable to articulate specifically the exact nature of their dissatisfaction. Topics for these training days are chosen by the staff themselves and the format is mainly participative. The lack of direction and clarity in the criticisms made by the scheme consultants of the training they received is almost certainly a reflection of the complexity of the job they are asked to carry out and the very varied set of prior learning experiences they bring to this job. There was some consensus that counselling was the most important role of the scheme consultant. Although training had been given in counselling, staff still identified this as an area where more training was needed.

The amount of stress involved in the job was also frequently mentioned, although staff development days had covered this topic in the past. There may be a place for some kind of facility whereby the issues of stress and counselling skills could be addressed on an ongoing basis. Such an ongoing programme could be useful, not just for individual trainers, but for Community Industry as a whole,

contributing to lower staff turnover and a consolidation of expertise and experience.

Training and counselling in stress management is almost certainly not enough. Forging stronger links and relationships *between* scheme consultants must be an important part of dealing with stress. There was a feeling that some members of staff may become isolated because of the distance of some projects from the Greenock head office of CI in the Lower Clyde area. Although the area office staff ensure that each site gets a minimum of at least one visit per week in order to discuss any problems that arise. This does not appear to be enough to create a secure bridge between the core and the periphery of the organisation. Other factors generating stress among scheme consultants were the mix of the groups of trainees and the relatively short period of training. Again, neither of these is susceptible to training solutions.

The final issue on training was the perceived need for ongoing training opportunities to update the vocational skills of the scheme consultants. This was felt to be especially important where there had been advances in technology, or new techniques introduced in a trade or occupational area. This updating training is important at two levels. First, it allows the trainer to maintain his or her professional competence allowing them to return to a job in that area if they so wish. This is important for morale. Secondly, if the youngsters are to have a reasonable opportunity of gaining employment they must be trained in the most up to date techniques of their particular sector. The disadvantages are clearly great enough without receiving outmoded training.

Relationship Between Scheme Consultants and the Young Employee

All the scheme consultants interviewed felt that CI was about more than providing work experience and skill development; rather it was a process of personal development and the key relationship to establish was a caring one. This presented something of a dilemma for staff as they felt that CI as an organisation had been changing towards a greater emphasis on skill rather than personal development. For each project there is a skill development plan for the group of young people to follow. Although the scheme consultants are involved in drawing up these plans they tend to find them difficult to adhere to because of the varying abilities in any one group. This difficulty is probably exacerbated by the size of the groups they have to deal with. Universally it was felt that CI should offer more than just training and work experience.

The development of a caring relationship with the young person was felt to be extremely important in determining the development of the youngster over time. It was this that determined how quickly a youngster would develop both on a personal level and in terms of skill acquisition. Very few of the young people, it was felt, did not need this relationship and would get on as well without it. The building up and maintenance of a caring relationship between the scheme consultant and the youngster was felt to be the main determinant of an effective learning outcome. Discussions with young people confirmed the

importance of the relationship. They had been in training or employment positions before where no relationship of respect and trust had been established. In these circumstances, they felt they had learned little and drifted into a position of more entrenched labour market disadvantages.

Development Profile of Young CI Participants

One of the major reasons for talking to scheme consultants was to gain an insight into the learning and development profile of the young people. In practice this is likely to vary between individuals. The discussion with scheme consultants suggested that it is helpful to think of the young people in terms of three groups:

- (i) those who are keen to learn new skills,
- (ii) those who are at CI because of pressures from family, social workers or benefit officials,
- (iii) those who are genuinely slow to learn.

These groups differ in terms of their learning development profile within CI. Those that want to learn can pick things up straight away and make good progress within less than three months. Those that do not want to learn will take much longer and make little or no progress within the year. Finally, the slower learners tend to be beginning to develop only in the last three months of their stay with CI.

Another perspective on the development profile of the young people can be gained by considering their most productive period at CI as assessed by the scheme consultants. Again it is useful to split them into different groups. Most young people are at their most productive around the middle period of their stay with CI - roughly the middle six months. Those young people for whom discipline is a problem though, will often be disruptive up until around the ninth month, obviously delaying the learning process both for themselves and others. According to the scheme consultants, for both these groups of youngsters, development tails off after around the tenth month, not because the young people have no more to learn, but because of a change of attitude as the end of their association with CI approaches. At this point the young people often become despondent, many feeling that they were just being trained for unemployment. Some youngsters revert to the attitudes and behaviour displayed at the beginning of their stay with CI. Finally, the slower learning group tend to be at their most productive in the last three months of their stay. These young people would still appear to be developing at the point they are forced to leave CI.

Personal Development Through Skill Development

In the interviews with the scheme consultants an attempt was made to distinguish between the two processes of personal development and skill development. However, the consensus view was that these two processes were closely intertwined. Youngsters tended to develop social and personal skills as they acquired a work skill. The acquisition of work skills in themselves would bring a sense of achievement and attract praise, leading to enhanced self esteem. Skill development then appeared to be the key. Along with the change in skill usually came a change in attitude and a growing sense of self worth.

A further part of personal development was to give experienced trainees more responsibility towards the end of their period with CI, often involving them in passing on basic skills, as well as codes of behaviour, to new recruits. This took pressure off staff and meant that they could spend more time with the slower or more difficult individuals, but it also provided a positive feedback for the more experienced young people nurturing leadership qualities, self esteem and a pride in their work. Within the restrictions of a twelve month period it was only the more advanced young people who could benefit from this enhanced personal development. In any extended period, possibly, more of the young people could benefit in a similar way.

Views of Scheme Consultants on Scheme Length

There was a universal pessimism among scheme consultants concerning the employment prospects of the young people leaving CI, not least because of the state of the labour market generally. The broad view was that few of the young people managed to find a job on leaving CI. There were a number of relevant factors. Scheme consultants felt that at the end of a 12 month period with CI there was still a lack of personal development among the young people. The main points raised here were a lack of maturity, social skills and confidence. It was felt that given the age and background of these young people this set of characteristics needed to be introduced, nurtured and reinforced over a much longer period of time. Additionally, at the point of leaving CI these young people were believed to still lack work skills at the standards required by local employers. This pessimism concerning the prospects of young people leaving CI was a major source of low morale in the training system.

The scheme consultants felt that better results could be achieved over a longer period of training. The optimum length of training period with CI was felt to be around eighteen months to two years for a number of reasons. Basically, because of the backgrounds of many of these young people, attitudinal problems and lack of academic achievement, the majority just could not be taken to a level generally acceptable to the labour market in a bare twelve months. A longer training period was felt to be necessary because these young people need to be given some amount of stability and security over a longer period of time. In a very real sense the effects of the very unstable backgrounds which characterised the lives of the young people prior to joining CI could only be tackled by a correspondingly long period in a stable and supportive environment. There is a danger that in today's economic environment the year spent with CI becomes only one in a sequence of short episodes which come together to produce a norm of instability.

It was envisaged that young people could be taken to a higher level of skill over a longer period, or that they could be equipped with a broader skill base. Many scheme consultants emphasised employers' requirements, saying that most employers were looking for a least two years experience, and that no young person could be proficient in a skill in a one year period. There was the obvious

comparison with the extension of YTS from a one-year to a two-year programme. If this makes sense for the average youngster the scheme consultant found it difficult to understand why it was not regarded as an even greater priority for their disadvantaged client group.

The Responses of Young People to CI

As part of this study, young people in the last three months of their stay with CI were interviewed in a semi-structured fashion. These youngsters were in a good position to begin to assess their experiences with CI and see them in relation to their future prospects in the labour market. They were also able to give their views on the personal development they had experienced during the scheme. Finally, they would have views on how the scheme could be improved. The responses summarised below are based on in-depth interviews carried out with 12 youngsters from CI in the Lower Clyde area.

It is useful to start by noting that there was a tremendous variability between the young people interviewed. Some were extremely shy and reluctant to participate, others had plenty to say for themselves and coped well with the questions asked, confidently giving considered answers. There was less variability, though, in their views. However, it should be remembered that the majority of these young people although appearing bright and confident in this informal situation, come from areas of severe multiple deprivation with all the social disadvantage entailed. Few of the young people had left school with any qualifications, although some pointed out that they had had practical skills or perhaps a certificate from a previous YTS scheme.

Previous Labour Market Experiences

As a group, the youngsters had very unsettled labour market experiences prior to joining CI, - on and off government schemes, in and out of temporary jobs and unemployment - a process characterised as subemployment by some commentators. (Coffield, Borrill and Marshall 1986; Wallace 1987). Only one of the group had held a full-time permanent job in the past and only one person had been continuously unemployed. The majority of the young people had tried YTS, in some form or another, and many had been on more than one YTS scheme. For this group of young people YTS was less than a satisfying experience. They would often leave a scheme through boredom, the feeling that they were being exploited, or because they found it difficult to get on with people with whom they were working. Others were forced to leave through sackings. The opinion of YTS was universally low among the group.

It is interesting to note the varying experiences of YTS within the group on the basis of gender. Girls tended to display more variety in their experience of YTS in terms of occupational training area and type of scheme entered. The majority of the boys, however, had spent some of their time at the local training workshop. The scheme here involved moving around, on a four-monthly basis, to different work areas such as engineering, joinery, sheet metalwork etc. Many of the young people identified this

circulation around different occupational training areas as a source of disadvantage.

Experiences with CI

The young people were asked about their experiences with CI. They had been drawn from a range of project areas to ensure a spread of experiences. In fact during their time on the scheme there had been quite a lot of movement between different projects, with three quarters of the young people trying two or more project areas. Many had moved through choice, although some had been forced to move for a variety of reasons, perhaps because they did not get on with their scheme consultant, or because of discipline problems. The young people themselves saw little real advantage in moving between project areas; rather it was viewed as a drawback. The main reason given for trainee-induced moves was simply boredom. This may be a reflection of a lack of challenge in the areas of training; alternatively it may be an indication of the extent of the problems of this group of young people. The very fact that these young people had actually stuck with CI for 12 months could in itself be viewed as an achievement, particularly given their unstable patterns prior to joining the scheme.

The importance of a stable relationship between scheme consultant and young employee was confirmed in the interviews with the youngsters. A good relationship with one's supervisor was universally felt to be essential in the learning process. The feeling was that they would not have learned as much or as quickly in the absence of this relationship. Earlier we noted how scheme consultants had stressed that establishing trust and security in the form of such a relationship was important in determining personal development. There was some disagreement here in that scheme consultants expressed the view that the establishment of this relationship could sometimes take some length of time to establish. The young people, however, felt they had got to know their supervisor within a short time of starting the scheme.

Confidence Buildings

Almost all of the young people felt that for them CI had been a confidence building exercise. This type of information was elicited in a number of ways. For example, they were asked if CI had give them more than just another work skill and whether there were things they could do now that they had not done before joining CI. The young people felt that they got on better with people than previously, particularly those in authority. CI had exposed them to a wide variety of personalities, so they had experience in coping with different types of people. There was also the feeling that they would perform more effectively in interview situations, not only because they were now more willing to speak to people than before, but because they felt they now had something to talk about. One young man declared that he was more skilled at painting and decorating (the project he had worked on) than he ever thought he would be. Such comments tend to confirm the view of scheme consultants that skill development is an important impetus to personal development, giving a sense of pride and self-confidence. For

many, then, CI provided an environment within which they were given a chance to prove themselves.

It is important not to underestimate the role of the supervisor in the personal development. As a whole the group felt they had been treated as adults at CI and this in itself had made them feel more mature. They also recognised the benefits of being given responsibility within project groups, because this nurtured the feeling that others had confidence in them. Scheme consultants attempted to give youngsters more responsibility than they had been given under YTS. In comparison with YTS, CI was felt by these young people to be far superior, the difference being mainly in the way in which they were treated. As one young man said:- 'The gaffers really look after you on CI'.

Skill Development

Skill development should obviously be an important part of any training scheme. Not only were we interested in gaining an insight into the personal development profile of these young people while with the scheme, it was also very important to get a view of skills development. The main questions were:- Could these young people become more skilled; could this be achieved within the given period of time; or did a higher level of skill require a longer period of time? The opinions of the scheme consultants had been that these young people were not sufficiently proficient at the end of 12 months to attempt a successful entry into employment in their area of work. They were personally more confident, as a result of the approach of CI, but this would soon be eroded by tough labour market conditions resulting in unemployment for most of the leavers. This was shown by the young persons subdued behaviour and deteriorating performance in the last three months of their contract, with the expectation of an imminent return to unemployment.

The views of the youngsters themselves on the time span of skill development were sought both in the broader postal survey and in the face-to-face interviews. Starting with the results of the postal survey, Table 7 shows that although the majority of young people felt they had begun to learn almost right away with CI, a sizeable minority (18 per cent of boys and 25 per cent of girls) felt that the learning process took at least 6 months to get going or never got going at all. These responses tend to confirm the views of the scheme consultants in contact with the young people on a day to day basis.

TABLE 7:
Point at which young people began to learn skills

	Boys	Girls
Right away	35(63)	11(55)
After 3 months	11(20)	4(20)
After 6 or more months	5(9)	1(5)
Never	5(9)	4(20)
	56(100)	20(100)

Source: Postal Survey

Youngsters asked whether they felt a longer stay with CI would have provided them with specific advantages - the chance to learn new skills and an enhanced probability of finding a job. Table 8 summarises the responses.

Over 80 per cent of the youngsters responding felt a longer scheme would give them a chance to learn new skills. This was a more common response from the boys than the girls. Just over 70 per cent of the boys and 45 per cent of the girls felt that a longer scheme would increase their chances of finding a job on leaving CI. Clearly, the youngsters accept that enhanced skills do not guarantee a job as the comparison of the two rows of the table show.

TABLE 8:
Percentages seeing advantages in longer training period

<i>Advantage</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
1. would learn more skills	84	65
2. Would have better chance of job	71	45

source: Postal Survey

For example, roughly a third of the girls who thought an extended scheme would generate increases in skill levels felt that, at the same time, it would not increase their chances of finding work.

Although it is important to be cautious, given small sample sizes, about the difference in responses between boys and girls, they may reflect a need for a more demanding skill regime in the project areas where girls tend to be concentrated. Supportive evidence on this was contained in the responses to a question on whether the youngsters felt they would benefit from exposure to a more varied set of training and employment situations at CI. Whereas 65 per cent of the girls felt this would be useful the corresponding figure for boys was only 54 per cent.

In broad terms, the semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with the smaller group of CI youngsters confirmed the postal survey findings on skill development and related issues. The majority of this smaller group felt they had coped well while working with CI and that they had never really been stretched in terms of skill development. Additionally, they expressed the feeling that they could have learned more skills with CI had the scheme been longer in duration. In a sense they were only really getting into their stride when the scheme began to draw to a close, with serious consequences for morale and motivation. Particularly in the light of the extension of YTS, many expressed the view that most employers were now looking for at least two years experience in an area of work. There was also the feeling that an extended scheme would make them feel more secure for another year and there would be more chance to look for a job. They would also become more skilled. For all these reasons, most of the young people believed that they would have more chance of finding a job if they could stay longer with CI.

An Extended Scheme

If an extended training scheme were to be proposed, the form of any extension would have to be well thought out,

it would not be sufficient to just extend the scheme to more of the same. The change of YTS from one to two years involved new aims and objectives. It is not being suggested that the importance of the caring role should be in any way relegated but that skill development should be given more importance over a longer period of time. If the new found confidence of these young people is backed up by skills, this gives them a fighting chance in the labour market. This is not to say that the young people were not skilled at all on leaving CI, but not skilled enough in employer's eyes. Given the wider changes in training systems leading to longer and more systematic approaches, if CI does not enhance the training inputs given to each youngster, their relative disadvantage will grow.

Any such extension could first be implemented on a pilot basis. An important consideration is of course the locale in which the scheme operates. As in other national training schemes, CI experiences differential placement rates according to the economic environment in which the scheme operates. Placement rates are higher in the south of England than in the North or in Scotland. Indeed in some areas in the south east one can imagine that there may even be difficulty in filling places in the scheme, as the falling cohort of young people takes effect. In other areas such as Strathclyde, where unemployment remains high throughout the age structure, placement rates in employment following training are likely to remain more of a problem. Recent research has reaffirmed the importance of the conditions in the local labour market for the employment chances of young people (Ashton and Maguire, 1986). There may well be an argument, then, for some redistribution of resources within the scheme or perhaps the establishment of a pilot scheme in areas where the problems are worst to test the effectiveness of any extension.

Assessment, Lessons and Ways Forward

On the basis of the postal survey and the interviews with staff and young people involved with CI in the Lower Clyde area, the following central conclusions emerged.

1. On the hard-edged indicator (proportion finding a job) the figures are disappointing, particularly for the boys. However, this needs to be heavily qualified given the difficult backgrounds of the youngsters and the long duration of unemployment prior to entering the scheme. Cosmetic increases in placement rates could be achieved easily simply by screening out the long-term unemployed recruits.
2. Both trainers (scheme consultants) and young people felt the CI experience led to enhanced self-confidence and personal skills.
3. For many of the youngsters, CI was their first stable experience of employment or training. Previous exposure to the labour market and YTS had been typically characterised by movement in and out of work, or around a carousel of occupational training areas. It was for this reason that many youngsters felt they had actually achieved some skill development in their stay with CI.

The processes or approaches producing these beneficial

outcomes were basically threefold.

1. CI on Lower Clyde held strongly to the view that time and effort had to go in to establishing a relationship of trust between trainer and trainee. In a sense caring was placed before training, at least in the chronology of a young person's period of tenure with CI.
2. Closely associated with this, the personal development of the youngsters was given a high priority relative to their skill development. This was a deliberate strategy which clearly produced beneficial personal growth among the youngsters going through CI in the Lower Clyde area.
3. Although youngsters were exposed to different training/employment areas an effort was made to create stability and give them a lengthy run at a particularly activity provided there were no extenuating circumstances necessitating a switch.

There is a very clear sense in which these approaches are sympathetic to the backgrounds and previous employment and training experiences of the youngsters recruited. There is, however, a tension between catering for the needs of the youngsters as they come through the door and preparing them effectively for labour market entry. We noted earlier how many of the youngsters felt they had not been sufficiently stretched and that they saw scope for fuller skill development within CI. The tension is caused by the fact that within the relatively short period of one year, time spent on establishing trust and fostering personal development is spent at the expense of skill development activities. In other words they become substitutes for each other when in reality they should be considered as complementary activities.

The clear need would seem to be for an extension of the period of time spent on CI from one to two years. This would;

- (i) bring CI into line with YTS
- (ii) allow CI to continue with its emphasis on personal development
- (iii) provide a significant block of time for a more thorough going development of work experience and skills training

As these youngsters start out with severe disadvantages it is difficult to see any technical justification for not extending the period on CI to two years so that the gap between them and YTS trainees is not widened. There would, of course, be serious resourcing considerations with such a change. However, a mixture of a decline in the age cohort

and a reallocation of resources from (say) low to high unemployment areas could contain the funding problem. Demographic changes may be a very significant factor. The numbers of young people aged 16 to 19 will have fallen by around 30 per cent in the decade to 1995 (National Economic Development Office, 1988: Industry Department for Scotland, 1988). Within this broad national picture there are wide regional variations. For example, within Scotland the reduction in Strathclyde is nearly 37 per cent but only 5 per cent in the Shetlands. Many areas (e.g. Caithness, Sutherland, Glasgow, East Kilbride, Inverclyde, Clydebank, Cumnock and Wigtown) will experience declines in excess of 40 per cent.

Whereas this is currently being viewed as a problem, particularly for employers seeking to recruit labour (Atkinson, 1989), it can equally be described as a major opportunity for organisations like CI. With the competitive balance shifting in favour of the youngster entering the labour market and away from the employers recruiting the labour it increases the chances of CI youngsters making a successful transition to employment on completion of their period of training and work experience. A combination of lengthier training and increased opportunities could give an unparalleled boost to these youngsters in their attempts to establish a secure footing in the labour market.

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WORKING SPACE

The Community and Youth Workers' Union - Transforming the Service

DOUG NICHOLLS

The Young Pretenders **JUSTIN GREENWOOD**

The Community and Youth Workers' Union - Transforming the Service.

In 1890 the first attempt to organise youth workers took place in Manchester with the formation of the Girls' Workers' Union. The subsequent century of building and merger of small associations to form a specialist trade union led to the most uniting organisation CYWU.

We are the latter day equivalent of a craft union. Regrettably craft unionism has been misinterpreted as an elitist form of almost freemasonry. Wanting to do a job well, wanting to be well trained to do that job and wanting that job to take place within a context of social status and priority - all these are very basic to working class organisation in trade unions. We do no different.

The continued marginalisation of our work and service, its lack of statutory base and its pathetic funding, all have given a particular edge to continuing to build a small, specialist union able to give prominence to the importance of Youth and Community services. If the service falls off the bottom of political and media agendas, we are determined it will not fall off the trade union agenda. 50,000 workers full and part time provide a service which, according to the estimates of the National Advisory Council for the Youth Service, affect the lives at some stage of 90% of the nation's young people. One union for all of these workers is needed if the service itself is to prosper.

Developed trade unionism has been integral to the progress of all forms of social provision and industry, but particularly to education. The continued weakness of the Youth and Community sector is reflected in the weak trade union organisation of those within it. Various unions cover the field and there is a lot of non unionism and nineteenth century philanthropy still.

CYWU uniquely interrelates concern for workers, with concern for the overall health of the provision for young people and the qualities of training and service delivery being developed. This commitment is enshrined in our Constitution's Aims Section which reads as follows:

The Aims of the Union shall be:

1. To obtain the best possible Salaries and Conditions of Employment for its members.
2. To recruit as members all those involved in working with young people and adults in the community, outside of the formal teaching and lecturing situation.
3. To promote youth and community work and through its endeavours and advocacy, to identify further and meet the needs and interests of young people and the

wider community.

4. To conduct its affairs in ways which exemplify its op-

position to discrimination on the grounds of age, race, gender, sexuality, disability or class.

5. To submit to continuous and critical analysis the ideas of Community and Youth work, as expressed in the curricula of full time and part time training courses and in the real face to face methods adopted by those employed in these areas of work.
6. To undertake and encourage the training and education of members and representatives in trade union practices.
7. To campaign for changes in those institutions which affect young people and the community and which will give them a greater say in the operation control and policy making of those institutions.

These aims originated after years of struggling to build two cornerstones of the whole Service: The Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Workers (JNC) and the Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work (CETYCW). CYWU in its previous incarnations played a vital role in the formation of these two bodies which have proved essential in bringing respect, coherence and national order to the handful of mercury that has been the Service.

CYWU is the majority union on the JNC and over the years has fought to ensure not just that the JNC imparts the best possible terms and conditions most suited to the peculiar dimensions of Youth Work, but that it acts as custodian of the ethos of the work. You will find in the new Grading Criteria of JNC not just a way of paying workers, but an important statement on the value of the work. In addition the Grading Criteria have provided a useful foundation for the consideration of core competences so helpful when looking at the whole question of validating learning from experience.

The JNC gives final endorsement to the proposals to establish new college training courses. CYWU representatives play a key role in the validation of these college courses and the discussions surrounding all matters to do with In Service training.

Being built on the specialism of the work does not shroud our task in the mysteries of a secret profession, it simply helps to advance the workers and the work they do within the education setting. Hence our members unwillingness to merge with a generalist trade union with no expertise in the educational context.

Good trade unionism means improved service to young people also when we consider the central place of part time workers both within our union and the Service. We say there will be no regard for the Service, no ability for the Service to really oppose inequalities and disadvantages unless the main providers of the Service, part time workers, are treated equally and not disadvantaged by their casual working status (mostly temporary contracts with no holiday and sickness provisions). Our 1990 Campaign to achieve parity for part time workers will dramatically transform the shape of the Service.

It will also run into all the contradictions of a non statutory Service which receives recommended expenditure figures from the Government, but consistently fails to spend them, choosing instead to allow Councils to spend the Youth allocations on other areas - roads for example. Our Union has challenged every Local Authority to spend the GREA figures. Looking at the Audit Commission's Report, the reports of the HMIs and the final report of NACYS on Resourcing of the Youth Service, we also believe a huge overhaul of and increase in expenditure arrangements should be made. This area of work should concentrate minds more than the philosophy of a National Curriculum. Indeed some will say that the National Curriculum will be a device for controlling budgets to minister approved provision.

Our National Journal, Rapport, now seventeen years old, is available to non members to subscribe for £10 a year. It is open to contributors from all parts of the Service. Similarly we have an Associate membership category for those, such as Training Officers or even lecturers, who are in other unions, but who wish to remain in contact with our work.

We have developed a House Style of working and a structure which, though at times eccentric, uniquely reflects of a form of trade union accessibility that others could learn from.

If Youth and Community provision is about enabling and organising, about collectivity and achieving change, it seems about time that the workforce applied these principles to themselves and helped build a strong national union.

We have had Albermarle, Mills Fairburn, Thompson and the rest. I firmly believe that CYWU's Report to its National Conference in 1990 must set the tone and plan for the Service in the next decade. The single most important development within the Youth Service is the completion of the construction of one appropriate trade union. I look forward to going into more depth on this in the next issue.

The Young Pretenders

One of the more obvious signs of change in Czechoslovakia last week came while waiting for luggage to arrive from the plane to the terminal at Prague airport following the flight from Heathrow. Package after package was marked 'ITN' or 'ABC NEWS', in a hunt for a story that only existed in parts.

Day after day, visits to Wenceslas Square, the scene of protest gatherings in Prague over the last week, gave an unmistakable impression of calm. Indeed, protests seemed almost too calm - perhaps even aimless. They were almost exclusively attended by students, young people and early middle aged Czechs who between them provided earnestness but little real organisation. Indeed, demonstrations became so routinised in their daily occurrence at set times that they quickly became part of Prague life, thereby surely losing their efficacy. The great paradox was of students and other young people protesting in Prague while older shoppers went about their everyday business, almost unperturbed by events around them. Stories of the city coming to a halt - at least in the week before the general strike on Monday (27.11.89) may have helped sell newspapers in the West, but were, in reality, untrue.

The protests arose from particular issues which, on closer examination, show the heart of the problem in the socialist countries. Ten days ago, Prague students met to commemorate the death of Jan Orsbach, a student slain by the Nazis during the early days of occupation. Their gathering was broken up by Czech police, and ten of their number ended up in hospital while many more were arrested with the help of trawler nets used by the Police. Subsequent protests - misinterpreted by western journalists as purely a post Berlin wall chain reaction - were initially orchestrated to demand punitive action against the police culprits, and set demands for action against a deadline of noon on Sunday (26.11.89). Failure to meet demands would result in a General Strike. It was only at a later stage that real political demands were added to this first ultimatum.

It is, of course, absurd that the state should use its powers to forcibly break up a commemorative march of which they should wholeheartedly approve. Much Communist Party propaganda is invested into the anti Nazi origins of their ruling political machines. The supreme irony is that this is precisely why the Communist Party lacks appeal to young people. It has no message of real relevance to make to emerging generations, in that political statement is reduced to anti Nazi rhetoric which, whilst admirable, only finds a relevant audience among older generations. It is these groups who were conspicuously absent during protests, and who seemed most conservative about change in Eastern Europe.

The Socialist countries do have their achievements. The most striking of these to the Western town dweller is that crime of most kind is comparatively rare, transport and heating are almost free, and very few want. Similarly, civil freedoms today in Eastern Europe are unrecognisable from even the turn of the 1980's - for instance, the only real barrier for most young Czech people to travel West is the impossibility of turning a weak currency into hard

western exchange - a clear restriction on liberty, but no more so than Britain's poor face in restricted choices through lack of income. Perhaps the biggest farce I experienced in visiting Czechoslovakia was the near harassment from Czech people at every turn to change English currency, with up to four times the official exchange rate available on the black market. Some clearly make an entire living from money changing, touring hotel breakfast rooms from the early hours to barter with bleary eyed Western Europeans.

This is one really tangible benefit which tourism brings to almost the entire Czech population. For Western Europeans, the power of the pound (£) - or more particularly the Deutschmark - gives the traveller an almost imperial feeling of being able to buy virtually anything. Indeed, much of western Bohemia is little more than a playground for young West Germans from the nearby Federal Republic,

who delight in the luxury of mixed saunas, attended to by Czechs of their own age. To the young population of Eastern Europe, such displays and gross inequalities must surely heighten feelings of disenchantment with their world, and provides some of the fuel for protests of recent weeks.

Despite the apparent lure of the 'Golden West', relatively few young East Europeans want to emigrate west. Their real interests lie in achieving dramatic change at home. In the case of Czechoslovakia, real, lasting change might only succeed if young people build alliances with their own more disinterested elders, who in turn might help organise them and channel their energies into clearer, more winnable directions. Until they do, the alternative is still that of a semi gerontology leadership who cling to the political rhetoric of yesteryear and who watch the new 'post Iron Curtain Europe' pass them by.

POPULAR FRONT

Popular Front is a section of the journal devoted to aspects of popular culture and the media

Coffee Table Pop Culture

MALCOLM JACKSON

DREAMS FOR SALE: POPULAR CULTURE IN THE 20TH CENTURY.

Richard Maltby. (Ed.)

Harrap

£17.95, pp. 256. ISBN 0-245-54883-1

This volume is the first in a proposed series of six volumes of Harrap's Illustrated History of the 20th Century; future volumes will cover Politics, Economics, the Family, the Arts and Science.

The major themes of the book are cinema, fashion, design, media and advertising, popular music and dance, and sport but it also examines the popular press, fads and leisure activities. The publishers suggest that the only other volumes published on the popular culture of this century that have attempted to cover a similar range of topics have been limited to either a single decade or a single country, or else have been celebratory and nostalgic, rather than analytical in approach. The book aims to both inform and entertain the reader, providing a detailed, vividly illustrated history of the ways in which modern society has shaped its aspirations, created its heroes and lived out its fantasies.

The book is divided into six sections on a chronological basis: 1900 - 1914: The Consumer Society, 1914 - 1929: The Modernist World, 1929 - 1945: The Glamour years, 1945 - 1960: The Suburban Dream, 1960 - 1973: The Revolution of Youth, and 1973 - 1989: The Global Village? Each section begins with a useful 'Time Chart' and contains a series of 'Datafiles' at regular intervals which provide some interesting statistical information supportive to particular arguments. Each section is sub-divided into four or five parts and there are twelve somewhat arbitrary 'Special Features' on such topics as Vaudeville and Music Hall, Mickey Mouse, Coca-Cola: The Real Thing and Rock Festivals. Also, at the top left hand corner of each double page spread there is a key sentence as to what those two pages are about. This is a rather redundant gimmick which seems to serve no real purpose other than a facile mini-synopsis. The book ends with biographies of some 300 of who it deems the most important men and women in popular culture from across the globe, from Alvar Aalto to Daryl F. Zanuck. There is a useful glossary and a further reading section sub-divided into the topics of Film and Media, Popular Music, Design, Fashion and Sport.

It is difficult to see who exactly this book is aimed at. The 'serious' student of popular culture will probably gain little that is new, whereas the 'general' reader may find the text a little too academic in tone. What emerges is really a history of consumption rather than of popular culture, indeed, the editor states that, 'the present book seeks to analyse the popular culture it describes, rather than simply celebrate it. In doing so, it lays emphasis more on consumption than

production!'. Although it professes to be a global history, it is, at best, mid-Atlantic in tone with a strong bias, arguably rightly so, to the USA and its

vast impact on popular culture in the 20th century.

The book is undeniably comprehensive, covering a remarkable range of subjects, but this becomes a weakness rather than a strength in that it invariably means there is no real depth in its analysis and, generally, the surface gloss is only scratched. It takes a rather traditional overview and does not tell us anything new. What it does do is pull together all the disparate elements inherent in such a history remarkably well and support the text with some marvellous illustrations. What you remember are not the arguments contained in the text but some of the excellent photographs (I particularly liked the 50's kids hula-hooping on page 15, and the expression of ecstasy on the face of the Paraplegic Olympics winner on page 211).

If I can cite a couple of examples of the book's lack of depth; one would be its tendency to talk in cliches, for example, William Randolph Hearst cannot be mentioned without giving the obligatory nod towards Orson Welles' 'Citizen Kane' (or vice-versa!). Also, an example when discussing pop music would be its description of Chuck Berry as being on equal footing with white performers without compromising - that denies the racism Berry had to face, including having to 'white-up' for publicity photographs early in his career, and leading to a number of prison sentences later for violation of the iniquitous Mann Act.

Interestingly, the concept of the teenager and their impact on popular culture as both consumers and providers does not make an appearance until over half way through the text (page 130 to be precise!), and pages 140 - 145 deal specifically with 'The Emergence of the Teenager'. From then on the notion of youth pervades the book, as if popular culture suddenly switched from being an adult-led concept to a youth-led one. This is arguably a true assessment but the book is shaky at really putting its finger on the reasons for this - to mention (again, a cliché) the increase of young people's spending power in the 50's as its main *raison d'être* is not good enough.

All these reservations aside, I did get a certain amount of hedonistic pleasure out of leafing through its lavish pages. It is obviously a book to dip into rather than read from cover to cover and its lay-out does assist in this. Left lying casually on one's coffee table it is no doubt the sort of book friends would pick up and leaf through, finding both things that would, despite the editors' claim otherwise, trigger off some nostalgic wallowing as well as stimulating some debate and argument around its more predictable analyses.

FEATURE REVIEW

Writing about Section 28

PETER KENT-BAGULEY

Sex Education: Playground or Classroom, A Paper for School Governors, North West Campaign for Lesbian & Gay Equality, P.O. Box 169, Manchester, M60 4DY, 1989, Free.

Section 28: A Guide for Schools, Teachers, Governors, produced by Stop The Clause Education Group (STCEG) in association with All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism (ALTARF), Published by STCEG, 1989, £2, (£2.50, direct from STCEG, c/o ALTARF, Room 216, 38 Mount Pleasant, London, WC1X 0AP, 10% discount on orders for 5 or more from Turnaround Distribution, 27 Horsell Road, London, N5, 01 609 7836.)

Publish & Still Not Be Damned by Richard Gutch, David Miliband and Richard Percival, National Council for Voluntary Organisations, 26 Bedford Square, London, WC1 3HE, 1989, £3 for voluntary groups, £6 others.

Out on the Shelves: Lesbian Books into Libraries, compiled by Jane Allen, Linda Kerr, Avril Rolph and Marion Chadwick, Newcastle under Lyme (Staffs) Association of Assistant Librarians Publishing, 1989, £5.95, (By post from LIL, BM Box 6572, London, WC1N 3XX, £6.50 incl. p & p).

Section 28 and The Youth Service: An Information Pack, London Union of Youth Clubs, 64 Camberwell Road, London, SE5 0EN, (01 701 6366), £1.50, (incl. p & p).

Out At Work by Trades Unionists Against Section 28 (TUAS 28), P.O. Box 1733, London, W9 3SH, £2.50 (incl. p & p).

Section 28: A practical guide to the law and its implications by Madeline Colvin with Jane Hawksley, National Council for Civil Liberties, (NCCL), 21 Tabard Street, London, SE1 4LA, 1989, £4.50.

Learning Our Lines: Sexuality & Social Control in Education edited by Carol Jones and Pat Mahony, The Women's Press, 1989, £7.95.

Two years after the implementation of Section 28 'the strident boasting arrogance of the homosexual community seems to have quietened down

a bit' according to David Wilshire MP, the man who promoted the attack on policies and practices developed by a handful of Local Authorities to enhance the equality of lesbians and gay men. Strange how saying 'we are as valid as you are' can be labelled 'strident, boasting, arrogance'! Of course, it's neither new nor strange to feminists and Black groups.

The orchestrated wave of unnecessary self-censorship in the shadow of Section 28 flourishes on existing deep and widespread prejudice. The well organised and highly publicised equality moves pioneered by the GLC, ILEA, the London Boroughs of Haringey and Ealing and Manchester City Council, were the visible targets for the Right's basic hatred of any sexual expression beyond procreative marital monogamy. (1) In its disdain for logic and truth the Right's populist propaganda easily linked infinitesimal amounts of ratepayers' money to the promotion of sexual abnormality and AIDS, accusing 'loony left' Local Authorities of murder.

Section 28 has done its job well. Yet there is a widespread feeling that because there has not been a single court case, Section 28 was merely a necessary but embarrassing toothless token to quieten the moral entrepreneurs on the extreme Right. And, furthermore, such naive apologists add, significantly, that had the Left been less strident in its demands the Right would never have been affronted. Again, the logic of the argument is similar to that familiar to feminists and ethnic minority groups: stay silent, stay invisible...and stay unacceptable!

Section 28 has called the bluff of those politicians and professionals riddled with the rhetoric of 'equal opportunities'. This is so in the statutory Youth Service as anywhere else. How many college youth work courses, how many apprenticeship schemes, how many local authority part-time and in-service training schemes address sexuality as a central issue? Once upon a time it was enough to hide behind the 1967 Sexual Offences Act but the gradual effects of the Gay Liberation Movement eroded that cop-out. Once the erosion seriously threatened the walls of education, buttressed reinforcements were to be expected. In that sense Section 28 was a measure of the significant success of lesbian and gay equality policy initiatives; too much for totalitarian heterosexualism to tolerate. In a handful of local authorities there are both politicians and professionals still committed to progressive policies

inclined to defy rather than deify Section 28. In the vast majority of authorities, however, the patchy pattern of proposed ad hoc help for lesbian and gay groups and events is hindered by legal departments; delays, demoralisation and defeatism ensue. (2)

The Stop The Clause campaign prior to the Royal Assent became almost singularly obsessed with the complaint that the Section was 'badly drafted'. Lawyers were commissioned to prove the point! Strangely enough, even after two years of Section 28, this is still a constant refrain. Would it have been (more) acceptable, one wonders, had it been well drafted?! In any case, even if the drafting dissatisfied the sudden surge of linguistic purists the tone and content of its supporters in Parliament ought to have made abundantly clear that deterrence was to be intentionally promoted by Section 28.

When working through issues of sex/uality, what we talk about is obviously important but how we talk about it is crucial. The words we use reflect a host of unspoken assumptions about our ideological perspective.

The call for 'accurate information' on every other page of the North West Campaign's twenty page booklet, Sex Education, is trapped within a liberal ideology. What 'accurate information' would have predisposed Nazi exterminators to stop killing 'homosexuals'?

Without a radical analysis we are constrained by countering one 'fact' with another 'fact' within the predetermined ideological territory of our opponents, where our ways of thinking and talking are distorted and dominated by their ways of thinking and talking. The pamphlet concludes; '...can children be persuaded or seduced into becoming lesbian or gay by being exposed to positive information about homosexuality? Although this notion was at the heart of the Section 28 debate, not one shred of evidence to support it was ever produced. Indeed, all available evidence demonstrates clearly that this does not happen.'

The Earl of Halsbury and his merry right-wing Christian fundamentalists need worry not about positive images. They are not, after all, it seems, designed to encourage anyone to choose same-sex relationships, sometimes, all of the time, or indeed ever!

Real progress will not be achieved by playing clever with legalistic interpretations of the law and ministerial circulars. The North West pamphlet quotes from the Department of the Environment circular 12/88 that government policy 'will not prevent the objective discussion of homosexuality in the classroom, nor the counselling of pupils concerned with their sexuality' but does not quote from the DES 11/87 circular which says that 'there is no place in any school in any circumstances for teaching which advocates homosexual behaviour... indeed, encouraging or procuring homosexual acts by pupils who are under the age of consent is a criminal offence'. Such selective use of official texts is a redundant strategy, at best defence by default, at worst by deceit.

Section 28: A Guide For Schools makes the important point that the government talks about 'homosexuality and sex education' whereas the very few local authorities which have acted have done so in terms of 'lesbian and gay

rights within equal opportunities'. Unfortunately, these fundamentally different ideological views are unexplored. Although chapter three is less narrowly selective of Government statements than the North West Campaign's pamphlet, in failing to mention the DES consultative circular, Sex Education at School, (August 1986) it missed the opportunity of charting the major change in tone and content of the 11/87 Circular, (September 1987) the result of eighteen months of the Conservative Family Campaign moral crusade.

Perpetuating the 1 in 10 myth it claims: 'A more positive attitude toward lesbians and gays in schools will not result in a massive increase in the numbers of people who are homosexual. Heterosexuality is not that easily subverted!' How can they be so sure? And in view of that static view how can they claim that 'young people will be in a position to make informed choices free of destructive pressures.'? The booklet claims to advise schools on how best to interpret the various government reports, circulars and legislation concerning sex and sexuality education in schools so that schools fulfil their responsibility to all students, including those who are lesbian or gay.

One could be forgiven for thinking that the content for the opening section, promisingly entitled, The Background: A Carefully Designed Moral Panic, was lost in production. There is hardly anything here which adequately conveys the chronology and analysis of events leading to Section 28.

It misleadingly asserts that 'what is more, governors, parents and staff have been given control over their school's sex education policy (in the 1986 Education Act).' In fact it is the governing body which has been given the control. Furthermore, despite the Tory ballyhoo about parent power the composition of governing bodies is such that local education authorities retain local control, but more importantly, the Minister has the final decision in any dispute.

The style is uneven and the analysis typical of the Stop The Clause approach, moribund in interpretations of ministerial statements and statute law, In essence, it is a reactive, defensive approach.

Publish And Still Not Be Damned is a measured meander through the legalities of Section 27 (political publicity) as well as Section 28. Apart from the bizarre claim on page 4 that Jenny lives with Eric and Martin is an ILEA booklet, the book is accurate and avoids obvious bias. In its way and for its intended readership, it was a timely and appropriate first anniversary snook to the law.

Out On The Shelves is a deliberate response to Section 28, it is in the tradition of ILEA's Positive Images materiography (1985), which along with Jenny, the GLC Charter and various pro-lesbian and gay articles in academic publications, so enraged the Halsbury hordes. Out On The Shelves should succeed very well in furthering the promotion of lesbianism. Section 28 is printed in the appendix along with brief extracts from Hansard 'to provide librarians with defensive material... to help them resist' any calls from the public, councillors and local authority lawyers to censor their stocks. Usefully, the Hansard references to

the Clause 28 debates are tabulated at the end, but note that the Third Reading in the Lords on February 29th 1988 (Cols 67/83) is omitted.

The London Union Of Youth Clubs' Pack is excellently arranged and compiled. Although only five sheets of folded A3 (pink, of course) between two card covers in a polythene folder, it is packed with factual information about Section 28, a clear and concise explanation of how mainstream youth work fails young lesbians and gays and hence the need for separate provision, resources, contacts listings, a quiz for workers and a challenge to workers to stop ignoring the needs of 20% of the young people contacting the lesbian and gay youth groups in London because they are under 16. Presented with a lively, immediate feel the pack is bound to inspire debate, challenge and change.

Out At Work offers a vast amount of experience and expertise for trade unionists campaigning for lesbian and gay liberation. It is an excellently designed 50 page-pack, divided into eleven sections, providing concise and clear briefings. It is determinedly designed to inspire defiance of Section 28 at the grassroots. Organising for change can involve us all in some way or another and Out At Work straight-forwardly shows the vast variety of issues that need tackling and it suggests ways of making a start in the local branch. Out At Work was launched on May 23rd 1989, the first anniversary of Section 28, and it is encouraging to know that it has been selling well throughout the year.

The pervasive partiality of the NCCL's Section 28: A Practical Guide is difficult to ignore: there are no party-political lesbian and gay groups in the list of fourteen supposedly 'Useful Organisations' amongst which are the near-defunct OLGA, the all-but defunct North West Campaign and the actually defunct Stop The Clause Education Group! A resources list of lesbian and gay newspapers, magazines, bookshops and books, packs and videos concerned with Section 28 would have been much more useful.

Appendix Two is indicative of the book's approach. Six pages of Ministerial quotes but no explanation for using only the mollifying ones! As Ken Livingstone, Tony Benn, Chris Smith et al tirelessly repeated, it's not what Ministers say Section 28 means but what the courts say it means if ever they get the chance, which is unlikely, given the success of its deterrent effect to date. ⁽³⁾ When even child psychiatrists employed by a health authority, think Section 28 affects them, Halsbury, Knight, Bruinvels, Kellet-Bowman and the rest of the merry Christian fundamentalist bigots may justifiably feel they did a good job.

The politics of struggle are subsumed by sly, seductive semantics focused on the bureaucracy of law. Having achieved the seemingly impossible task of actually defining 'promotion', 'pretended family', 'homosexuality' etc in 'the awfully badly worded Section' we suddenly find that all the things we ever wanted a local authority to do (and which so few hardly ever did!) are still, surprise, surprise, legal! Confused about what all the fuss was about? Does the NCCL seriously believe that a single local authority has

ever or would ever intentionally promote homosexuality in the sense of 'persuading people to become homosexual or experiment with homosexuality'? Admittedly, corruption one way or another is a perennial preoccupation of the biological determinists but the thrust of their campaign concerned what they perceived to be a 'celebration' of lesbian and gay relationships by a handful of local authorities. The Stop The Clause (STC), the Association of London Authorities (ALA), The Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Action (OLGA) and the Arts Lobby lived in a world of their own. They couldn't believe that lesbians and gays could be so detested; it all had to be a ghastly definitional mistake!

The reliance on a liberal idealist principle of equal treatment, particularly in chapter four, on education, not only fails to convince but highlights the degree to which reality is removed from such rhetoric. Simplistically arguing that teachers are answerable to school governors not LEA's and further, that governors not LEA's control sex education, misses the more complex reality that, despite the Tory propaganda about giving power to parents, the LEA's effectively retain control of school boards of governors!

Quite misleadingly, Colvin asserts that: 'nothing in Section 28 prohibits any teacher from dealing with the subject of homosexuality in an *honest* and *objective* way with pupils in the classroom,' (emphasis added) and further states: 'In the case of a teacher who is himself gay or herself lesbian, it must be that person's decision as to how they deal with the fact of their sexuality with their pupils.' Really? Well, that was not quite what Michael Howard had in mind. In answer to Joan Lestor's question: 'if a teacher who is lesbian or homosexual tells the children in the class that he or she is thus, will that in the mind of the minister be regarded as promoting homosexuality?' Michael Howard's response is not, of course, amongst the select-a-mollifying-ministerial-quote Appendix Two: 'the answer would depend upon the circumstances and the context in which that was said'. (Hansard, 15.12.87, col. 1007). But the reader need only be reminded of the government's view via the DOE Circular 12/88, here reprinted in Append Three: it makes clear 'the government's view that there is no place in any school in any circumstances for teaching which advocates homosexual behaviour, which presents it as the norm . . .'

Colvin's insatiable search for the sunny side of ministerial statements is carried to absurd lengths through Appendix Four by reprinting letters from ministers. 'There is absolutely no reason why the clause should encourage a climate of intolerance towards homosexuals. It does not prevent balanced and factual teaching about homosexuality taking place in schools . . .' wrote junior education minister Angela Rumbold in January 1988. 'To teach homosexuality as being an acceptable way of life is not correct' she had declared in the Times Educational Supplement in November 1986. Had she, therefore, changed her mind? Of course not! It is the search for semantic solutions so favoured by the Arts Lobby, OLGA, ALA and STC that pushes them further and further away from the reality of

political struggle, away from the reality that 'balanced', 'honest' and 'factual' are ideologically-relative concepts, and thus, in fact, hotly disputed. The NCCL does no one a service, least of all teachers and pupils, by perpetuating the myth that there are agreed facts about homosexuality. Nor does their unjustifiably one-sided set of ministerial quotes help lesbian and gay liberation.

Even when speaking against Halsbury's Bill, the Section 28 prototype, Lord Skelmersdale, for the government, said: 'the government have made it clear that any teaching about homosexuality must never, in any sense, advocate or encourage it as a normal form of relationship. To do so would be educationally and morally indefensible,' (Hansard, 18.12.86, col. 336). How much more clearly does it have to be said? (4)

Considerably more for reviewers such as Harold Williamson, who, like the authors of the books and pamphlet they review, are confused and confounded by the repressive rhetoric of ministers (both political and religious), media hacks (in the tabloids and the broadsheets) and middle-class, middle-brow merchandisers of a moral myopia, hell-bent on further policing the public and political aspects of 'the enemies within' through more and more proscriptions on our private and personal lives.

Williamson's uncritical, unchallenging and curiously contradictory review of the NCCL booklet emphasises the 'imprecisely drafted' nature of Section 28 yet inexplicably claims that it imposes on local authorities 'specific limitations'! His misunderstanding of the legislation is further underlined by his obsession with the 'danger that . . . Section 28 may lead to excessive caution . . . that those responsible for the delivery of education - in schools and other settings - may over-react . . .' In missing the point of Section 28 he and others like him, highlight and serve its purpose well.

Conceived in early 1987, just after Halsbury launched what was to become the prototype of Section 28, LEARNING OUR LINES appears not a moment too soon in this period dangerously regarded as the 'aftermath' of Section 28; a calming-down, clearing-up period after the storm, letting things settle and get back to normal, like after an earthquake or flood. But Section 28 is much more insidious and invasive than an eruption or a storm, dividing walls or prohibitive signs; it is our 'enemy within', deliberately and determinedly devised and delivered to protect and promote the heartland and hegemony of heterosexism by permeating and policing its every institutional support. The only getting back to normal with Section 28 around is the normal which tens of thousands of people protested against; the normality of institutionalised heterosexism; violence against lesbians and gay men, the violence of rape, beating and harassment women endure in private and in public, perpetuated through the major structures, not least through education. (6)

The main purpose of this book is to focus on 'the state's control of sexuality through education. In particular . . . the promotion of a model of heterosexuality in which masculinity, (central to which is violence) and femininity (as it is stereotypically understood) go unchallenged'. In their in-

roduction, Pat Jones and Carol Mahony continue: '. . . if we are seriously committed to equality, then we have to make rather fewer curriculum analyses of girls studying physics and boys parentcraft and spend more time addressing much more difficult issues' such as 'male sexual violence . . . central to the maintenance of male power by being structured into a model of masculinity which schools have done little to challenge'.

As the ministerial consultation process for a National Youth Work Curriculum generates more and more discussion and documentation within all sectors of the statutory and voluntary Youth Service I anticipate being overdosed with 'equal opportunity' policies, naturally, but within which, I suspect, there will be an unnaturally marked absence of sexuality in general and lesbians and gay men in particular.

Notes

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 was given the Royal Assent on 24th March, 1988 and took effect two months later on 24th May, 1988.

1. *Lesbian & Gay Socialist* No. 15, 1988; 'Positive Images', Peter Kent-Baguley. (Available from BM ROUGE, London WC1N 3XX).
2. *Association of London Authorities*: 36 Old Queen Street, London SW1 9JF. (01 222 7799), 'Briefing on Section 28', Chris Baker, Lesbian & Gay Officer.
3. *Youth & Policy* No. 24, 1988: 'One too Many', Peter Kent-Baguley.
4. *Lesbian & Gay Socialist* No. 13, 1988; 'Clause 28', Peter Kent-Baguley.
5. *Young People Now* March 1990: review by Harold Williamson.
6. *Rouge*, Issue 1, December 1989: 'Learning Our Lines' reviewed, (Available from BM ROUGE, WC1N 3XX. £1.50).

REVIEWS IN THIS ISSUE

Ruth Lister
**SOCIAL SECURITY FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE**
Neville S. Harris
Avebury

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**EDUCATION AND EXPERI-
ENCE: CONTEMPORARY
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Manchester Monographs
Series

Phil Garrahan
BEYOND THE INNER CITY
David Byrne
Open University Press

**SOCIAL SECURITY FOR YOUNG
PEOPLE**
Neville S. Harris
Avebury, 1989,
£29.50 hbk., pp.200 ISBN 0-566-
07029-4.

'Cardboard City', inhabited by young homeless - and often penniless - men and women, stands as a shocking symbol of a social security policy that was designed to target help on those in greatest need and discourage dependency on the 'benefits culture'. Targeting resources towards the 'needy' in a nil-cost reform inevitably implies targeting cuts on those deemed to be less needy. Young people fell firmly into the latter category. A series of reports from established charities such as the Children's Society and Barnardos has documented the results: in the words of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, 'a situation which is intolerable in a society committed to the welfare of all its citizens'. Even the media, weary of stories from the 'poverty lobby', have been unable to ignore the visible signs of actual destitution among some of the young homeless.

Neville Harris' book is not another expose of the impact on individual young men and women of recent social security legislation. Indeed, given its critical stance, it is surprisingly reticent as to what the changes were likely to mean in terms of sheer human suffering (most of the actual evidence having emerged since the book was written). Instead, he looks much more broadly at a range of social security policies for young people over time, in the context of both education and employment policy. This involves a detailed exposition of the present Government's policies which is, at the same time, both useful and rather tedious.

More interesting is his central theme of 'the role of social security in the transition to adulthood'. This transition is not necessarily a smooth one and can involve a number of elements and stages. It is, Harris argues, 'hampered significantly by unemployment' and he asks what 'role could or should social security play in smoothing the transition of the young unemployed to adult independence?' He notes that 'as the Twentieth century has progressed, young people have, on the one hand, generally seemed to want and expect more and more independence - to a large degree supported in

this desire by their parents. On the other hand, they have become economically dependent on their families for several years after leaving school or reaching the age of majority' because of increased participation in education beyond the school leaving age and, more significantly, unemployment.

Harris' consideration of the nature of the transition to adulthood provides a very good framework for his analysis of social security policy for this age group. However, it suffers from treating young people as if they were a monolithic group. Little is said about social class differences and nothing about possible differences between ethnic groups and between young women and young men (although some reference is made to the latter in a later discussion of family formation). Given the ambiguities surrounding the shift from childhood to adulthood, it is difficult to believe that class, gender and 'race' divisions do not help shape the transition.

Financial independence, Harris suggests, is of central importance 'in the way that it enables a young person to make real choices, such as to leave home and marry . . . Personal financial resources are crucial if young people are to be able to leave home and live independently of their families'. His central thesis is that a succession of social security changes has increased the enforced dependence of young people on their families and has 'pushed back the age at which adult independence among the young unemployed is deemed to start'. Drawing on secondary sources, he spells out briefly some of the consequences of this enforced dependence for the intra-familial transfer of resources; poverty; household and family formation; family tensions and the psychological well-being of young people. The evidence is rather fragmentary and this underlines the need for some primary research into the impact on young people living at home and their families of recent social security changes.

The irony of a Government, committed to reducing dependency, increasing the dependency of a particular group is familiar to feminist commentators. It is a contradiction which is conveniently obscured behind the public-private dichotomy which characterises much social policy. The assumptions about dependency which underpin social security policy are, of course, hardly new and Harris brings out very

well the continuities in policy with regard to young people. His account of developments in social security policy towards young people in the 1920s and 1930s shows how the roots of current policies run deep. 'Throughout this period' he writes 'it was anticipated that young people, although usually productive members of the workforce and economically important, could fall back on their families for support if, for example, they become unemployed and did not have adequate contributions for entitlement to unemployment benefit.' However, social conditions are very different today and as Harris notes for 'the working class (and he does here acknowledge class differences), the increasingly protracted transition into adulthood of the young unemployed, which social security cutbacks have probably intensified, runs counter to social expectations of a brief transition to adult independence'.

In a tantalisingly short section, it is noted that social security benefits are not available to school-leavers in many industrialised societies but we are not told what this has meant for the transition to adulthood in these countries.

It is clear from Harris' account of the complex benefit rules facing the 16-21 age group that, despite devoting a whole review to benefits for children and young people, the Fowler reforms failed to tackle the 'tangle' of young people's social security benefits. 'The lack of a clear strategy on benefits support for young people and the piecemeal development of social security as a whole throughout much of this century, have undoubtedly contributed to the rather confused and incoherent state of young people's social security benefits in Britain', Harris concludes.

He outlines some of the proposals for reform put forward by others without committing himself. However, he does make clear the objectives he believes any reforms should achieve: 'a measure of independence for young people and equal support for those participating in education and training so as to reduce the financial disincentive to study faced by young people from poor backgrounds'. At a time when it is supposed to be official policy to increase access to higher education, a greater focus on the inadequacies of the discretionary education maintenance allowance scheme for young people from low income families who stay on at school would have been welcome.

The book ends by linking the reduction in poor people's rights to notions of citizenship - a very important point but one which, I feel, has been tacked onto the end rather than integrated into the overall argument of the book. As Harris points out, policies which, in the name of self-reliance, increase young people's dependence on their families and reduce their autonomy, are inconsistent with notions of social citizenship. The same policies, which, combined with cutbacks in housing provision, are condemning some young people to the streets, are also disenfranchising this age group and thus effectively removing their rights of political citizenship.

Ruth Lister

TAKING CHILD ABUSE SERIOUSLY The Violence Against Children Study Group

**Unwin Hyman, 1990,
£9.95 pbk., pp.239 ISBN 0-044-45322-1.**

'Taking child abuse seriously' is a though-provoking title, which most professionals in the medical, legal, political and social work fields would find difficult to ignore. Its immediate implication is that those of us in these professions who have not contributed to the text do not take child abuse seriously. However, it is of great benefit to the reader to delve further into the book. Upon doing so s/he will find a text which links social theory, politics, policy and practice and underpins the factors which 'allow' child abuse to occur.

The book does not enter into theoretical aspects of dealing with clients face to face but penetrates the core issues which, we as a society, should be exploring and adapting to attempt to alleviate the problems surrounding child abuse. The Study Group facilitates this task by examining the role of the State and State power, the contribution made by the feminist movement and the impact of gender, race, class, and age upon child abuse theory and practice.

Each chapter focuses on a specific issue related to child abuse, although many of the chapters are inter-related. One of the major questions raised in the early chapters of the book is that of the responsibility for protection of the child - does that lie with the family or the State? By examining the policy changes made by the Thatcher government over the last decade, the Group produces evidence of a move towards the family becoming the protectors of children as in Victorian times, and the State taking a back-seat.

The book then moves on to discuss the importance of the feminist perspective, and examines some of the major gender issues neglected by the majority of publications dealing with policies connected with child abuse. By concentrating on the power struggles between women, children and men the Thatcherite theory of family responsibility is shown, in reality, to be one of female responsibility, and therefore family failure to protect is related as a mother's failure. As a follow-on there is an important and interesting chapter which looks at child abuse as men's violence. Written by Jeff Hearn, who adopts a pro-feminist analysis of child abuse, the chapter develops practical steps male social workers can take in making a stand against violence and the effect this would have in child abuse cases and preventative work.

The remainder of the book looks at the nature of present day social theory and practices in relation to child abuse and how, by examining child abuse in its present and historical context, more adequate theories and practices become possible. References are made here and throughout the book to two of the most publicised cases, those of Jasmine Beckford and Kimberly Carlisle and to the crisis encountered in Cleveland, which led to many of the

policy changes made in recent years. By focussing on these enquiries the risk elements associated with Child Protection are highlighted but acknowledges that these risks cannot be avoided if the best interests of the child are to be served.

Linked with the above is a chapter which debates the racial and ethnic dimension of practice surrounding child abuse. The chapter questions cultural differences and asks if they lead to a failure to act. It points to the difficulties previously expressed in the book when dealing with child abuse but adds the issues of ignorance, or worse, racist ideas workers can have when dealing with black people and families.

The final two chapters of the book discuss the systems that can be employed to lessen the work load on hard-pressed Social Services Departments. They focus on the need for multi-disciplinary work in child abuse and examine the many difficulties that can arise with the coming together of agencies. Further indications are given that positive results can be gained through good communication between the agencies and explains how the exchange of views, opinions and ideas, if embraced rather than fought over, can lead to a dispersion of the problems and pit-falls encountered by Social Workers in recent years.

The Violence Against Children Study Group have produced a book which gives the reader an important insight into the complex problems surrounding child abuse. It adequately achieves its aim set out in the introduction, which was to produce a critical approach to the problem of protecting children and to ensure that the reader becomes aware of the complexities involved in such a task. The question remaining is, who would benefit from reading this book? It should be said that, in the main, professionals in the social work field would benefit most as a knowledge of the cases and Government policies mentioned is needed to understand the relevance of much of the book. However, it remains an essential text for all students, practitioners and academics involved in all aspects of child abuse, but will be of particular interest to those interested in social policy past, present and future.

Susan Atkinson

NEW APPROACHES TO CRIME IN THE 1990s: PLANNING RESPONSES TO CRIME

**Trevor Locke
Longmans, 1990,
£19.95 pbk., ISBN 0-582-05124-X.**

This book by the Development Officer of NACRO is a response to a double crisis, the 'nothing works' despondency of the 1970s and the continuing fragmentation of official responses to crime in the 1980s. Indeed, the whole notion of fragmentation is central to the argument that without a more integrated and nationally shaped plan our reactions to crime will continue to be ineffective. Within this national framework, Locke suggests, the best way to combat (and *reduce*) crime is through a

multi-agency approach at a level local enough to be sensitive to particular problems but large enough to be efficient. The overall aim would be to produce both a decriminalisation of many offences and a depenalisation of many offenders.

This is not startlingly new: what is unusual is the strategic planning approach, which the author explicitly compares with that increasingly fashionable in social work (in Dick Stockford's *Integrating Care Systems, 1988*). The jargon and basic concepts, however, derive from what the author calls 'management science' or 'policy science' (xii, 124). If you've always wondered what the difference is between co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration, or puzzled over demands from your manager to list clearly and separately your aims, objectives, goals and purposes, then this is the book for you. Every concept has its section in large, rather indigestible chapters devoted to the distinction between *policy, planning* and *practice*. Every strategy of what we should do and why (policy), of what we can do and how (planning), and of what we will do and when (practice, p.178). A whole chapter is devoted to the need for an efficient information system in order to build the appropriate 'knowledge engine' with an 'interpretative front end' that will model the processes of crime and our responses (p.235). These 'evaluative tools' will no doubt add up to a whole series of maps, flow models, set diagrams and other detailed graphics just like those in the book.

In the midst of this desperate managerialism there are occasional hints that things might not go all that smoothly. It is admitted that strategic plans are frequently unattractive to those who have to carry them out at the grass roots, and that in fact the whole process of planning economically is often incompatible with democratic accountability (p.166). Indeed, one of the issues consistently dodged in the current documents of Home Office thinking (and left rather vaguely resolved by Locke) is the problem of exactly to *whom* the planning of responses to crime should be accountable (p.171). Yet the idea of planning has become tacit in most recent official discussions of crime policies. This book has the considerable merit of subjecting that idea to examination.

The weaknesses in the concept of planning adopted by Locke, however, derive from the management school approach to politics and public opinion. That the whole process is political is admitted, but there is no substantive discussion of the common ground (the 'vision' and the 'mission') on which a strategic plan could be credibly established. Any such plan has to have some convincing and above all practicable theory of the causes of criminal behaviour or its perpetuation among those processed by current criminal procedures. Unless all the professions and their different agencies could agree on a common view of crime and the priorities of criminal policy no plan would bring them together. Above all, they would have to convince an increasingly sceptical public. There are no signs in this book that discussions of crime response policy would

rise above the exchange of slogans that has dominated the politics of crime, the police and the prisons in the 1980s.

Perhaps it is too much to ask one author to deal with all these issues. Locke is trying to introduce a new way of thinking into the public services which deals with crime and criminals (or potential criminals). As such, he has provided a useful guide to the new management techniques that will shape our lives everywhere in the 1990s. Integration is the key to the problems caused by privatisation, hiving-off, forcible opting-out and other ways of fragmenting the public services. Managing that integration is a problem that most people have avoided so far. As his final chapter of proposals indicates, Locke is far from conservative in his approach. He wants to see a national and local system of crime commissions to pull together the agencies into a single policy on crime, building on the lessons of current practice towards juvenile offenders. Perhaps he is right to avoid outlining the specific way this would be achieved. He lays down the basic principles we should follow - a reduction in the number of criminal statutes and the decarceration of many offenders, the targeting of police efforts on crime at the expense of their other responsibilities, and an integrated intervention in the lives of those caught up in the criminal justice system. This book represents a useful attempt to take the choice of responses to crime out of the hands of lawyers and the police mandarins. We shall find out in the 1990s whether this is really possible.

Pete Rushton

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE; CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

Scott, D.W. & Ruddock, R.
(Manchester Monographs series): University of Manchester 1989
ISBN 0-902-25213-5.

What is known as experiential education has developed in its theory-practice relation to the point where it has gained an eminently respectable status throughout the education services. It is no longer confined to the margins of adult studies or the relatively narrow concerns of vocational training. Though still not as widely practised as some of us would like, we do not have to defend it now as a legitimate approach to learning or justify its processes to our more traditionalist-minded colleagues in

higher education. The battle to validate its relevance, though not quite won, is at least now engaged on all fronts. Although we may suspect the commitment of certain more recent and partial converts such as the Training Commission or the backwards looking theorists behind the Education Reform Act, we can be sure that in their lip-service to it they are aware of its existence, even if they don't understand it.

This question of understanding experiential approaches is crucial. To *understand* it is to *become* it. Those of us in higher education who work with both young undergraduates and adult students know with certainty that society had prepared them for 'learning' in very different ways. Those differences condition their whole experience of education, of knowledge, and of learning. Any form of learning that depends upon assumptions of a 'pure' academic curriculum in which knowledge is abstract or neutral is essentially a reification of knowledge itself. There is a 'double curriculum' to every subject, the body of knowledge intrinsic to that subject as such, and the totality of the person who is 'learning' it. Each individual brings to the educational process the sum total of themselves - their life as it has been and as it is - and that experience constitutes a curriculum of its own which is no less real or relevant than the subject that they study. Whether the student/pupil is studying engineering, mathematics or the liberal arts is of secondary consequence. Any educational process that ignores the 'life-curriculum' of the person, and offers knowledge as value-free (as a 'thing in itself') is essentially a one-dimensional activity. Within it the individual may change, but not necessarily *develop*, and the 'learning' gained remains a commodity. In a society where knowledge is power, education is a greater force for social change than any other - including money, which makes its strict control by all governments an absolute necessity. Of all the 'radical' social policies introduced by successive Thatcher cabinets, the 1989 Education Reform Act is the one that will go further to actually reconstructing British society than any other. At its root is the pernicious belief that education can somehow be translated into the social equivalence of *cash*, the only other form of social mediation that the capitalist mentality accepts as valid. Despite recent back-tracking, somewhere in the bowels of the D.E.S. the ghost of bumbling Joseph lives on, still believing that the 'cycle of deprivation' can be redeemed by *vouchers*.

Scott and Ruddock remind us that experiential education has already travelled a hard road, through adult education, extra mural studies, the vocational courses. It has even further yet to go. Youth and Community Work training has contributed to its practice very considerably, though not substantially to its theory. The usefulness of this monograph is in the reviewing of current theory, and in the openness with which it discusses the central issues of experiential approaches for which we still have not constructed an adequate practice. There are still very large obstacles to progress, the method of a 'practical-critical' learning, the 'education

versus training' problem, and not least, the difficulties of contradictions, especially in the re-making of the personal and the political. The overview of experiential approaches here is as good an introduction as I have yet encountered and, importantly, it is written in a serious, but not unduly academic tone. Moreover it is good to see disparate sources being harnessed together in the debate on theory. Gramsci's concept of commonsense and Rogers' model of therapy both have a relevance. In the past the debate had often been either too academic, in which case practitioners are accused of mystification, or over-simplified and thereby guilty of anti-intellectualism. In the pursuit of experiential education we have all got to be more honest, and some of us perhaps less concerned about what is 'ideologically suspect'. I personally welcome the method here that enables the knowledge of T.S. Eliot to be used to elucidate that of R.D. Laing. Even stranger bedfellows than these will ultimately have to be reconciled in a social democracy that is founded on a common culture, and that, in the last analysis, is what experiential education must be about. This from the foreword:

... it argues for those values which are liberatory, which encourage learners to make connections between personal and private troubles, and wider social inequalities ... ultimately it is about the social experiences of the learner ... it is about the extent to which process of personal discovery can be derived from these experiences ... about the misuse of power and privilege in all its forms.

That, it seems to me, is to start at the beginning.

Frank Booton

BEYOND THE INNER CITY

David Byrne

Open University Press

£9.95. pbk., pp.179. ISBN 0-335-15871-4.

The policy literature on urban issues is more often than not written and presented with a declared note of detachment:- social scientists (among them sociologists, geographers, political economists, and others) bring an academic objectivity to their work, or at least that is their professed (and professional) aim. In many instances, academic work on public policy contains an ill-concealed political agenda, leaving the reader to fathom things out. It is refreshing, therefore, to find a study which is clear at the outset about its intentions. David Byrne's book

analyses inner city issues with a view to developing a programme of action. This goal of an alternative politics, taking us 'Beyond the Inner City', will not be to everyone's liking, but there is a challenge there which anyone with a serious interest in the modern city will want to meet.

Byrne's book is divided into three parts. The first is a largely successful introduction which suffers mainly from brevity. Some of the key analytical matters, such as the understanding of the concept of 'locality' in making sense of change in advanced capitalist society, really demand more attention. It is here, however, that we learn of Byrne's empirical focus on the inner city of North Shields and the outer city of Cramlington. The middle part of the book is taken up with a comparative account of these two areas. The third, and final, part of the book allows Byrne to move on to strategies and tactics for change, emphasising the importance of organisation for collective response among working class communities.

The best part about this book is the middle core containing the information and analysis of North Shields and Cramlington. In the 1970s Byrne worked for the Community Development Project (CDP) in North Tyneside, one of about a dozen set up and administered nationally by the Home Office. The CDPs were intended both to study political and social problems, and to address policy options. Drawing on his prior experience, Byrne goes back to the inner city of his CDP days and offers illuminating and important contrasts between North Shields now and ten years ago, and between North Shields and Cramlington today.

Both places are part of the same conurbation, and yet for reasons of historical development they have different experiences to offer. This is especially true with regard to socio-economic change and attendant public planning exercises. On the one hand, North Shields has a longer industrial history:- this derived from serving as the export base for the South East Northumberland coalfield during 19th century expansion and from developing specialist ship-repair employment at Smith's Dock Yard from the turn of the century. Both of these industries have seen profound decline in recent times. On the other hand, Cramlington is a New Town managed by a partnership between local councils and private developers which grew significantly as a planned response to post-1945 economic and demographic change:- the intention was that Cramlington should attract new investment to provide employment following the decline of the coal/shipbuilding/engineering industries and to build housing for the overspill populations moving from the densely populated inner urban areas.

The issue of land planning is taken up as part of the analysis and land is presented as the crucial resource in times of economic change. Byrne then goes on to investigate the dimensions of de-industrialisation involving a switch from production to consumption-reproduction based activities. This switch is signalled today by the advent of the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) in Tyne and Wear. The

UDC is symptomatic of the current era of economic restructuring, and there is much more that needs to be said as this process of change is stimulated by state agencies like the UDC. It is not simply a matter of shipyards and collieries closing because of market forces, rather the state is playing a key role which is in urgent need of study. Following this, there is an analysis of socio-spatial segregation, with a sensitive interpretation of evidence appearing to show an underclass resulting from extreme social differentiation.

In the final part of the book Byrne develops his ideas on the future planning of city life and on the sources of collective action. In an area where local culture is heavily influenced by the proletarianising effect of an industrial history, Byrne examines the likelihood of resistance. As ever, collective or community organisation is of the essence. Comparative evidence suggests that popular movements become incorporated in the very system they set out to challenge, and Byrne's optimistic view is that the particular political culture of the localities studied would prevent such a result. His argument on this will be unconvincing to many, stimulating to some and outrageous to others. Nevertheless, if urban studies are to go much beyond trite acceptance of the model of the post-industrial city, some recognition is needed of the social and (potential) political response to contemporary change. This book goes some way towards that recognition, and is in sharp contrast to much of the arid theoretical work that fails to illuminate how and why cities are changing.

Philip Garrahan

ANALYSIS

The Children Act 1989 - a Charter for Children and Their Families?

JULIE LAND

(For the purpose of this article 'child' means a person who has not reached eighteen years of age).

It has been suggested that the degree of civilisation of a society can be judged by the way it treats its children. Using this definition as a guide, we clearly cannot be complacent about the present law relating to children and families, nor the services we have to date offered to them.

The last decade has witnessed increasing criticism of the law relating to children and of the professionals attempting to operate it. Between 1980 and 1985 ten children were known to die at the hands of their parents, and six of these were on care orders at the time of their death. The press chose this opportunity to hound not only the social workers involved, but also the social work profession in general, and public opinion became increasingly angry with a profession unable to protect children in their own homes. Commissions of Inquiry appointed to investigate the circumstances of these deaths pointed to the mistakes of the professionals involved, but also commented on the inadequacies of the law they had to operate.

1987 saw the Cleveland Affair in which over a hundred children, suspected of being sexually abused by their parents, were removed from their own homes. Publicity given to some of these parents increased the public's concern that the present law and current social work practice could be held responsible for infringing basic parental rights by contributing to the break up of the family. Similarly, research commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Security and the Economic and Social Research Council pointed to the fact that children entering care often become 'lost' in the care system by losing contact with their natural family and consequently greatly reducing their chances of returning home.

Further the care system itself has come under increasing attack from children in care, because they feel it does not respond to their needs, or recognise their rights to have a say over their future.

In response to these attacks the Government introduced a new piece of legislation, The Children Bill, into the House of Commons in November 1988. After several amendments from both Houses this Bill received the Royal Assent in November 1989. The Act, The Children Act, will be fully implemented in 1991.

What are the main changes introduced by this Act and will it provide a better system for helping children and families? The Act deals with one of the major criticisms of the preceding legislation by producing a comprehensive piece

of legislation which should provide practitioners with a simpler and more consistent code of practice. At present there are over twenty routes

by which a child can enter care of the local authority. The Children Act abolishes many of these routes, and aims to simplify existing legislation by joining together, a) the law relating to individuals in private family cases and, b) the responsibilities of local authorities both to children at risk in their own homes and to children with special needs.

In keeping with its general philosophy the Act moves away from the concept of 'parental rights' to a doctrine of 'parental responsibility'. The Act makes it clear that wherever possible persons having care of a child should be made fully subject to this doctrine. The Act rests on the principle that children are generally best looked after by their family and systemises the previous rag-bag of rights, powers, duties and responsibilities towards their children. It also clarifies which rights and responsibilities remain with the parents when the child comes into care, whether by agreement or under a care order. These residual rights were far from clear to parents under the old legislation.

The concept of 'voluntary care' is abolished, and, in accordance with the doctrine of parental responsibility, parents may arrange for the entering of their children into local authority accommodation on agreed terms for suitable periods of time. Thus parents have rights to maintain contact with their children, and the Act imposes a duty on the local authority to promote contact between the child and his/her parents in order that the child may be returned home as soon as possible. The right of the local authority to assume parental rights over children lodged with them by agreement (previously known as children in voluntary care) has been abolished, as is the necessity for a parent to give notice to the local authority if he/she wants to remove the child from such local authority accommodation.

A guiding principle of the Act is that the child's wishes must be considered at all times, as long as the child is old enough to give a considered opinion. The child cannot be forced to submit to a medical examination if the child refuses and is old enough to make an informed decision. Further the local authority must give due consideration to the child's religious persuasion, racial origins, and cultural and linguistic background when planning for the child's care.

The Act gives local authorities a general duty to provide a range of services appropriate to the needs of children in their area and this may include assistance in kind, or in exceptional circumstances in cash. Unlike the old Act cash assistance may be made conditional on whole or partial

repayment. The Act does impose a new duty on local authorities to provide day care for the under fives, and care and supervised activities outside school hours and during school holidays for children in need. If local authorities commit resources into these areas it could be of considerable benefit to the child and his/her family, as research has shown that preventative services offered to children and families diminish the need for children to come into care. The Act is also concerned with the protection of children in their own homes, and the overriding purpose of the Act is to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and to protect them from unwarranted local authority interference.

The local authority and the N.S.P.C.C. have been given a new power, a child assessment order, to enable them to investigate suspected cases of child abuse where the person caring for the child is unco-operative. The order lasts for seven days and may be appealed against.

An 'emergency protection order' replaces the 'place of safety' order under the old Act. This order lasts for eight days extendible to fifteen days, unlike the old order which lasted for twenty eight days. Parents can appeal against the emergency protection order after seventy two hours which will have implications for the local authority as they will have less time to collect evidence to take to court in support of their case. On the other hand, children removed from their own homes will have less time to wait before their case is heard in court.

The grounds for care and supervision orders have been changed from those in the old Act to harm, or the likelihood of harm, and an order can only be made if the court feels that, a) the conditions have been satisfied and, b) it will improve the welfare of the child. The police and the local authority education department lose their right to initiate care proceedings, so, unlike the old Act care cannot be used by the courts as a sentence for non-school attendance. However, the local authority education department can apply to the court for an education supervision order when a child is persistently truanting. Offending is also no longer a primary ground for care or supervision under the new Act, although the child can still be prosecuted for offending under the 1969 Act. This is not to say that children who are either offending, or truanting, or both, will not come into care, or be placed on supervision orders under the new Act where the court feels that the child's welfare is being impaired by his/her behaviour.

Interim care and supervision orders are available under the new Act, but once again, like the emergency protection order, the duration of the orders has been reduced in order to ensure that the full court hearing takes place as soon as possible.

Supervision orders under the new Act give the supervising officer greater powers than were available under the old

legislation. Obligations are not only imposed on the child, but on a responsible person who may be the parents or the person the child lives with. The responsible person has to allow the supervisor access to the child and the order may require the child to live in a specific place, present himself/herself to the supervisor at appropriate times, and participate in specific activities.

The Act also looks to the after care of the children who have been in local authority care. The Act requires the local authority to assist a young person who has been in their care up to the age of 21 years if the young person requests this assistance. Assistance can be in kind, and in exceptional circumstances, can be in cash. The young person may have to pay back cash assistance, but is not liable to do so while in receipt of income support or family credit. Cash grants can be given to help the young person meet educational or training expenses, or expenses incurred in seeking work, and in these cases grants do not have to be paid back and can continue beyond the young person's twenty first birthday.

The Act makes considerable changes which will affect children and families. On the positive side it recognises the rights of parents and the importance of considering the views of the children themselves, but balances this with the need of the local authority to protect children. It demands that social workers adopt the good practice model of working with children and their families with clear contracts which define the role of all parties in the care process. The preventative role of the local authority towards children in need, by providing nursery care for the under fives, and services after school hours and during the school holidays, could reduce the numbers of children needing to come into care. However, to carry out this duty effectively, local authorities will need to develop resources, which in the present climate may prove to be very difficult unless the Government is prepared to offer financial assistance.

One of the major problems of the legislation stems from the acceleration which has been injected into the court processes. A basic principle of the new Act is that a child's case should be heard in court as soon as possible, both for the benefit of the child and his/her family.

Consequently, the duration of the temporary orders has been reduced with obvious implications for hard-pressed social workers.

All cases involving children and families, once the legislation comes into force, are to be dealt with by the domestic branch of the magistrates court. Magistrates courts are at present under considerable pressure and cases are waiting months to be heard. Without an increase in available court space and funding the whole process will break down, and children and families will again be left in limbo, thus defeating the whole aim of the Act.

I N SHORT

In Short is a new section which aims to provide a short guide to selected recent legislation, legislation in progress and miscellaneous information on statistics and new reports. Entries will vary each quarter.

BENEFITS

The main changes (including announcements in October 1989), will follow elsewhere in the next Journal. A selection of changes are shown here:

Child Benefit

The three year freeze continues. Frozen at £7.25.

Housing Benefit

Capital limits were increased to £16,000 from April 1990. However, tariff continues to apply.

Increase in lone parent Premium (to be introduced in October 1990).

Increase in earnings disregard for lone parents (to be introduced in October 1990).

Draft regulations to be enacted from September 1990 propose to bar most students from claiming Housing Benefit assistance. Students currently receive assistance where rents are over £29.17 per week in London and £18.67 elsewhere. Disabled students, students with children, pensioners and people receiving Income Support will still be able to claim. Student grants will only increase (& Student Loans) by £460 in London and £420 elsewhere. See entry on Student's Grants for more information.

(Source: Inside Housing Vol. 7, No. 10, March 90)

Income Support

Introduction of a new premium for carers (-only applies to those in receipt of Invalid Care Allowance).

Maternity Grants

The maternity Grant is to increase by £15 to £100.

COMMUNITY CHARGE

Capital Limits

The budget announcement on 20.3.1990 increased the capital cut-off limits in eligibility for Community Charge and Housing Benefit from April 1990. The new limit has been set at £16,000. Scottish claimants cannot obtain backdating for the financial year 1989/90.

(Source: Guardian 21.3.90)

Transitional Help

4th March 1990, David Hunt, Minister for Local Government announced that seven and a half million charge payers will get £350 million in transitional relief on their 1990/91 community charge bills.

Transitional relief is automatically given if

- you are the only charge payer and your assumed community charge bill is more than £156 above an assumed rates bill for 1989/90 for the property concerned.

- there are two charge payers in your property and your assumed community charges added together are more than £156 above an assumed rates bill for 1989/90 for the property concerned.

- there are three or more charge payers in your property and two assumed community charges added together are more than £156 above an assumed rates bill for 1989/90 for the property concerned. The relief will be divided equally between all charge payers.

Elderly and disabled people and their partners, who did not previously pay rates or rent will have to apply directly to their local authorities.

*assumed - if your actual community charge bill is more than the assumed bill the relief will be calculated on the basis of the assumed charge. (Source: DOE Press Release, 153, 7.3.90).

CRIME

Custody

In Europe, Britain has the highest number of people in prison with a rate of 97.4 per 1,000,000 of the population according to figures for 1988 from the Council of Europe.

(Source: Guardian 3.4.90)

DISABILITY

The Treasury Department is considering scrapping the Independent Living Fund after trustees announced that its budget of £24 million for 1990/91 had almost run out. The Fund was established in 1988. Approximately 4,500 people have received grants and there are 1,800 applications a month.

(Source: Guardian 20.3.90)

Disabled and Housing

A new report from Shelter indicates that few local authorities possess information about the numbers of disabled people in their areas and that planning for future housing needs ignores the disabled.

(Source: 'Our Homes, Our Rights', by J. Morris. Published by Shelter, March 1990)

Disabled Students

The Government has announced more help for disabled students (see Students Grants be-

low).

EDUCATION

New Regime

From April 2nd, schools will be operating under the new 'formula funding' arrangements but the full impact is not yet known. Few budgets have yet been announced.

Universities

Universities are to receive an average of 10% increase in funding next year.

Stress

A research report will be published in mid-April on the extent of stress in the teaching profession. The research was carried out by Professor Gary Cooper of the University of Manchester and commissioned by the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers.

Credit Vouchers

Credit vouchers to pay for part-time further education and training will be piloted to school-leavers by some T.E.C.'s from April 1991. They will partly be paid for out of current further education funding. Ten T.E.C.'s will run the pilots. The idea stems from a C.B.I. proposal last year.

(Source: Times Educational Supplement 30.3.90)

HEALTH

The N.H.S. and Community Care Bill is still progressing through the Commons at the time of writing. The most recent arguments have centred around the failure of the Bill to recognise the key relationship between state benefits and affordability of registered care home services. Lack of ring fencing around Social Services budgets has also been heavily criticised since it weakens the ability of Social Services Departments to provide necessary funds for services in their new role as enablers.

HOUSING

The provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are now being implemented.

HOMELESSNESS

The Government's proposals following its Homelessness Review were finally announced in November last year. Little was offered in the way of major change to assist vulnerable groups excluded under the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act.

Michael Spicer, Housing Minister, has an-

nounced that an extra £12 million will be available to tackle homelessness. Two thirds of the amount will go to local authorities in London and the remainder to authorities in the South East.

(Source: Inside Housing Vol. 7, No. 13, 30.3.90)

Rents

Local authorities have announced steep rent rises in many localities as a result of the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Local Authority Repairs

Capitalisation of resources rather than revenue has enabled local authorities to fund repairs on existing housing. The provisions of the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act will prevent this in future by penalising authorities who spend more than assumed levels of expenditure on management and maintenance. Cut backs on repairs or increasing revenue by raising rents are the options available.

STUDENT GRANTS

The proposals to forge ahead with student loans faced a new challenge with Peers defeating the Government on benefits proposals to cut student entitlement to Housing Benefit, Income Support and Unemployment Benefit. Peers argued that benefits cuts have to be seen alongside loans proposals to offer amounts of around £400 from September.

(Source: Times Educational Supplement 30.3.90)

TRAINING

Cuts

£350 million will be cut from employment training over the next three years. £300 million will be taken from Y.T.S. budgets and £50 million from Employment Training.

(Source: Guardian 19.3.90)

End of YTS

Introduced seven years ago as 'the permanent bridge between school and work', YTS has officially ended. It is being replaced by a cheaper 'Youth Training' programme. Places will still be guaranteed to all unemployed school leavers and the allowances of £29.50 and £35.00 (17 year olds), will continue. However, grants payable to participating companies or training groups will be cut and fears have been expressed about the knock on effects of cuts on top up amounts paid to trainees by employers.

(Source: Times Educational Supplement 30.3.90)

These entries were prepared by Moyra Riseborough, Research Fellow, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, Birmingham University.

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YOUTH AND POLICY

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Submission Details

Material for the journal, including correspondence, is welcomed within our stated editorial aims.

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The editor welcomes enquiries for specific information and general comments on the feature????????

ARTICLES

Please send articles, of any length up to 10,000 words, to: Judith Cocker.

FEEDBACK

We welcome letters concerning the journal or on issues concerning youth in society: Maura Banim.

REVIEWS

Suggestions for future review material and names of possible contributors are invited from the readership: Chris Parkin.

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Working space is aimed at those who may not normally consider contributing an article and may be written in whatever style the individual feels comfortable with: Malcolm Jackson.

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APOLOGY

In the last issue we omitted the biographical notes for Mary Issitt, author of the piece on the ESG Apprenticeship Scheme. Mary Issitt worked as the development adviser to the National Steering Committee for the ESG Apprenticeship Scheme from January to October, 1989. She now teaches Youth and Community Work at Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education.

YOUTH AND POLICY

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