youth & policy

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CONTENTS

MANAGERIALISM IN YOUTH AND COMMUNITY WORK:

A Critique of Changing Organisational Structures and Management Practices

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The purpose of this paper is to explore the development of hierarchical structures and the growth of managerialism in contemporary youth & community organisations. I shall attempt to show that the traditional organisational design of youth services, whilst matching the complexity of the work and the culture of the service, has considerable weaknesses in relation to improving practice and in providing quick and creative responses to our hostile and dynamic environment. However, changes that are being made in relation to increased bureaucracy and centralised control do not seem to tackle these weaknesses, but may well damage the morale and commitment of good and effective staff. I shall conclude by suggesting alternative approaches to the management and organisational design of Youth and Community services.

The Structure Of Organisations

Mintzberg (1979) defines organisational structure as 'The sum total of the ways in which .. (an organisation) divides its labour into distinct tasks and then achieves coordination between them.' (p2). Handy (1985) agrees that structure seems to have two clear elements within it; one which is about the formal roles that people have and may include elements of hierarchy, lines of accountability and job descriptions, (see a typical organisation chart); and another is the linking mechanisms between those roles. Morgan (1986) makes the point that we tend to think of organisations as machines and therefore design them in a rather mechanistic way, ignoring the influence of people upon them. The development of organisation theory appears to be partially a development of our understanding about how organisations are affected by those within them and the task that the organisation has to achieve. Explanations have moved from a bureaucratic, mechanistic analysis (Weber 1947), to an 'organic' explanation stressing diffusion of power and communication (Burns & Stalker 1961); to the 'contingency' approach with an emphasis on the match between organisational variables and structural design (Hage 1980) [all from Hall 1987].

Mechanistic/bureaucratic:

The mechanistic, bureaucratic organisation is an approach to structure that 'emphasises precision, speed, clarity, regularity, reliability and efficiency achieved through the creation of a fixed division of tasks, hierarchical supervision, and detailed rules and regulations' (Morgan 1986, p24) It is imbued with the idea of rationality and efficiency. However, it requires that the component parts (workers) will behave like machines. Yet, as Morgan says, the tasks facing organisations are far more complex and erratic than those facing machines. Therefore the approach has been criticised for the following limitations:

1. It disregards the human elements of organisations and can have a dehumanising effect, particularly at lower levels in the organisation.

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It encourages people to obey orders rather than show initiative or question what they are doing.

2. It can't adapt easily to changing situations

3. It can cause 'mindless, unquestioning' bureaucracy

4. It tends to compartmentalize and cause unnecessary barriers to communication and innovation

5. Clearly specified job roles have a side-effect of telling people what 'is not expected of them'. This is likely to limit initiative and flexibility in responding to change.

(How many times have I heard youth workers say I can't do so and so because it isn't in my job description)

Organic
Organic theories of organisational design have been strongly influenced by the critique of classical scientific/mechanistic approaches. Theories of human motivation (eg. Maslow) and job design (e.g. Hertzberg) emphasised the need for work organisations to take into account the social and psychological 'needs' of human beings in order to be fully effective and make good use of their human resources. In other words, organisations need to blend human and technical factors and this notion is known as the 'sociotechnical' approach to organisational design.

Open systems
Organic approaches to organisation theory have been expanded to take into account not only the need to consider socio-technical principals in organisational design, but also the fact that organisations are part of and 'open to' their broader environment.

Contingency theory
An obvious development from the 'Open systems' approach, with its recognition of the impact of different internal needs and external circumstances on the organisation, has been the notion of 'contingency' theory. That is, the notion that the most appropriate form of organisational design will be dependent or (*contingent*) upon the task and environment with which the organisation will have to deal. Burns and Stalker (1961) and Lawrence and Lorch (1967) (cited in Morgan 1986) were influential in the development of this theory, and in the period since the sixties, many research studies have tried to illuminate what organisational characteristics are best matched to different tasks and environmental circumstances.

Summary
The debate almost seems to have come full circle. The major rejection of the mechanistic/bureaucratic approach in favour of 'organic' designs has now been displaced by the idea that almost any organisational structure may be suitable. What seems to be more important now is less the intrinsic merit of a design, and more, its effectiveness in meeting the internal and external needs of a given organisation. In other words the **congruence** between the structure and the demands that are being made of it.

The following table from Harrison (1987) illustrates some of the current thinking about the conditions that best fit mechanistic and organic organisations.

Conditions Affecting the Fit of Mechanistic and Organic Systems

Description	Mechanistic	Organic
Roles, responsibilities	Specialized, clearly defined	Diffuse, flexible change through use
Coordination and Control	Supervision, rules standard procedures detailed plans; frequent evaluation based on meeting objectives, standards	Consultation among all having related tasks; flexible plans; diffuse, changing goals; evaluation of results over longer time frame.
Communication	Top-down emphasis: top management has key outside contacts	Multidirectional: multilevel contacts with outsiders
Supervision and Leadership	Non-participative, one-on-one; loyalty to superiors stressed position and experience grant authority.	Participative team styles: emphasis on task, team, organisation; expertise & knowledge grant authority.
Sources of knowledge	Local, internal	External, cosmopolitan, professional orientation

Fit best when	Mechanistic	Organic
Technology is	routine (well understood, standardised).	nonroutine (not well understood; or designed for each problem).
Task environment	Predictable (simple, changing predictably)	unpredictable (complex, changing rapidly).
Personnel expect	High level of structure and routine; control from above.	High levels of role flexibility, challenging work.
Effectiveness criteria stress	Efficiency; standard predictable operations and outputs; ease of control from top.	Creativity, innovativeness, adaptiveness, quality of work life, development of human resources.

Harrison (1987) p82

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Youth Service Organisations

I now wish to use this potted summary of organisation theory to examine youth service organisations and whether their traditional and changing organisation patterns are **congruent** with their needs. That is, is there a good fit between organisation designs (including their management practice) and the nature of the organisation's staff, tasks and external environment.

In my experience, youth service organisations (large enough to employ several full-time workers) have traditionally fallen into what Mintzberg would call **Professional Bureaucracies** and strong elements of this organisational form continue in contemporary organisations. **Professional Bureaucracy** is one of a number of 'ideal type' structures through which Mintzberg has attempted to formalise key elements of contingency theory. In other words, he has categorised different types of organisation and discussed what contingent factors they are best suited to. For example his **Machine Bureaucracy** is typified by the MacDonalds restaurant. An organisational form which works well for the continuous production of standardised products requiring low level staff skills, and operating in a fairly stable external environment. (Works well for whom you might ask!)

Mintzberg describes the **Professional Bureaucracy** as the structural configuration that appears when an organisation is largely made up of skilled workers; **professionals**. These people take a long time to train, and complete complex tasks. Teachers and doctors are good examples of such professionals because their tasks are highly complicated and skilled. Because the tasks are so complex, the workers retain high levels of discretion. Many judgements are involved and this gives them considerable control over the performance and outputs of their work. Standardisation, or quality of outputs, is not controlled by direct supervision but by 'professional' standards. These are learnt through training and experience, and are regulated by professional bodies and peer pressure from outside any one organisation. For example in the field of youth and community work, the strong emphasis on anti-oppressive practice is determined by the broad professional and academic youth work community nationally. That community has far greater influence on these matters than the particular organisation that any one of us operates in. Indeed, the emphasis on anti-oppression in the professional Youth Work community may be in some conflict with many employing organisations.

> Whereas the **Machine Bureaucracy** relies on authority of a hierarchical nature - the power of office - the **Professional Bureaucracy** emphasises authority of a professional nature - the power of expertise (Mintzberg 1979, p351)

However, such organisations remain bureaucratical (as defined by Mintzberg from Weber) because the behaviour within them is 'pre-determined or predictable, in effect, standardised'. There are formalised methods and procedures for dealing with things; relationships between different roles are predictable. Mintzberg makes the point that *bureaucratic* does not equate with *autocratic* and organisations can be decentralised bureaucracies. Higher Education is a good example of this with heavily bureaucratic systems for timetabling, examining, validation and decision-making, yet traditionally very decentralised in its power structure.

Mintzberg's category, therefore, describes very well the traditional educational institution or the organisation of hospitals, social work and other human service agencies. Individual staff work largely autonomously and because there is little need for direct supervision, the organisational shape is flat with broad spans of managerial control. Middle management is of minor importance because there is little point in the direct supervision of staff. Furthermore such professionals not only control their own work, but also tend to exercise collective control over other aspects of the organisation that affect them. The committee structures that abound in Universities are an excellent example of this collective control. Senior management, whilst having less power than in other types of organisational structure, still hold more power than any other individual professional in the organisation. However that power may be overwhelmed by collective resistance.

It is possible to see why Professional Bureaucracy is an important configuration to discuss in relation to the Youth Service where the staff are highly trained (compared with staff in MacDonalds) and they perform tasks that are so complex that they cannot be easily broken down and specified (witness competency lists). It is also difficult for those outside the Youth and Community field to assess the quality of the work. Thus the staff retain high levels of discretion over their performance. For example, during a period of one year when I worked as a full-time youth worker for Lancashire Youth Service, my line managers did not once observe my work with young people; I had considerable control and discretion in relation to my work, much as I do now as an academic. However, despite the level of worker autonomy, youth service organisations have remained largely bureaucratic in the sense that there are formalised procedures and a reasonable standardisation to activities. Good practice is frequently determined outside any individual organisation as part of 'professional' standards. For example, the development of *girls' work* has filtered into organisations not by senior management dictat but by mainstream workers in contact with a wider community of youth workers, and pressure groups, who are able (if somewhat slowly) to exert collective influence on their organisation. Furthermore, youth work staff expect to have considerable control over their organisations and to be consulted about changes and developments.

Contingent factors
How effective is this traditional structure of Youth and Community organisations for their current role and contemporary external environment? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to consider what Mintzberg identifies as the contingent factors related to **Professional Bureaucracy**. That is, under what circumstances is it an effective organisational design? Mintzberg argues that a **Professional Bureaucracy** is appropriate for organisations:

1. Where the staff do complex, skilled work

2. Which operate in a stable external environment

3. Where the technical systems are unsophisticated

To what extent are these an accurate description of youth work organisations?

Complexity:
There is no doubt that the role of youth worker is enormously complex. Attempts to develop competency lists have revealed dramatically how difficult it is to identify and describe all the different skills, attitudes and knowledge required by an effective youth worker. Likewise, the measurement of that performance has created similar problems, not least because of disputes regarding what counts as good practice and appropriate outcomes. In the event, the complexity of performance leads to it being measured by the 'professional judgement' of a fellow worker or manager. This complexity, both in the range of skills used and discretion held by staff, links with decentralised management where staff do not require regular direct supervision and tend to resist administrative and supervisory interference in their work. Mintzberg argues that this 'control over his own work means that the professional works relatively independently of his colleagues' *(p349)* and this is certainly true in youth and community work. Even in part-time teams, staff may well be working with different groups of young people with only brief periods available to discuss their work together. Therefore staff enjoy considerable autonomy and organisations tend to be 'fairly loose conglomerations of their constituent staff members' *(Becher 1987)*. However, this does not prevent standards of performance being set but these tend to come from outside the organisation as, for example, standards in relation to provision for young women. 'Individuals act in an essentially entrepreneurial role'.

Therefore, in terms of complexity, the professional bureaucracy appears to be congruent with the nature of Youth and Community work. However the same could not be said of the external environment.

External environment
There is no doubt that the youth service is now operating in a turbulent and hostile environment. It interacts with an environment which is both complex and changing and this presents organisations with considerable uncertainty. Witness the proposals for a national core curriculum in 1989, which were overturned by the new minister responsible for youth soon after his appointment in 1992. Earlier paragraphs highlighted the environmental conditions suited to different organisational structures. Katz and Kahn argue that an organisation's success depends on how well it adapts to its environment *(cited in Harrison 1987)*. Therefore, a turbulent and dynamic environment requires an organisation that has sufficient flexibility to make rapid changes in tune with the needs of the environment. The youth service over the last decade has needed, for example, the ability to respond quickly to changing demands *(from both communities and the state)* such as youth unemployment, inner-city riots, changing patterns of training, the advent of HIV/AIDS, and youth homelessness and destitution.

Therefore a **Professional Bureaucracy**, with its need for a stable external environment, would appear to have major shortcomings in relation to the current operating environment of Youth and Community organisations.

Technical systems
It could be argued that the technical systems of Youth and Community organisations are very unsophisticated, with the primary tool for delivering the work being

the workers themselves. There are some moves towards management information systems but with many workers still carrying out most of their own administration, and work roles being largely independent of each other, the need for complex technical systems to co-ordinate work has largely been absent. In this sense, the **Professional Bureaucracy** has been an appropriate form of organisational design for Youth and Community Services.

In summary, it would seem that although there are elements of Youth and Community work which suit a **Professional Bureaucracy**, the current external environment certainly does not fit with this organisational form. Therefore in the next section, I would like to explore further the failure of this organisational form for Youth and Community work and examine the attempts that have been made to overcome some of its disadvantages.

Problems and possibilities
The process whereby each youth worker has tended to operate as an independent entity has had important consequences for aspects of communication and co-ordination in youth work organisations. Internal co-ordination is very difficult. They are fragmented, loosely coupled *(Watts 1990)* institutions and horizontal communication (ie between workers across the organisation) is hampered by the lack of interaction. However, where this flat, decentralised structure has been replaced by an equally bureaucratic, *hierarchical* structure, horizontal communication is also curtailed by having to travel up and down the hierarchy.

The lack of co-ordination also creates considerable political conflict as different sections argue over the boundaries of their territory. When new problems or expansion are dealt with by allocation to existing units and workers, rather than by combining them, it is not surprising that those different groups put up a fight. Organisational tasks that do not fit into existing categories become lost in the gaps between specialisms and teams of workers. This has enormous consequences for adaptation to the external environment, as we shall see below.

Centralisation refers to the distribution of power in organisations and, as I have said, youth service organisations are traditionally very decentralised. One of the benefits for the people involved has been the democratic structure. Staff may complain about not having sufficient say in matters, but compared to many types of organisation, youth services traditionally allow staff considerable voice in decision-making procedures with team meetings, consultative groups, and representation on committees. This decentralised decision-making is clearly linked to poor co-ordination by Hall *(1987)* with the associated inability to implement consistent organisation-wide policies and make rapid decisions. Matterson (1981) talks about 'the innate conservatism of representative government' which tends to put off making decisions and avoids excessive change. Unfortunately, such caution is contingent on a stable external world, and does not sit comfortably with the environment facing Youth and Community Services currently. As Francis *(1987)* says 'The difficulty of obtaining the willing co-operation of many independent people means that change proceeds with almost painful slowness' *(p68)*.

Not surprisingly, then, the last decade has seen a concerted effort to change this type of organisational structure in the Youth Service with attempts to increase rationality and tighten controls by executive management, evidenced by reduced autonomy and increased management supervision, appraisal and accountability. There has been a huge growth in managerial posts, phrases abound like 'management's right to manage' and organisational structures have become much taller. For example when I worked for Lancashire in 1980 as a full-time worker, there was one tier above me in the Youth Service structure and the odd adviser floating about. Now the same post would have four tiers above it within the Youth Service and probably two or three more in the Senior management of the Education Department. A total of 10 levels between Chief Education Officer and part-timer!

Of course the internal changes within Youth Services reflect wider political pressures as well as internal dissatisfaction. As Tolbert *(1985)* argues in relation to Higher Education, organisations experience pressure to conform to external views about how they should operate. Failure to respond can effect the legitimacy of the organisation and its ability to attract resources. The funding arrangements related to in-service training, youth work curriculum and the head quarters grants of voluntary organisations have all reflected this pattern.

One example of this political pressure has been the individual freedom of workers which has come under considerable pressure over the last decade with external efforts to curtail it in all areas of professional life, particularly in the public sector. The national curriculum is an excellent example of this as is appraisal as a precondition of wage rises for teachers and academics. Parallel pressures can be seen between the demand for Higher Education institutions to justify their activities and account for their use of resources in terms of effectiveness (Sizer 1986) and Alan Howarth's challenge to the Youth Service to clarify 'the core of what the youth service is uniquely best placed to provide' *(1989)*.

Mintzberg (interestingly, writing in **1979**) points out that a view of professional problems as a result of insufficient control over professionals leads to the introduction of **co-ordinating controls designed for other types of organisational configuration**. These tend to be 'direct supervision, standardisation of work processes, or standardisation of outputs' *(p376)*. Some recent examples of these in the youth service include accounting for time used, regular managerial supervision, monitoring of club activities, competency lists, appraisal, detailed job descriptions, and performance indicators. In general, the approaches are a shift to a hierarchical structure of control with a strong emphasis on **management intervention.**

However, this move is in direct contradiction with traditional practice in youth work *(as I have suggested above)* and it is argued *(Becher 1987, Mintzberg1979)* that not only does it fail to improve the work of incompetent staff, it also damages the work and motivation of competent staff. Becher *(speaking of HE)* says that like most 'top down' reforms it fails to take into account other features of the work and Mintzberg states that it is based on the false assumption that professional work can be formalized by rules. As Mintzberg says, technocratic measures do not enrich professional practice and they cannot differentiate between good and bad professionals. 'They constrain both equally....(and) only serve to dampen professional

conscientiousness' *(p378)*, creating conflict, job dissatisfaction and passivity. They force professionals to play the 'bureaucratic game'. For example, Cave et al *(1988)* illustrate how performance indicators can be sabotaged or can detract from good practice. They illustrate how measuring the quantity of research output for academics might encourage publication of low grade research. Likewise measuring attendance figures encourages discos and asking for indicators of social education invites workers to redescribe football as developing team work and constructive use of conflict!

Mintzberg argues that complex work cannot be carried out well unless it is under the command of the person who does it and therefore it is through the **training and learning processes** that change happens and not by its imposition from above. However, the trend is to reduce individual autonomy and increase centralisation despite the arguments, presented above which indicate that an organic structure is far better suited to a dynamic and hostile environment than increased formalisation, hierarchy and bureaucracy. Hall says 'It is odd that the environment pressures to do this, since in many ways the loosely coupled organisation is more adaptive to the environment and is more likely to develop innovations that might be beneficial over the long run.' *(p229)*

There is a clear contradiction here for managers attempting to change to a more effective organisational structure. On the one hand external political forces and a hostile, uncertain environment are creating pressure for centralisation, yet the recipe for organisational survival in such a dynamic, competitive environment seems to be an, organic decentralised organisation.

In the Youth Service, it may be the case that because the traditional pattern is decentralised, the pressure for change is automatically interpreted as a need to change the level of **centralisation** rather than a need to change the level of **bureaucracy**. And this view is heavily supported by fashionable, political ideology in public sector management practice. But this increase in centralisation will not foster innovation. It may make difficult decisions but it will not make exciting or creative ones. The evidence suggests that we have to retain decentralisation but move to a more flexible, organic structure which can adapt quickly to changes in the environment and can co-ordinate activities easily across old bureaucratic boundaries.

Barriers to change
A further crucial issue in discussing recent changes in management structures is aspects of organisational culture. A great strength of the Professional Bureaucracy, and why it is so fashionable with workers *(Mintzberg)* is its ability to meet two important needs of its staff. Firstly, it is a very democratic organisational form and secondly, it offers its operators considerable control over their work. Mintzberg suggests that this is a considerable aid to the motivation of staff and Francis *(1987)* describes it as providing 'deeply satisfying work' *(p67)*.

The notion of 'culture' in organisations is based on the idea that there is a shared system of meaning amongst the members of that organisation. This system underpins the values that are common to the different people involved. Handy argues that 'No structure, however well related to the diversity of the environment, will

work effectively without a culture appropriate to the structure ......The designer of the organisation forgets this at his peril' *(p318)* This is a vital factor in youth work organisational structure and management because there is a traditional culture of democracy and an emphasis on individual freedoms. Clearly, changes in structure need to work with, if not accept, the existing culture in the organisation. The move to managerialism has not always taken this into account.

To conclude this section, the traditional organisational design in Youth Services, whilst matching the complexity of the work and the culture of the service, has considerable weaknesses in relation to improving the work and quick and creative responses to our hostile and dynamic environment. However, changes that are being made in relation to increased bureaucracy and centralised control do not seem to address the weaknesses, but may well damage the morale and commitment of good and effective staff.

What might be done:
Innovation and speedy response to the environment:
The weakness in flexible response to change is located in poor co-ordination between autonomous workers. Appropriate structures should foster control at the lowest possible level in order to involve more people, with the best information, in making decisions and feeling ownership of decisions that are made about their direct work. To this end, delegated budgets seem like a move in the right direction. A move that recognises the 'loosely coupled' nature of Youth Services and does not try to co-ordinate the unco-ordinatable. Smaller groups making decisions must be speedier than long-winded trails through committee structures and up and down hierarchies. I would argue that many full-time staff spend so much time trying to communicate with each other and attempting to co-ordinate their efforts that little time is left to actually work with young people. Furthermore, delegation of decision-making should also allow greater opportunity for participation by local communities.

Co-ordination and control of work:
As with all forms of work, some people do not do it to the satisfaction of others. This is a band wagon that the Tories have jumped on over the last decade and have bashed all of us in the public sector as needing better control and co-ordination. The problem is equally important to youth work staff. A frequent cry on in-service management courses is the request for help from managers who complain that staff are sabotaging change and development. 'Our staff say they will do things but always come up with excuses in the end', 'How can I make them turn up on time, do so and so, etc', 'Can you tell us about disciplinary procedures?'

This is an essential point for those involved in training youth work staff. The route to improving work practice is not through greater bureaucratisation which is easily sabotaged and demoralises good staff. Managing improved work needs to come through training, particularly the 'sitting-by-nellie' approach where managers are able to model good practice. Managers need to understand the importance of developing their workers *by example*; by being present; by demonstrating high standards; by talking and sharing good practice. Supervision, appraisal and disciplinary action will not do. If this notion of **Professional Bureaucracy** is valid, then

it suggests that maintaining and improving standards of youth and community work comes from having a strong *professional community* which can articulate good practice. I suggest that that community exists and managers can provide a key reflection of it, particularly for part-timers.

Kenney and Reid point out that learning goes on all the time when people are brought together:

> *Every encounter between a superior and subordinate involves learning of some kind for the subordinate (and should for the superior too). The attitudes, habits and expectations of the subordinate will be reinforced to some degree as a result of every encounter with the boss...Day by day experience is so much more powerful that it tends to overshadow what the individual may learn in other settings.*

Thus the move to greater managerial roles and less work alongside part-time staff is probably detrimental. Staff with management responsibility need to consider their role in relation to maintaining and developing codes of professional good practice by demonstrating them in all their contacts with staff. Frequent regular contact of this nature will, I suggest, be far more effective in achieving improved practice than endless supervision and appraisal sessions or the filling of monitoring and evaluation forms, or the detailed demarcation of job descriptions and the checking off of competency lists, to name a few examples. It will also increase the time available for managers to work with the clients of their service.

Endpiece

The direct translation of managerial methods and theories from areas of industry and commerce to complex human service organisations, without regard for their different tasks and staff roles, has failed us. I have to say that the best illustration of this failure of the 'management' approach confronts me regularly when I visit my local youth centre and find that virtually nothing has changed over the years despite the endless upheavals in the local authority hierarchy operating above the two part-timers struggling to deliver what they think the young people want, almost totally unacquainted with the practical application of developments in youth work ideas. I do not think they have ever had the benefit of working alongside their largely absent manager to watch him cope with the difficult youngster, or start a discussion on a challenging topic. The impact of equal opportunity policies is another illustration. Whereas management can devise policies and issue guide-lines, changed practice will only come via the changing professional community that staff are exposed to through observing good practice and attending training.

Critics may argue that this whole paper still rests firmly within conventional organisation and management theory and this is a major weakness. For example, developments in feminist theory *(see Fenby 1991)* are highly critical of the technical/rational approaches that underpin traditional management theory, particularly American work. I imagine that the continuing notion that organisations can be understood objectively, and separately from the individuals who compose them would expose my arguments to criticism that they have failed, at the very least, to

address the power dimension within institutions. As Fenby says of social work:

> *The discussion remains overshadowed by the booming male voice, which continues its romance with the technical at the expense of examining moral choices (p35)*

So, there is considerable room for further debate in this area and it is certain to be spurred on by internal dissatisfaction as well as external pressure for change - not the least by the massive recent cutbacks. This paper has attempted, merely, to open up that debate, challenge the increasingly accepted wisdom and begin to suggest some alternatives.

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TOWARDS 2000:

Which Direction for the Youth Service?

ROBERT GUTFREUND

There are a number of changes occurring in the Youth Service in the United Kingdom and also in the services for young people over - or under - the Channel. Indeed, the social, political and economic upheavals in Europe since 1989 are likely to have significant consequences for the population of the Continent as a whole and upon young people in particular. There are many more changes to come, the full consequences of which remain unclear at present - although renewed signs of intolerance and attack against 'foreigners' have again shown its unacceptable - if historically familiar - face. Nevertheless, all agencies working with young people, in particular those involved in the training of professionals have a responsibility to identify potential need and help towards the formulation of appropriate policies; these cannot be left to the Governments alone. I was reminded of this when invited by the British Council to contribute to a seminar aimed at extending Anglo-German youth exchanges with a former East German Länder. Our hosts, the Youth Officers of the Land Mecklenburg-Vollpommern have to respond to the dilemmas facing young people during a period of rapid social change and the consequent disequilibrium caused by unemployment and political uncertainty. These have clear effects on the stability of individual identity. There is a belief in Germany that youth work approaches in the UK, with its varied educational focus and established relationship between the statutory and voluntary sectors is an example from which they may learn. Which policies could the 'new' Länder - also perhaps other former socialist countries - adapt from the British experience? This was the question to which I attempted some tentative responses, necessarily placing my comments within an historical and social context.

It was clear, when viewed from such a perspective that the Youth Service in England and Wales (with perhaps some differences elsewhere in the UK) had traditionally been a service of leisure focused upon the social educational needs of young people. Of course, the precise meaning of this generalised and generic objective has been interpreted in a wide variety of ways as a diffuse service attempted to respond - and at times reacted - to concerns perceived by Government or the public as central at a particular moment. Against a background of general 'social education' the service has, often as much by chance as by design, been concerned to meet the needs of 'varied' groups of young people. Since the 1960s these have included those involved in crime, drug, solvent and alcohol misuse, the unemployed, truanting pupils, the homeless, pregnant teenagers, the effects of the raising of the school leaving age, those involved in football hooliganism, 'concerns' with the 'problems' of ethnic minorities, inner city and rural deprivation, latch key kids, 'problems' of adopted children, counselling services, the re-emergence of right wing political activities and, more recently, 'joy riding'. Significantly, responses to these and other 'concerns' occurred within a philosophy of the service set out in the often dismissed Albermarle Report of 1960. The objectives for the Youth Service were there broadly stated as

to offer young people in their leisure time, opportunities of various kinds, complementary to home, formal education and work, to discover and develop their resources of body, mind and spirit and thus better equip themselves to live the life of mature, creative and responsible members of a free society.

In many ways this is, and remains, a deliverable social educational objective at the point of contact with young people. It is preeminently a purposive approach which, as one American group work theorist observed, is a necessary pre-requisite for effective practice, 'all intervention of a professional nature is goal directed' *(Konopka 1972,p.55)*. There have always existed alongside the primarily educational focus of the Service a number of goals pursued by some Authorities, training agencies and individual workers, which were, in my view, diversionary away from the young people and misused resources allocated to them. The most damaging of these to the Youth Service was the attempt, in the 1970s, to align to it a 'Community Service' without any clarity as to where this 'community' was located; or indeed what it meant. The most significant consequence of this policy was to divert very scarce resources from young people towards adults and confuse even further many practitioners, full-time and part-time. Fortunately 'community' is currently out of favour as a number of Authorities return to a Youth Service, though vigilance is required to avoid its limited resources being directed into non-youth areas of work.

The Service was further diverted and weakened during this period by 'new' approaches to training and a quasi-radicalism. Does anybody recall the hefty 'Realities of Training' produced in the late 1970s? *(NYB 1978)*. A number of trainers and practitioners unmindful, it appears, of the actual relationship between society and the education system - of which the Youth Service is a part - entertained visions of transforming society by means of the Youth Service! The generally conventional youth worker was re-defined and transformed in the minds of many as 'an agent of social change'. In retrospect, and by analysing some of the indicators of continued poverty - unemployment, homelessness and the distribution of wealth for example - we may conclude that, in effecting overall social change, the influence of the Youth Service would range from minimal to nil. Located within the Education Service its role is to continue to be responsive to those social demands made upon it by the public, including, of course, young people. Given appropriate clarity of goals the service can, in co-operation with other agencies, especially school, deliver its educational task. It is however unable to redress social inequalities. The misleading belief - that it can effectively change political realities as a state provided service has had the most debilitating effect upon the morale of those who work in it. Despite this, the service continues a 'bound to fail' attempt at a form of 'social engineering' - the phrase is, of course, Popper's *(Popper 1951)*. The 'advice' to our hard pressed colleagues in the emerging democracies must be to resist such attempts.

Aims, objectives and a measure of autonomy remain central concerns for every professional service since these are important in helping to determine *('softly' for those intent on debating this)* the direction into which energies and resources will be channelled. In a way comparable to other social shifts - witness the economic,

educational and political domains - the direction of the Youth Service is being re-orientated, mainly be external forces over which youth workers, as youth workers, have little influence. Unlike in other domains however it appears to be buffeted - helped by strong internal collusion - towards attempting the quasi amelioration of 'social ills' of a small minority of young people in the directions selected by the Government and National Youth Agency. It should be reiterated that the Youth Service like the rest of the education system *(or Social Welfare system)* is a dependent variable with almost imperceptible opportunities to affect social structures in any predetermined direction, it is rather the social structure - and primarily its economic imperatives - which is determining the Service.

Although there are national variations a service which is preoccupied with reacting to the vagaries of immediate public concerns cannot be described as other than a 'fire brigade' service. Within such a mode of work, professionals and politicians, aided by media induced 'moral panic' react to every 'current' concern no matter how fleeting or ongoing. Whilst it is legitimate for professional workers to have concerns about a range of issues, a primarily crisis orientated service will inevitably lose its credibility with the majority of the public. Put into an educational context, the current drift of the Youth Service is tantamount to the teaching profession placing the interests of Special Schools (and note how these are contracting) and disruptive pupils at the forefront of their goals. Would the teaching profession, we need to ask, be permitted by the Government to place its emphasis and direct its resources to about 15% of potential pupils? Could it professionally or politically risk almost totally neglecting 85% of school age children? One doubts this very much - and yet this appears to be the direction the Youth Service has embraced following central policy decision; little wonder that management consultants and accountants are taking a closer interest in what is delivered. It is recognised that a number of youth workers (and teachers) will take a personal political position over issues and regard such an approach as entirely legitimate. The Service, they will claim has to meet the 'needs' of those in greatest need - and who would argue that the needs of deprived inner city - or even rural - youngsters are high on the agenda. Nevertheless such a stance is in the long run politically suicidal, since a professional approach in a democracy has to consider majorities too. It cannot claim the whole of target resources for minority groups of young people only. In order for the Service to gain *(or re-gain?)* public recognition, it requires a movement away from (to use Parsonian terms) particularistic to universalistic provision. Such provision will of necessity be broadly educational in its orientation. In this way more young people may come into contact with the Service. Significantly, such a Service is likely to attract and expose the profession to young people from a wider social base, and of more varied abilities, thus enabling the users of youth services to learn from each other. The 'radicalising' and confidence boosting effects of the growth of knowledge and understanding should not be underestimated.

The almost exclusive emphasis currently placed by many Metropolitan Authorities upon working with 'problematic', 'difficult' or 'disaffected' sections of the young population *(now, of course, extend to age 26)* is professionally rather absurd. Yet such 'micro' absurdity in the service is equalled and proceeded by a 'macro' absurdity. 'The purpose of the Youth Service'; concludes the report on the second

Ministerial Conference,

> *is to redress all forms of inequality and to ensure equality of opportunity for all young people to fulfil their potential as empowered individuals and members of groups and communities and to support young people during the transition to adulthood (NYA 1991).*

One can endorse fully the last sentence, as does the responsible Minister, who is quoted as saying that 'the Youth Service should empower (young people) to understand and act on personal, social and political issues which affect their lives'. Clearly there would not be anything about 'redressing inequalities' *(NYA 1991)*. The Minister at least is aware of the appropriate role for the Youth Service and also its limitations. How can a Service which nationally attracts less than 5% of the relevant age group reverse economically induced trends? How can it begin to 'empower' young people - apart from in an individual educational way which permits wider choices - in a society where their parents lack such 'empowerment'?

Despite all the evidence pointing in the opposite direction, there are many in the Service and in training who maintain that 'social engineering' is not only possible and practical - but also desirable. And since all the signs are that young people's conventionality predominates - often with consequent reactionary outcomes - and the more liberal direction is often rejected, why not shift from influencing the young and attempt a similar process with prospective youth workers where the government have some control? A recent document on the future of initial training had one group suggesting that trainees

> *must encourage ... an understanding of and commit themselves to certain values such as working for freedom, justice and equality, having a respect of persons, a belief in community and in relationships based upon choice (NYA 1992,p14).*

Fortunately this did not make it into the final 'recommendations', yet, since all this is highly contested and subject to widely different interpretations, it appears to me indicative of an anti-liberal approach to education. Irrespective of interpretation, the logical corollary of the intention here is an anti-democratic drift in that it leads to the selection by unelected professionals of only those who shared all their values and attitudes. This again manifests the conspiratorial dimension of professions in the face of which those of a more liberal persuasion must remain vigilant.

In the foreseeable future and in terms of a relevant value base, the most appropriate - by which I mean deliverable - direction for the Youth Service is to reaffirm its primarily social educational role and uniqueness of work with young people. Thus whilst we may have to concede that the traditional *(after work)* leisure service role will decrease, its educational role can, paradoxically, increase if we move closer to the teaching profession. They are, of course, currently hard pressed by the combined demands of the National Curriculum and the numbers of often 'unwilling' or 'difficult' youngsters obliged to remain in the eduction system due to lack of employment opportunities. To these, as well as the more conventional young people in schools and increasingly in Further Eduction, the social education skills of the Youth Service have a valuable and positive contribution to make. The profession would be well advised to move in this direction rather than the more 'pathol-

ogy' - orientated social work focus towards which current government policy is pointing - and by resource allocation - directing us. A profession which deals exclusively with those defined as 'social problems' can have very limited claims to broaden educational aspirations for the majority of young people. There are numerous examples of positive changes and good practice which have occurred in schools and FE establishments as a consequence of our initiatives. These may not result in 'radical' changes of a political kin - but will provide opportunities for many young people to gain informal educational experiences otherwise unavailable. Effective practice - that is to say where a growth in confidence, knowledge and social awareness has occurred - are universalistic educational objectives. Even if social education is an essentially 'conventional' approach, then that is what we should provide. It has, in my view, not been legitimate for professionals even to attempt to impose any specific 'quasi radical' ideology upon groups of young people; such attempts are more suited to totalitarian societies. Such indoctrinatory material or 'ideas' have, of course, been rejected by young people themselves. They have in many cities understandably deserted the Service, frequently objecting to the mismatch between what the Service 'offered' and what they wanted. A national attempt to seek the views of 'representative' young people concluded that they wanted centres open 24 hours daily providing advice and opportunities for them to meet their peers.

A Youth Service which once again focused upon individual and group development in educational terms would offer learning and leisure opportunities to all young people. Such an approach would make it more acceptable to fund providers - the taxpayers - and their representatives. They would also need to be effectively informed as to the objectives of the Service - this requires a clarity of realistic goals. I have referred to the 'needs' of young people. However, there are wider, 'social needs' to be considered too - and also (it appears) the 'needs' of professionals 'delivering ' the Service. Any gap between the needs of individual young people and those of society cannot be bridged by the Youth Service alone. In my view, and ideally a democracy requires reflective, informed and enquiring young people (adults too, of course!). We believe that such young people will be more likely to develop a sense of justice, elevate human dignity to a principle and form appropriate relationships with others than those who lack either individual or social awareness. To approach such objectives very close collaboration between school and post-school education has to develop. I am of course aware of disaffection in many schools, the National Curriculum and industry orientated education. Nevertheless, without closer collaboration - from which schools and other educational agencies would gain much - our opportunities to practice social education would remain minimal.

A professional service which seeks to go beyond this is ultimately a danger to individual freedom by attempting to impose a value base for which its unelected practitioners cannot get democratic, that is to say electoral, support. Fortunately many young people are too well informed - or just too much like their parents - to have anything to do with such crusade type attempts to impose upon them during their leisure time a wide range of 'isms' for which there is often little social support in their environment. If such attempts are made, surely these should be stressed in the schools if they are to become more effective.

In concluding, it remains necessary to account for the persistence of such strong ideologically 'skewed' strands in a conventional youth service serving conventional young people. Two explanations may be illuminating. First we need to appreciate that the Youth Services developed and built upon the voluntary bases of work with young people. Much of this was concerned with welfare and social control. There was then - as today - pronounced ideological commitment to inculcate young people with appropriate values, guidelines and encourage the purposive use of leisure - in combination we may call this 'discipline' or 'social control'. Some of these values and approaches remain whilst others have been questioned. It may be that the 'quasi radicals' of today are similarly concerned with the transmission of the value system - only the content may have changed.

The second explanation is grounded in a more overtly political reality. Put at its most simple, political indoctrination is a reaction by some in the profession to the continued failure to achieve radically 'left' political objectives in the last 30 years through democratic process. Underlying this at a deeper level there is present, one suspect, a dormant professional axiom that the electors are really mistaken, they select the 'wrong' government and even when they select the 'right' one, its freedom of action is circumscribed by external, and primarily economic forces. Faced with the institutionalised conservatism of the political system and a traditional electorate, some professionals consider that it is entirely legitimate to challenge, outside the open political (public) process the choice of the electorate. Given the re-election for the fourth consecutive term of the current party of government - with little realistic prospect of a significantly different alternative in the near future - attempts to attain through the profession that which cannot be attained through the ballot box, are understandable.

In many ways, the ongoing debate about the direction of the Youth Service represents wider social and ideological divisions in society. Such division would be most evident - as Mannheim noted in 1945 - in Higher Eduction, where philosophical divisions are often located. Trainers there often see the future Youth Service professional as providing opportunities for structured and directional social change. This helps to explain what appear to be disproportional concentration in training upon social disadvantages and various forms of discrimination even though the Service has had the most limited opportunity to remedy these over the past 30 years. This may also, in part, explain the 'fire brigade' approach during the same period.

Much of the foregoing may appear far removed from the short visit to the former German Democratic Republic - about 30 miles from Restock, recently the scene of racist violence by young people. If our colleagues there - working directly with those who are unemployed, educated by 'socialism', do seek our advice - what could we say? Given the apparent sympathy accorded by a number of the adult population, would youth work approaches alone be effective? Or could we be advising some more fundamental and joint approach with other agencies? Once the constraints and single ideological focus of the 'socialist' system of education collapsed following re-unification, the ineffectiveness of what had been 'transmitted', became apparent. It is precisely a similar danger, of paying 'lip service' only to a 'correct' ideology that characterises the 'Mission Statement'. It is hoped that it

is not too late for the Government to seek ways of aligning the Youth Service professionally closer to the education service with which we share an historical and, in many ways, ideological association. The often uneasy attempts to seek affinities with the highly pathology-orientated social work profession are best put aside - there is little evidence that they welcomed us. An education based service would represent a movement away from the overt social control approach which currently characterises the Service. This has in effect meant that, if the police can be described as agents of social control in blue, psychiatrists in white, social workers in tweed, then youth workers are agents of control in denims. A realignment of the Youth Service appears to me necessary if the Service is to maintain any vestiges of identifiable professionalism and retain public support and confidence.

Perhaps the first step towards such a re-orientation is to reassess the relatively unique aspect of the Service - the delivery of a broadly defined and liberal social education service to all young people who have need - or want - to make use of the Service.

There is a further link to the Anglo German seminar. The changes occurring - in all the countries of Europe brought on by changes in economic arrangements and especially in the European Community - provide central government and centralised European agencies with unprecedented powers in the economic sphere. However, this simultaneously provides a temptation to determine and identify 'social problems' and special categories of 'concerns' across the continent as a whole - the case of minorities is already coming into focus. Professionals in the services for young people should be wary of becoming fragmented and marginalised by diversion to work alongside such existing and emerging 'problem' categories. We should attempt to resist the transfer of a localised 'fire brigade' service into a European, 'Super Fire Brigade'. This would leave services for the young destined to the sidelines only. To counter such developments we need to make an outspoken and vigorous attempt - nationally and internationally - to move closer to overtly educational institutions where our influence is potentially much wider and beneficial to young people.

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THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT 1991:

New Ways Of Dealing With Adolescent Offenders in England and Wales

MIKE WORTHINGTON

This article briefly examines the Criminal Justice Act and the way in which adolescent offenders will now be dealt with through the criminal justice system in England and Wales.

A Decade of Change: Developments Through the 1980s

One of the success stories in criminal justice in England and Wales through the 1980s has been the development of what has become known as 'juvenile justice'. The 1982 Criminal Justice Act led to decisions being made - on an inter agency basis - to focus on the diversion of juvenile offenders from crime, court and custody by an increased use of informal action by the Police and by an extension of cautioning.

The cautioning rate for indictable offences *(males 14-16)* changed through the decade from 34% in 1980 to 69% in 1990.

The use of custody for juvenile offenders was reduced from 7,700 in 1981 to 1,400 in 1990 and the proportionate use of custody fell from 6% in 1985 to 2% in 1990. In completing the picture of sentencing patterns in respect of juvenile offenders through the 1980s it should also be recognised that there was a decreased use of both the Care Order and fine and an increased use of discharges and Supervision Orders.
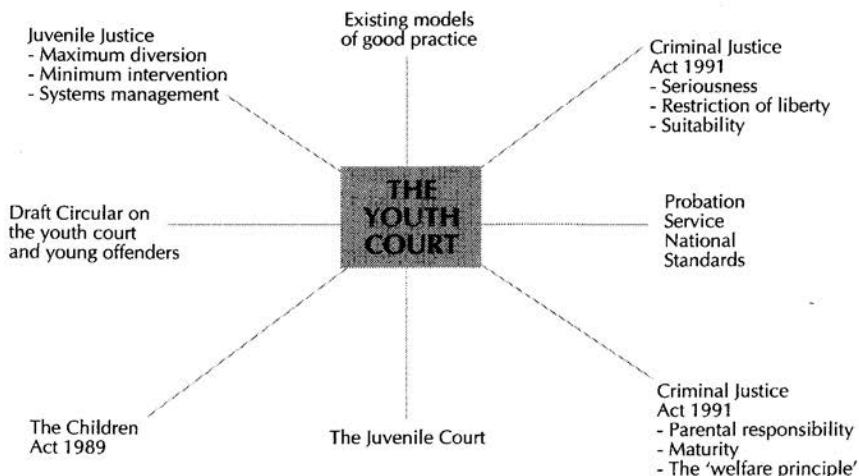
Partly based upon the success of juvenile justice but, also borne of a concern about offending by young adults aged 17 - 21, Probation Services in England and Wales were required to prepare an Action Plan in 1988 which set out a strategy for tackling offending by young adults. The impact of the implementation of Action Plans can be seen in the following figures which relate to 17 - 21 year old offenders:-

	Custody (Crown Court)	**Community Service**	**Probation**
1988	42.7%	19.4%	19.6%
1990	35.8%	21.2%	25.1%

As can be seen, therefore, the trend throughout the decade of change has been significantly to shift the focus of sentencing of those who appear before criminal courts under the age of 21 from custody to community sentences and this, of course, provides the background for the 1991 Criminal Justice Act with it philosophy of 'just deserts' and its introduction of a framework for sentencing. Custody is now to be reserved for only the most serious offences and community sentences will be applied to a range of offences within the second band of seriousness.

The Criminal Justice Act 1991: Introducing the Youth Court

The introduction of the Youth Court is based upon the philosophy which has underpinned emerging developments in the criminal justice system and how young adult offenders are dealt with. In addition to the principles already outlined, it is important to recognise that, for the Probation Service, implementation of the Criminal Justice Act will be underpinned by the establishment of national standards for practice which should ensure a consistency of provision throughout England and Wales. The chart below indicates how the principles I have outlined will influence practice once the Youth Court is established.

Juvenile Justice
- Maximum diversion
- Minimum intervention
- Systems management

Existing models
of good practice

Criminal Justice
Act 1991
- Seriousness
- Restriction of liberty
- Suitability

Draft Circular on
the youth court
and young offenders

THE YOUTH COURT

Probation
Service
National
Standards

The Children
Act 1989

The Juvenile Court

Criminal Justice
Act 1991
- Parental responsibility
- Maturity
- The 'welfare principle'

Having established the principles, it is important to recognise the actual changes that will be brought about by the introduction of the Youth Court as part of the 1991 Act. These can be listed as follows:-

- The Juvenile Court is re-named the Youth Court.
- The Youth Court will include 17 year olds.
- There are new community sentencing arrangements for 16 and 17 year olds.
- There are new remand arrangements for 15 and 16 year olds.
- The Home Office estimates that three-quarters of defendants in the Youth Court (which will deal with 10-17 year olds) will be aged 16 or 17.

A Sense of Grievance: The Social Context for Adolescent Offenders in the 1990s

Throughout the 1980s the success of juvenile justice was parallelled by there being no significant increase in the overall level of crime committed by this age group. However, towards the end of the 1980s and into the 1990s this pattern changed. The recession of the past four years has been a significant contributory factor to an overall increase in the level of crime committed and, perhaps more importantly, the fear of crime within our society. Others have chronicled the impact of what is termed a 'post industrial society' and, as a consequence of this

significant change, the creation of a so called 'under class' within our society. This under class is said to represent about 10% of the population whose lives are identified by unemployment, poverty, generally poor accommodation and who have little hope of achieving the rewards of the market economy which has been the hallmark of the 1980s. Consequently, it is said that this under class represents a large number of people who have little or no stake in society and who are not, therefore, bound by its norms and values.

Trying to understand and come to terms with these major changes has produced a conflict within our society and we are witnessing the paradox of, on the one hand, encompassing the progressive reform of the last decade, alongside the introduction of more punitive measures for offenders. This conflict is expressed in the Criminal Justice Act and in the language it uses. The theme is on restriction of liberty and punishment, whilst the outcome is a far heavier emphasis on community sentences than has hitherto been the case within society.

Another important example of the paradox I refer to is Income Support legislation which is based on the assumption that 16 and 17 year olds live at home, are in education, employment or undertaking a Youth Training Scheme. This, of course, does not reflect the lifestyle of many of the clients of the Probation Service - most of whom tend to come from society's under class - and who, therefore, are ineligible for benefit. Research recently undertaken by the University of Lancaster, on behalf of the Association of Chief Officers of Probation, describes this situation and its consequences quite graphically:

> The belief that all 16 and 17 year olds should be living at home and on YT schemes, working, or at school, is enshrined in social security legislation. In a recent survey looking at the effects of the social fund on clients of the probation service (see end note), it was evident that for those young offenders whose lives did not match this happy ideal, living without crime was nearly impossible. In addition to the obvious privation of homelessness and hunger, their situation fostered a sense of grievance which made doubly difficult their probation officers' task of preventing further criminal activity.

> Of our sample of 1,075 clients, 10 per cent were 16 and 17 year olds, of whom three-quarters were male and one-quarter female. Most of them had been sentenced for offences involving dishonesty, particularly burglary, shoplifting and theft. Stealing cars was also popular. Far fewer had been convicted of violent offences; and those who had were mainly convicted of lesser assault.

> The sense of grievance felt by many offenders was present in the 16 and 17 year olds, and they had a jaundiced view of adults which made the probation officers' role difficult. Their strategies for escaping their circumstances had met with frustration at the hands of other adults. Their sense, then, that all authoritative adults had got it in for them stretched beyond the probation officer to include all youth workers, whether voluntary or professional (Stewart & Stewart 1993).

Conclusion

The challenge to criminal justice agencies in England and Wales is to ensure the effective implementation of the 1991 Criminal Justice Act. This includes a particular challenge to the Probation Service to ensure the effective working of strategies designed to divert young adult offenders from court and custody in the face of a hostile public climate. We need to build on the sound preparatory work that has already been undertaken and on developing effective practice with young offenders such as that which has been introduced as part of the Action Plan.

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THE YOUTH TRANSITION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET DISADVANTAGE:

Gambling on YTS

ANDY FURLONG

Abstract: In this paper I use evidence from the Scottish Young People's Survey to argue that, as a result of the high rate of post-scheme unemployment and of the difficulties faced by unemployed young people in finding jobs, the experience of youth training schemes can contribute towards the marginalisation of disadvantaged school-leavers within the labour market.

1. Introduction.

The transition from school to work is a crucial stage in the lives of young people: a stage at which social advantages and educational achievements are translated into a position within the labour market. From this time on, they have their own position within the social structure which is a better predictor of their future life chances than the social position of their parents. In occupational terms they are just starting out: some will achieve intra-generational mobility through promotions in their field or through switching jobs. Yet to a large extent their class positions and their life chances are sealed at this stage *(Halsey et al., 1980; Payne, 1987)*. Future trajectories tend to follow predictable patterns.

Over recent years we have been forced to re-conceptualise the nature of the transition from school to work in Britain. The 'old' model of the transition was based on the assumption that young people entered full-time jobs soon after leaving school *(Ashton and Field, 1976; Willis, 1977)*. Social class had a strong influence on the school streams children were placed in and these streams channelled them towards different positions within the occupational structure. The transition from school to work in the 1980s and 1990s is a much more protracted process *(Roberts et al., 1987)* due to the introduction of various youth training schemes and the virtual disappearance of the youth labour market. Bynner *(1991)* has argued that these changes have led to a de-coupling of the worlds of school and work and despite the introduction of a 'surrogate labour market' these changes have had little effect on the reproduction of social inequality during the transitional period *(Lee et al., 1990)*. Indeed, the available evidence suggests that the basic pattern has not changed: the initiatives which aimed to produce a better trained and technologically competent young workforce have created little in the way of new opportunities for those working class youths who start out with few educational achievements *(Furlong, 1992)*.

In the 'old' model, the transition from school to work was regarded as a relatively smooth process because trajectories were highly predictable with most young people managing to enter jobs which confirmed their prior expectations. In the protracted transition the process is still predictable for many young people: the better qualified still follow tracks which lead them via extended education into jobs which offer them reasonable long-term prospects for advancement. Those who

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leave education at age 16 with a few O grades or O levels enter the sorts of jobs which offer them the prospect of limited career progression, often after spending some time on the Youth Training Scheme. However, for minimum-age-school-leavers without O levels or O grades the process is much more turbulent.

In this paper I argue that the protraction of the transition from school to work and the contraction of the youth labour market has resulted in a process whereby unqualified school leavers are forced to negotiate a dangerous route between school and work. While they once followed relatively safe routes into semi and unskilled employment, today some will find it extremely difficult to get any kind of foothold in the full-time labour market. Furthermore, it is argued that the Youth Training Scheme provides an institutional framework in which educational disadvantages are translated into labour market disadvantages.

2. The Data

This paper is based on data gathered through the Scottish Young People's Surveys of 1985, 1986 and 1987. The Scottish Young People's Survey is a longitudinal postal survey which gathers information about education, training and labour market participation of young people. The surveys are carried out at Edinburgh University by the Centre of Educational Sociology and are sponsored by the Scottish Education Department, the Industry Department for Scotland, the Training Agency and the Department of Employment[1]. The survey cycle reported here started with the first sweep in spring 1985 which was sent out to ten per cent of young people who were in the Scottish fourth year in the academic year 1983/1984. The Scottish fourth year is the last year of compulsory schooling for those who reach sixteen during the school year. As pupils in Scotland begin secondary education a year later than their English counterparts, the Scottish fourth year is broadly equivalent to the English fifth year.

Members of the cohort were sent a follow-up questionnaire in spring 1986 when their average age was 17.75, and the third sweep took place in autumn 1987 when the average age of the cohort was 19.25. Response rates for each survey were in the region of 80%, with around 50% (4013) of the original target sample responding to all three sweeps (for full details of the coverage and response rates, see Furlong and Raffe, 1989).

Response rates varied according to the qualification levels of members of the sample, with higher response rates being achieved from those young people with better qualifications. Throughout the survey cycle, efforts were made to minimise the sample bias which can result from select non-response through a variety of attrition reduction methods (see Dodds et al., 1989).

The data have been weighted so that the weighted distributions of the sample matches figures provided by the Scottish Education Department for fourth year Scottish Certificate of Education attainments and grades for males and females. In 1986 and 1987 the weighting also took account of differences between early school-leavers and later leavers.

3. Youth Training and the Transition from School.

During the late 1970s, the 'old' transitional pattern was under strain as increasing levels of youth unemployment meant that many young people experienced a period of unemployment between school and work. Concerns about the 'problem' of youth unemployment led to the introduction of a series of schemes aimed at out-of-work youth. The first of these schemes were unemployment-based: introduced as schemes for the unemployed designed at first to maintain individual employability until the economy picked up (the Job Creation Programme), and later to develop the skills of the unemployed and provide them with work experience (the Youth Opportunities Programme). Thus from the mid to late 1970s young people making the transition from school to work frequently experienced both unemployment and Government schemes prior to their first job.

Although YOP was intended as a scheme which would develop individual skills and competencies, it was widely regarded as providing little in the way of training while providing employers with a free source of labour. Although some employers used the scheme as a screening device for potential recruits, others used trainees as a constant stream of free labour.

Partly as a result of these criticisms, the Youth Training Scheme was introduced in 1983. It was to include a broad programme of integrated work experience and training, and young people who joined the scheme were to be able to study for recognised national qualifications at local colleges or training centres through day or block release while drawing a training allowance paid through their scheme sponsor or employer.

On the face of it, YTS signalled a promising new development which offered the potential for the provision of a coherent approach to post-16 training in this country. Britain has a poor record of post-16 education and training and this has often been linked to the inability to compete on an international basis *(Finegold and Soskice, 1988)*. Moreover, the majority of young people in Britain leave school at 16, and, prior to the introduction of YTS, most minimum-age-school-leavers received little in the way of post-16 education or training. Thus YTS, in theory, offered unqualified young people a 'second chance': they could join YTS to compensate for their lack of basic education and skills they learnt would improve their subsequent life chances.

However, what started as an innovative scheme does not seem to be delivering the goods. Although the scheme was extended to a two year scheme in 1986, it still bears many of the hallmarks of the unemployment based schemes from which it evolved, and which the New Training Initiative (MSC, 1981)expressly sought to avoid by making the scheme available to all school-leavers. The withdrawal of Social Security benefits from those refusing YTS introduces an element of compulsion which further lowers the status of YTS.

So far, better qualified young people have failed to be attracted to YTS, preferring to remain in full-time education or to enter 'proper' jobs *(Furlong and Raffe, 1989)*. Of those who do join YTS, the stratification of YTS helps to ensure that qualified trainees enter schemes which offer a realistic route to a permanent job, while the

unqualified enter 'sink schemes' *(Roberts and Parsell, 1989)* which offer little prospect of employment. Indeed, we have little reason to believe that YTS offers any compensation to those with social or educational handicaps. Those who make a 'successful' transition into the labour market after leaving YTS tend to be those who joined with reasonable school-leaving qualifications.

Although YTS would appear to offer young people in difficulty a 'second chance' in practice YTS tends to resemble a 'fixed' horse race: those with inside knowledge can usually predict the winners and there are certain types of horses which no self-respecting punter would put money on. Moreover, those who 'lose' the race by failing to be retained by their YTS sponsors or employers tend to be stigmatised by their failure and, as a consequence, are pointed in the direction of the knackers yard. They often face a bleak future in the labour market, experiencing prolonged and repeated spells of unemployment.

To understand the implications of the protracted transition from school and the ways in which socio-economic disadvantages are reproduced during this period, we first need to examine the reasons why YTS is failing to provide young people with a 'second chance'. In this respect, David Raffe's *(1987)* distinction between the 'content' and the 'context' of YTS is valuable. Raffe defines the 'content' of YTS as 'the quality and relevance of knowledge, skills and competences gained therein'. 'Context' refers to 'its articulation with structures of educational and occupational differentiation and, in particular, with selection and recruitment in the labour market' *(Raffe, 1987)*. Raffe argues convincingly that the 'content' of YTS leaves much to be desired and that for many young people its saving grace is its 'context'. However, the 'context' of YTS is the source of many problems because many young people are trained in a 'context' where they will suffer the stigma of rejection.

The Youth Training Scheme is an important source of recruitment insofar as it gives trainees access to information networks through which many come to find jobs. Around a third of those who joined YTS eventually found jobs on the internal labour market, with the employer or sponsor of their scheme. Around one in four ex-trainees found jobs on the external labour with employers unconnected with their YTS scheme *(Raffe, 1990)*. For those who found jobs on the external labour market, the 'content' of YTS was not judged to be important by the young people studied by Raffe. Indeed, he argues that only one in nine YTS leavers found a job on the external labour market on the strength of the 'content' of YTS.

Raffe also suggests that the experience of YTS gives young people advantages in the labour market even when they fail to be retained by their YTS employers or sponsors and when they find that the skills learnt on YTS are are not valued by employers. He argues that the willingness of young people to conform to YTS and to undergo training, coupled with the signalling function of the qualifications they gained at school is likely to give them strong advantages in the labour market.

If the main value of YTS is its signalling function, it is a wasted opportunity; especially if the sorts of young people employers recruit after YTS are very similar to

the sorts of person they were likely to have recruited if YTS did not exist.

Yet the problem is more serious than this as employers may regard a failure to be retained by a YTS sponsor or employer as a 'negative' signal. Such a tendency would be particularly serious if any 'positive' signal which came from a perceived willingness to conform was outweighed by a 'negative' signal attached to those who failed to get jobs immediately after leaving YTS. If 'negative' signals outweigh any 'positive' ones, then in the absence of any convincing arguments as to the intrinsic value of YTS training, we would be led to argue that the risk of joining YTS may outweigh the likely benefits.

Evidence from the Scottish Young People's Surveys suggests that experience of YTS can contribute towards the marginalisation of disadvantaged school-leavers because of the high rates of unemployment among ex-trainees and because of the difficulties these young people face in finding jobs once they have become unemployed. To demonstrate the level of vulnerability to unemployment among ex-trainees, in the next section I examine the experience of unemployment among ex-YTS trainees in relation to those with no experience of YTS, paying special attention to those who may be stigmatised by having failed to find jobs immediately after YTS.

While I suggest that certain sequences of experience push young people towards the margins of the labour market, it is not being argued that this group form an 'underclass' in the sense that they come to adopt values which are at odds with those held by young people who successfully enter full-time employment or that their normative orientations have contributed towards their marginalisation. Indeed, the concept of an 'underclass' has limitations in theoretical and empirical terms. Dean *(1991)*, for example, has argued that the concept is imprecise empirically and theoretically conflates structural and cultural definitions. Furthermore, young people who become unemployed usually retain a strong commitment to paid employment *(Furlong, 1992)*.

A more adequate approach to understanding the marginalisation of this group of young people is provided by segmentation theory *(see Ashton et al., 1990, for example)*, yet the conceptual framework provided by segmentation theory is unable to account for the problems they face in gaining access to the lower segments of the labour market. According to this theory, different segments of the labour market are seen as providing the worker with varying levels of security: those who enter the lower segments of the labour market often have a career in which they move regularly between semi and unskilled jobs, schemes and unemployment. Indeed, Ashton and colleagues *(1990)* have suggested that in recent years this type of career pattern has become common for a large proportion of the working class.

While there is much empirical evidence to support the view that there is a regular cycle of movement between the semi and unskilled segments of the labour market, unemployment and schemes, there is a sizeable group of young people who have difficulties in entering this 'normal' pattern of instability. This would seem to point to the existence of a lower segment of potential workers who face problems entering the traditionally disadvantaged segments of the labour market.

4. YTS experience and unemployment

As youth training schemes have come to play such a central role in the transition from school to work for minimum-age school-leavers, experience of schemes is bound to affect future labour market experiences. Yet judged by young people's immediate post-YTS destinations, YTS could not possible be described as a success story. Almost four in ten males *(39%)* and three in ten females *(29%)* were rewarded for their participation by a spell of unemployment on leaving. Just over a third of ex-trainees found immediate full-time employment with their YTS employer or sponsor *(35% of males and 34% of females)*, while more than one in five young people *(21% of males and 26% of females)* entered full-time jobs immediately after YTS with a different employer *(Furlong and Raffe, 1989)*.

For those young people who were successful in moving directly from YTS into a job, future prospects were generally good. Furlong and Raffe *(1989)* report that more than nine out of every ten *(92%)* of those who moved straight into a job with their scheme employer or sponsor were still in full-time employment at the age of 19. Bynner *(1991)* has also shown that once a young person has been successful in getting a toe-hold in the labour market they are likely to hold onto it. Those who moved straight from YTS to a job with a different employer were slightly less likely to be in full-time employment at the age of 19 *(76% of males and 78% of females) (Table 1)*.

Status in Autumn 1987 by Immediate Post-YTS Destination

	Full-time Education	Full-time Job	Other Scheme	Un-employed	Other	Total	Un-weighted
Male							
Full-time job with YTS sponsor or employer	0	92	-	6	2	100	(251)
Full-time job elsewhere	2	76	8	13	1	100	(151)
Part-time Job	*	*	*	*	*		(9)
Unemployed	2	33	21	40	5	101	(244)
Full-time Education	*	*	*	*	*		(16)
Other	*	*	*	*	*		(13)
All	2	63	10	21	3	99	(684)
Female							
Full-time Job with YTS Sponsor or employer	2	83	3	7	5	100	(237)
Full-time Job elsewhere	2	78	2	11	7	100	(166)
Part-time Job	(4)	(36)	(0)	(12)	(47)	99	(26)
Unemployed	2	29	5	42	22	100	(157)
full-time Education	*	*	*	*	*		(18)
Other	(4)	(28)	(5)	(25)	(37)	99	(24)
All	2	61	3	20	14	100	(628)

Notes: - = less than 0.5 per cent
*= base n less than 20
() = base n less than 50

From: Furlong & Raffe, 1989.

Young people who did not enter full-time jobs straight after leaving YTS faced a particularly hard time in the labour market. Around four in ten of those who were unemployed straight after YTS were unemployed at the age of 19 *(40% of males and 42% of females)*. Indeed, of those unemployed straight after YTS, only a third of males *(33%)* and less than three in ten females (29%) were in full-time jobs at the age of 19 *(Furlong and Raffe, 1989)*.

On the face of it, participation in YTS appears to be quite risky. Failure to find a job straight away can have serious implications for future labour market experiences. Given that nearly four in ten young people do fail to find jobs straight away, YTS should perhaps carry an appropriate 'health warning'.

However, if we are to assess the effect of YTS participation in terms of subsequent unemployment, we need some measure of the effect of non-participation on unemployment. Although those with experience of YTS were more than twice as likely to be unemployed at the age of 19 than those who had made the transition from school to work without experiencing YTS *(28% compared to 13%)* this is not a fair comparison given that it is the better qualified young people who manage to avoid YTS be entering jobs straight from school.

Because many young people join YTS after failing to find 'proper' jobs, a more accurate measure if its effectiveness would be achieved through comparing unemployment among ex-trainees with unemployment among those who refused YTS. This poses a problem for analysis as it is difficult to identify 'refusers' accurately from the Scottish Young People's Survey. Indeed, survey methods are likely to produce a rather crude picture of YTS refusal. In the 1985 survey young people were asked 'Have you ever turned down the offer of a place on the Youth Training Scheme?' and in the 1986 survey they were asked 'Have you ever been offered a place on the Youth Training Scheme?'. The problem arises as some young people may have refused as they wanted a different sort of placement; others may have refused as they had an offer of a job or a place on a course or were expecting to be made an offer. Moreover, some young people who had not been on YTS but said that they had been offered a place may actually have had jobs to go to, while others may not have put themselves forward for a place.

If we class 'refusers' as young people who had never been on YTS but who were unemployed at the first 'snapshot' date after leaving school (autumn 1984 for those who left from the fourth year, and spring 1985 for those who left at Christmas of the fifth year), five per cent of the cohort can be classed as 'refusers'. Yet we still face the problem of distinguishing the effect of YTS 'refusal' and the effect of an early period of unemployment on a later period of unemployment and must recognise that some 'refusers' may not actually have been made an offer to refuse.

Fifty-five per cent of those defined as having refused a YTS place were unemployed at the age of 19 and males who refused YTS were more likely to be unemployed than female refusers *(Table 2)*. Indeed, the unemployment rate at 19 among those who had experienced YTS was substantially lower than among those who had refused a place. However, immediate post-YTS destinations and having stayed on YTS until the end of the scheme both had an important affect on subsequent

unemployment. Moreover, there was little difference between the unemployment rate of scheme refusers and those who completed their schemes but failed to find jobs immediately after. Among those who moved straight from YTS to full-time jobs, relatively few were unemployed at age 19 *(13%)*. However, over half *(52%)* of those who completed their YTS schemes but were unemployed immediately afterwards were unemployed at the age of 19.

Unemployment+ in Autumn 1987 by YTS participation, completion and post-YTS destination

		Unemployed %	Unweighted n (base)
Experience of YTS	All	28	(1391)
	M	32	(736)
	F	23	(655)
Refused YTS	All	55	(140)
	M	66	(84)
	F	39	(56)
Completed YTS, full-time job after	All	13	(429)
	M	11	(251)
	F	16	(178)
Completed YTS, unemployed after	All	52	(255)
	M	57	(160)
	F	43	(95)
Completed YTS, neither full-time job nor unemployed after	All	23	(54)
	M	29	(22)
	F	20	(32)
YTS not completed, full time job after	All	9	(364)
	M	12	(145)
	F	7	(219)
YTS not completed, unemployed after	All	61	(141)
	M	67	(81)
	F	53	(60)
YTS not completed neither full-time job nor unemployed after	All	25	(52)
	M	(34)	(16)
	F	22	(36)

Notes: Brackets denote base n of less than 20
+ includes respondents on unemployment based schemes such as CP & JTS

The relationship between YTS participation, completion and unemployment at 19 is quite complex and experience of unemployment among YTS participants, completers, refusers and avoiders are likely to be conditioned by their family background and educational qualifications.

In order to assess the effect of YTS on the chances of a young person being unemployed in autumn 1987 it is important to measure the strength of the other factors which affect young people's chances of unemployment. This was achieved by using a logit model[2] to assess the relative chances of being unemployed (or on

unemployment-based schemes) at age 19 among young people with different post-school experiences *(Table 3)*. Because YTS was mainly aimed at young people who left school at the minimum age, the model is restricted to those who left school at the end of the fourth year or at Christmas of the fifth year.

Logit model predicting relative chances of unemployment[+] in 1987

	Males			Females		
	Relative Chances	Coeff	SE	Relative Chances	Coeff	SE
Age 18	0.9	-0.1563	0.08	0.9	-0.1475	0.08
Unemployed father	1.6*	0.472	0.08	1.5*	0.4163	0.08
Father in professional/ intermediate occupation	1.0	0.007242	0.11	1.0	0.04803	0.12
Father in skilled occupation	0.8	-0.1724	0.10	0.9	-0.07245	0.11
Father's occupation not give	1.1	0.1154	0.11	1.0	-0.04496	0.11
4+ 0 Grades	0.8	-0.1778	0.11	0.9	-0.07842	0.11
1-3 O Grades	0.7*	-0.3768	0.10	0.8	0.04803	0.12
Fails at O Grade	1.0	0.01388	0.10	0.9	-0.07245	0.11
Local unemployment rate	1.1*	0.07239	0.02	1.0	0.03272	0.02
Christmas leaver	1.0	0.01655	0.08	1.1	0.1223	0.08
Unemployed after leaving school	1.9*	0.6228	0.08	1.6*	0.4487	0.08
Ever on YTS	0.8*	-0.2112	0.08	0.8*	-0.1744	0.08
Completed YTS	1.1	0.09726	0.08	1.2*	0.1844	0.08
Unemployed immediately after YTS	1.6*	0.4524	0.08	1.7*	0.5372	0.08

Notes: Predictors significant at the 5 per cent level are marked with an asterisk
+ includes respondents on unemployment based schemes such as CP & JTS

One of the key findings to emerge from the logit model is that personal experience of unemployment *(either after leaving school or after YTS)* or having a father who was unemployed had a strong effect on the young person's subsequent chances of unemployment. This effect was not countered by YTS participation. The relative chances of unemployment among young people who were unemployed in the autumn or spring after leaving school were twice that of those who were not unemployed on those occasions. Males who were unemployed immediately after YTS had their chances of unemployment at age 19 increased by 60 per cent, while females saw their chances increase by 70 per cent.

Those who had fathers who were unemployed were also at a high risk of personal unemployment. Males with unemployed fathers were 60 per cent more likely to be unemployed at age 19 than those whose fathers were not unemployed. while females were 50 percent more likely to be unemployed. Furthermore, the chances of both personal unemployment and family unemployment were both influenced

by levels of employment within the local labour market. The local unemployment rate in October 1987 had a significant effect on the chances of unemployment among males, but not among females. Yet while father's unemployment was important in predicting unemployment among young people, father's occupation did not have a significant effect (the effect of father's occupation on the respondents chances of unemployment may have been mediated by educational achievements and by the variable measuring post-school unemployment).

For young people who left school at the earliest opportunity, school qualifications were more important in reducing the chances of unemployment among males than females. Relative to those who did not sit any SCE examinations, young people with 0 grade passes were less likely to be unemployed. Males and females with experience of YTS reduced their chances of being unemployed at age 19 by around 20 per cent. However, those young people who were unemployed immediately after YTS had their chances of being unemployed at age 19 substantially increased. Despite its early origins as an unemployment-based scheme designed to maintain individual employability, the Youth Training Scheme did little to remove the handicaps of its disadvantaged trainees and there is no reason to believe that Youth Training *(YT)* will perform differently. Those who joined YTS after having been unemployed and those who had unemployed fathers had a high rate of post-scheme unemployment. Those who failed to secure jobs immediately after leaving YTS, (a substantial proportion of trainees), found it very difficult to find jobs subsequently. Indeed, among those who became unemployed after YTS, the scheme carried no residual advantage: ex-trainees were no more likely to find jobs than those who had refused to join the scheme.

5.Conclusion
The increased protraction of the transition from school to work over the last decade has had little effect on transitional outcomes for qualified school-leavers. For the unqualified, the transition has become increasingly hazardous. Alongside the usual process of class reproduction, we can see the emergence of a group of young people who have failed to make a 'successful' transition from school to work; largely composed of unqualified and disadvantaged young people who had the misfortune to experience unemployment at a crucial stage in the transitional process.

The Youth Training Scheme is central to this process insofar as it provides an institutional context whereby young people come to be regarded as unemployable. In theory YTS offers a 'second chance' to those who leave school with few qualifications, yet opportunities are lost through the stratification of schemes and through its failure to equip trainees with marketable skills.

It would appear that those who fail to enter a job straight after YTS are regarded as 'double failures' as people who failed to find work on leaving school and who failed again after YTS. Potential employers may treat this as a negative signal about the acceptability of a trainee, especially as another employer (the YTS employer or sponsor), rather than an educationalist, with knowledge of their skills and work habits has decided not to incorporate them into the permanent workforce. Young people who refuse YTS without having secured alternative employment or training may also be stigmatised by being regarded as nonconformists (but refusers are no worse off than those who failed to find work after investing time and energy in YTS).

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This labelling process has powerful consequences. Those who fail to find work straight after YTS *(and this is around a third of trainees)* often enter a cycle of unemployment and deprivation from which they will find it difficult to escape. Because of the high level of post-scheme unemployment and the association between post-YTS unemployment and later experience of unemployment, it would not be worthwhile joining a scheme unless one were reasonably confident of being retained by a YTS employer or sponsor. In the absence of information about retention rates for individual schemes, YTS is a gamble. The scheme may pay dividends for some individuals in terms of a job at the end, but should they fail to hit the jackpot then the future looks very bleak.

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Notes

1   The author is grateful for the support given but the opinions and judgements expressed here are not necessarily shared by the sponsors.

2   In this model, dummy variables were used to describe school-leavers who were aged 18 or over in April 1986, and who had a father who was unemployed in October 1987. School qualifications were also described by a series of dummy variables (the omitted category being those who did not sit SCE examinations), as was fathers social class (the omitted category being semi and unskilled manual workers). Labour market experiences was described by a set of dummy variables indicating stage of leaving school (omitted category being after fourth year), and whether the young person was unemployed in the autumn or spring after leaving school (autumn for fourth year leavers, spring for those leaving from fifth year at Christmas). Unemployment in the local labour market is described by a covariate measuring all-age unemployment in the 'Travel To Work Area' in October 1987. Finally, YTS experience is measured by a series of dummy variables describing whether respondents had ever experienced YTS, whether they had ever completed a YTS scheme, and whether they were unemployed immediately after leaving YTS.

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'YOUTH TRAINING':

Consensus or Conflict in the 1990s

PHIL MIZEN

Introduction

It has been suggested recently within these pages and elsewhere, that the politics of Thatcherism has been responsible for bringing about a qualitative change in forms of life among the young working class *(Hollands,1990;1991;Bates, n.d.)*. More specifically, through the political and ideological assault of the 'new vocationalism', and successive 'youth training' schemes with their ideology of individual success and career progression,it has been claimed that a fundamental shift in 'working class transition, identities and lifestyles' *(Hollands 1990: 2)* has taken place during the 1980s. A shift whereby forms of working class experience, grounded in common sense assumptions about welfare and full employment, have been transformed into those more attuned to the discipline of training programmes and the politics of the market place. And more specifically, a shift which has brought with it a change in attitudes and expectations among the young working class, through which they have come to endorse those new values of independence and self-reliance which serve to legitimise the new institutional contexts of the changing 'transition from school to work'.

For accounts such as these, it is precisely through an appreciation of the 'new vocationalism's' ideological and political significance, that its 'success in mobilising a kind of consensus around the youth training issue' *(Hollands 1990:201)*, not least among the 'trainees' themselves, can best be explained. For Hollands in particular, 'the state mechanisms for implanting this type of ideology clearly bear the blueprint of Thatcherite philosophy' *(Hollands, 1991:39)* and its success is reflected in the emergence of a new series of 'transitions, identities and lifestyles 'which echo the 'new vocationalism's' major themes. Among young women this has taken the form of an enthusiasm for 'training' in jobs in 'glam' (glamorous) work, mainly in offices, hairdressers, beauty salon and with fashion designers *(Hollands 1990:105)*; new 'paraprofessional/domestic' work with children and the elderly; and for factory jobs, mainly in clothing manufacture and warehouse distribution. For young men, the enthusiasm for white collar work as a source of upward mobility ' and a growing conservative and corporate view of business' is seen as responsible for eroding the traditional collectivist appeal of manual labour; and the enthusiasm for self-employment and entrepreneurialism is seen to cut right across the entire spectrum of these new 'transitions'. Taken at face value, such an approach appears to offer a powerful account of the success of the 'new vocationalism' in both defusing sustained opposition to mass unemployment and, out of these conditions, moulding the foundations for which the success of the Thatcherite project has been built. For ten years now the current generation of 'youth training' schemes have enjoyed something of a consensus between the major parties, and new forms of 'training' for the unemployed are once more creeping up the political agenda as the jobless total threatens to break through three million. Over three million young people have been directly subjected to this current regime of preparatory 'training' and vocational skills, and the election of a fourth consecutive Conservative government

explicitly committed to further entrenching this 'training revolution' *(Conservative Party,1992:19)*, through further doses of work for benefits and initiative like Training Credits, promises more of the same. Indeed, its unique electoral feat in winning the last general election appears to add considerable weight to the claim 'that the transitions thrown up by the new vocationalism have influenced the identities and politics of a whole new generation of young people' *(Hollands, 1990:13)* because, as Hollands rightly points out, the 'children of yesterday grow up to be the electorate of tomorrow' *(Hollands,1991:41)*.

Working class transitions 'old' and 'new'

A closer examination of these new 'transitions', however, points towards a considerably more complex picture than the one sketched out by Hollands and others. To begin with, critics of *The Coming of the Post-Industrial Society (Bell, 1973)* have long argued that the emergence of a new social order based on a large service sector and sustained forms of white collar employment, has been part of a longer process of capitalist development stretching back over one hundred and fifty years *(Kumar,1978; Williams,1985)*. Similarly, the current preoccupation with Post-Fordism *(Lash and Urry, 1987; Hall and Jacques, 1989)* as a signifier of the end of mass production and consumption and the emergence of a new regime of disorganised production and fragmented culture, also neglects the historically diverse forms taken by working class life *(Callinicos, 1989; Costello et al,1989)*. Service sector and white-collar work have been a fact of life for successive generations of post-war British school leavers, with manufacturing traditionally offering few first points of entry into the adult world of work *(Jackson, 1985)*. Young men and women have traditionally left school to enter the distribution and miscellaneous service sectors in large numbers, while young women have also tended to begin their adult working lives in the clothing and footwear sectors *(Makeham, 1982)*. More generally, 'since the Second World War agriculture, clothing , construction, distribution and miscellaneous services have been Britain's main youth industries' *(Roberts, 1986:34)*, with the latter sector consisting primarily of hairdressing, hotel trade and catering work.

But the problems with Hollands's account do not end with this tendency to overstate the disintegration of pre-Thatcherite forms of 'transition', or the ways in which he loses sight of the longer-term continuities which characterise the movement from school to work. A close inspection of a host of recent studies into the lives of the young workless would have immediately illustrated that young people do not experience 'youth training' and the 'new vocationalism' in ways which can be construed as an endorsement, or which point towards 'consensus'. Rather such research continues to underline the complex and distinctly contradictory ways in which the working class young have responded to these new forms of 'training'. In ways which, more importantly, echo a familiar tale of working class experiences of institutional forms of state activity, through which the evolution of new 'benefits', like training, are bound up with submission to new forms of supervision and new methods of control *(London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, 1980)*,

This is most vividly captured in young people's enduring instrumental attitude towards 'training' schemes. Research among Scottish young people has consistently illustrated their appreciation of the Youth Training Scheme's limited oppor-

tunities for work experience and 'training', alongside a sustained and deeply felt cynicism, whether of employers or government, about the ulterior motives *(Raffe and Smith 1987; Raffe, 1989)*. The experience of young people in England and Wales supports these findings suggesting that they too appreciate youth training's offer of work experience in the context of the lack of *real jobs*, but that criticisms of its exploitation and low pay remain severe *(Courtenay, 1989)*. More recent research in England and Scotland also points towards this pervasive instrumentalism so that 'despite all the Thatcher government's efforts to establish a universal "training culture" on Continental lines, there were few signs ... that most school leavers had taken it on'*(Banks et al,1992:44)*.

The idea of a young working class of would-be entrepreneurs also fails to withstand a more rigorous examination. It has been pointed out that 'enterprise' is a diffuse and contradictory concept *(Coffield, 1991; Rees, 1986)*, and that this ambiguity has been reflected in the deep-seated pessimism which has characterised young people's response to this 'broad enterprise movement'. A detailed study of young entrepreneurs in the North-East of England found that self-employment was more likely to be a reaction to restricted employment opportunities, rather than indicative of active support for the enterprise culture *(MacDonald and Coffield, 1991)*. This initial cynicism was largely confirmed by the actual experience of self-employment which, more accurately, was defined by a 'phlegmatic realism', 'a determined and hopeful, but also stoical attitude to the practice of enterprise' (p.145), rather than the kindling spirit of wealth creation fostered by the Department of Trade and Industry. Evidence from Liverpool found less than 10 per cent of a sample of young people thought it likely they would become self-employed *(Roberts et al, 1989)* and research among Sixth Formers found that there had 'not been a major increase in levels of enterprise-mindedness among young people' *(Curran and Blackburn, 1990:42)*. It has been argued that 'trainees' on schemes appear even less likely to embrace the values of enterprise than either their employed or unemployed peers, so that 'the evidence points away from the idea that young people have absorbed much of the enterprise ethic which has been so enthusiastically advanced in the last decade' *(Ashford and Bynner, 1991:60)*.

This is not to deny that considerable numbers of young people do go on 'youth training' schemes and that this participation represents a partial acknowledgment of the limited opportunities it offers. But to interpret this as an endorsement of the 'new vocationalism', or to see this as the beginnings of a new Thatcherite 'generation' of young people, is to look for consensus where none exists and to take at face value the ideological pronouncements of the state *(Williamson, 1989)*. Working class young people have continued to resist youth training's claims to opportunity and choice, and have remained reluctant conscripts into 'Maggies's army' *(MacDonald and Coffield, 1991)*. The current generation of schemes and initiatives have been resisted at every stage of their development by young people through their sustained instrumental attitudes towards 'training', their high rates of early leaving (Mizen, 1990) and the continued inability of the state to sever the connection between the level of training allowance and young people's own moral economy regarding its 'fairness'. This is the harsh reality of everyday life on a 'youth training' scheme and it is here that analysis of its political and sociological significance should begin.

'Youth' and class

The significance of such a critique of Hollands does not merely lie in the exchange of different examples of data. More importantly, it raises methodological issues about whether accounts which present working class 'youthful' forms of behaviour (i.e. the actions of 'trainees' on schemes or enterprise initiatives) as constituted by ideological and political processes can detail the complexity of attitudes and behaviour of working class young people. And whether they can actually go beyond merely surface accounts in explaining the ways in which these forms of behaviour are structured in the first place. It is precisely because Hollands' account treats forms of 'trainees' behaviour as constituted through the ideological and political machinations of Thatcherism, and its highly individualistic ethos enshrined in the 'new vocationalism', that his account remains only partial. His consequent inability to relate aspects of 'trainee' behaviour to the ways in which social life is actually organised, means that analysis never gets beyond the level of appearances and that the conclusions offered tend to mirror the grander ideological claims which have accompanied the development of new institutional forms of activity centred around the *training state*.

This tendency to separate the ideological and political from the material organisation of social life can be traced to the influence of two accounts of Hollands' analysis. Following John Clarke *(1979)*, he views forms of working class behaviour as, at best, essentially defensive routines of everyday survival and, at worst, the actions of fully incorporated individuals. Changes in the sphere of production are seen to 'require the elaboration of new cultural practices and repertoires which are capable of producing ... new cultural frameworks in which to live the experiences of being working class' *(Clarke, 1979: 247)*, so that the significance of culture, like ideology, lies in its representation of the 'subject's imaginary relation to its conditions of existence' *(McGuigan, 1992: 30)*. Working class culture, therefore, only has any meaning through its role in ensuring that working class forms of behaviour are conducive to the maintenance and reproduction of capitalist social relations. Instead of recognising working class culture as both the product and process of struggle, riven by conflict and the transforming possibilities of everyday life *(Thompson, 1978)*, cultural forms are no more than static and alien structures which bear little relation to the actual hardship and deprivations structured by the material organisation of social life.

As Meiksins Wood points out it is but 'a flip of the structuralist coin' *(Meiksins Wood, 1986: 79)* to move from this essentially reductionist view of ideology and culture to one in which politics and ideology take on a life of their own. It is precisely because such accounts tend to assume that society is organised into distinct and separate spheres, i.e. the economic, political and ideological, that analysis can move between them with impunity and without regard to their logical or historical connections. In order to escape accusations of reductionism such accounts usually give politics and ideology some form of autonomy from the economic with the consequence that forms of social behaviour become constituted politically and ideologically, rather than by reference to any specific forces grounded in the actual organisation of social life. Taken to its 'post-structuralist' extremes, politics and ideology increasingly become alienated from the social and historical rela-

tions of which they are a form, eventually giving way to idealism or discourse as the sole determinants of individual subjectivities, and the formative factors in establishing the context within which social and political forces are actually constituted.

This is exactly the path laid out by Philip Cohen's attempt to 'rethink the youth question' *(1986)* and it is along its tracks that Hollands doggedly follows. For Cohen, 'youth' is not the unitary biological or psychological category of orthodox accounts, even if it is construed as such for the purposes of political or moral regulation, but is better understood as a 'relatively autonomous' category with a life of its own. For Cohen, 'youth' is an 'imaginary relation', an ideological form whose specific instances are the outcome of contradictory 'discourses' *(Cohen, 1986:54)* of powerlessness and hedonism. 'Youth' and types of 'youthful' behaviour are therefore not seen as grounded in the material organisation of social relations but become constituted in the realm of idealism, through politics, ideology and ultimately discourse.

This emphasis on 'youth' as the realm of idealism is located specifically within capitalist society by Cohen's insistence that class relations under capitalism are increasingly experienced in indirect ways and progressively take the form of 'imaginary relations' which appear in non-class forms. 'In other words, class positions are rarely registered in a simple and immediate form (e.g. in the conflict between Capital and Labour) they are lived through a series of non-class positions which they invisibly connect and inflect *at the level of cultural reproduction'* *(Cohen, 1986: 56, his emphasis).* More specifically, these 'non-class' positions take the form of 'reproduction codes' or 'cultural forms' *(Hollands, 1991: 15)* which, taken in their totality, provide the cultural framework within which individual subjectivities are constituted as working class young people mature. It is through these cultural markers that the meanings associated with working class childhood, adolescence and adulthood are defined and therefore why struggles over their definition, something uniquely appreciated by the politics of Thatcherism *(Cohen, 1983),* are so important in constituting forms of working class life.

But to see class as reproduced in indirect and alien ways is to follow both Cohen and Hollands into seeing class as a technical relation. A relation whereby factors such as labour and machinery are combined within the technical process of production, the 'economy', to make commodities and one which takes place *within* ideologically and politically constituted parameters *(Clarke, 1991).* But class is not a technical or an economic relation, and its development is not more or less synonymous with the technical ways in which commodities are produced or one whose course can be read off against essentially neutral laws of technological progress *(Meiksins Wood, 1990).* Class is a social relation, a relation rooted in the social organisation of production in which the production of commodities necessarily entails a relationship between a class who own and control the means of production and a class of wage labourers who are forced to return to the labour market each day in order to survive. It is therefore a *social relation* of exploitation and domination in which the production of commodities necessarily presupposes the production and reproduction of specific forms of social, and thus class, relations. In this way class cannot be seen as something separate from the other social

relations - ideology, politics and culture - because, as Marx sought to clarify, 'the relations of production in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and specifically, society at a definite stage of historical development' *(Marx 1977: 256)*.

It is this which defines the historical significance of capital as a social relation which imposes itself throughout society and which finds expression in all that society's activities and forms. Class cannot be defined purely economically, in terms of the immediate labour process or at the level of the enterprise, but is a social relation of exploitation and domination which expresses itself in economic, political and ideological forms. It is here that the significance of forms of 'youthful' behaviour lie because it is the generality and continuity of the capital relation, and the ways in which it necessarily involves struggles against its tendency to reduce all social relationships to those of exploitation and domination, that the significance of these activities lie.

In and against 'youth training'
The significance of forms of trainee behaviour therefore lie with an analysis of class in general. As the experience of adults on 'training schemes' demonstrates, young people display many of the same values and responses to these institutional forms which characterise the experiences of the wider working class in general. 'Working class young people are, in sociological terms, an actual and potential labour force and it is this (and not their youth) which determines their social relationships and structures their institutional relationships' *(Corrigan and Frith, 1976: 236)*. 'Youth' is primarily a class concept and what is specific about the behaviour of working class young people is not best understood by some ambiguous reference to ideology and politics, but to the ways in which 'youthful' forms of behaviour have historically been constituted *in and against* the forms taken by the capital relation. As Simon Frith points out, the 'concern of training programmes is young collective labour' *(Frith, 1980: 38)* and the problems of control it poses. Problems which arise from constant failure of young workers to display the same longer-term commitments to work characteristic of their parents with family responsibilities and mortgages to pay, and problems which have been fought out (and largely lost) through the development of new forms of state activity centred around 'training', as capital has sought to impose new forms of domination on the young.

It is therefore important that the state has increasingly sought to regulate these forms of 'youthful' behaviour and that this has found its institutional expression through *the training state form*. But to follow Cohen and Hollands in seeing this as the outcome of some 'relatively autonomous' political and ideological action, or as something constituted in the realm of 'discourse', is clearly inadequate. Such an approach merely reinforces the ideological power claimed by the state, finds consensus where none exists, cannot account for the complexity of forms of behaviour among 'trainees' and cannot relate these forms to the material organisation of social life.

What is needed, instead, is an approach to understanding working class young people's behaviour which begins from the centrality of the capital relation and the necessary struggle *in and against* its forms. Such an approach recognises that the

apparent separation of the political and the economic is intrinsic to the rise of capitalism as a historically specific set of social relations *(Holloway and Picciotto, 1977; 1978)* and seeks to demonstrate that the state and its institutional activities is, both logically and historically, a specific form taken by capitalist social relations of production. Therefore as an aspect of the capital relation, the state and its institutional forms are subject to the same contradictions, constant struggles and instability which stem from labour's position *in and against* capital. That is, labour historically constituted as a workforce necessary for capital's existence but simultaneously opposing its tendency to reduce all social relationships to those of exploitation and domination. It is this which defines the significance of forms of behaviour among 'trainees' and which represents the harsh realities of being young and working class on a state 'training' scheme. And it is from here, in struggles *in and against* 'youth training', that further research and analysis of the significance of forms of 'youthful' behaviour should proceed.

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WORKING SPACE

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT 1991:

Implications For Young Offenders

IAN D NESBITT

A colleague of mine, 'Stan the Man' displays a small poster next to his desk which proclaims, 'The Little Tinkers'. This wry comment is a poignant reminder of some of the more unhelpful terms employed by certain professionals, as well as politicians and the general public, when describing our clientele - young offenders.

Ours are societies young outcasts, portrayed as jackals in government car crime commercials. They are the child criminals from whom the Home Secretary wishes to give society a rest - the 'Short-Sharp-Shocked'. And to assist us through this mine field, our official guide is the Criminal Justice Act, 1991.

This Act of Parliament was a mammoth piece of legislation. It was many months in preparation, and all those involved in its operation - magistrates, judges, lawyers, probation officers and social workers - had to undergo detailed, and expensive training to be best placed to provide the public with a well integrated service from the implementation date of October 1 last year.

The whole ethos of the Act, it was said, was to reduce the prison population, by making greater use of community-based disposals such as supervision and community service. We were encouraged to work in partnership with the courts, in preparing the new Pre-Sentence Reports *(P.S.R.)*, which replaced Social Enquiry Reports as the means by which the judiciary were given an insight into an offenders background. We were to concentrate on the offence before the court, disregarding all welfare issues, and matters relating to previous offending, unless they had a specific bearing on the case.

Out went all references to the social situation of the young person, as well as the number of his or her previous offences.

On the incoming side, our trainers promoted the use of guidelines issued by Hampshire Social Services to indicate the perceived seriousness of a particular type of crime. When used in conjunction with sentencing guidelines issued by the Magistrates Association, outlining possible aggravating and mitigating features, the P.S.R. author has, in theory, a solid structure on which to base a report.

So equipped, and with a song in our hearts for a brave new tomorrow, we set forth on October 1 into what we felt sure would be a new era of enlightened decision making.

Transformed overnight from Juvenile to Youth Courts, the requests for P.S.Rs began to flow. Social workers and probation officers alike, led to believe by the Act that they were equal partners in the process, set pen to parchment calculating the seriousness of the offences listed. The required levels of intervention, and restriction of liberty was then determined by a set formula, giving - we thought - a clear indication of what would be the most sensible outcome to propose to the court.

But...

The magistrates do not like the new Act. They feel it restricts too far their freedom to determine what they believe to be the most appropriate sentence.

Very quickly, it became clear that proposals in P.S.Rs were being ignored, and custodial sentences instead of being reduced, actually increased. Specified Activity Orders made as a direct alternative to a custodial sentence all but disappeared for a staggering eight months. The good working relationship built up over several years with the local court was being strained to the point where some workers felt that it was becoming pointless even submitting a report to the Youth Court.

And then the government acted. The Home Secretary stood up in parliament and said that because of a wave of resignations by magistrates, the number of complaints over the unit fine system and various other excuses, the Criminal Justice Act would be given a major overhaul. The ability of a court to take previous offences into account when sentencing offenders would be reinstated. The unit fine system would be abolished, and to all intents and purposes, we would return to former practices as if the 1991 Act had never existed. The magistrates were appeased and the general public reassured that young offenders portrayed in the media as sweeping out of control across the nation would be provided for by increasing the number of secure units and reducing the age limit for qualification. The 'lock-em-up-and-throw-away-the-key' brigade were coming to the fore.

Why is it that those of us who work and have studied in the field of youth crime are the last people to be heard in the debate over how best to tackle the problem? Have we still not shaken off the bleeding heart do-gooder image? If not, then who is at fault - the power brokers in government for not listening or us for not making ourselves heard?

Young offenders need help. A strict punishment regime such as the current Young Offenders Institutions, or the borstals and approved schools of yesteryear, turn out criminals better prepared to return to their old ways, having learnt new techniques from other inmates during their stay. The re-offending rate for those released from custody is an alarming eighty percent and the average length of stay in such an institution only seven weeks, the equivalent of a school summer holiday.

When proper use is made of community sentences, the re-offending rate drops dramatically to nearer thirty five percent. It is certainly rare for us to turn out model citizens but the prospects for a long-term reduction in criminal behaviour have to be recognised. Young people are quite able to follow a career in offending with very blinkered vision. When there is little else provided to fill spare time the thrill of riding in a stolen car, being hotly pursued by police officers in cars and helicopters; or the buzz expressed by those who break into houses when the occupants are asleep upstairs, must be countered by someone who can open their eyes to the true consequences of their behaviour; on themselves, their families, their victims and innocent bystanders. This sort of perspective is not and cannot be given by a prison warder.

If there is to be a new Criminal Justice Act, I urge the policy makers to consult more extensively with grass roots workers, those of us who understand the young

offender. I would also promote joint training amongst practitioners within the system; lawyers, the judiciary - and shop floor plebs like myself! We do not seek to blindly defend young offenders but to actively change their behaviour for the benefit of society as well as themselves. You never know, we might all learn something.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not the organisation in which he works.

Ian Nesbitt, formerly a social work auxiliary and intermediate treatment officer is now employed by Gateshead Social Services as a member of the Youth Justice team.

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REVIEW

Moyra Riseborough

This is the lastest addition to the BASW Practical Social Work Series, a series edited by Jo Campling. The book complements others in the series with its emphasis on practical work set in a theoretical framework. It is an excellent book for students and practitioners involved in social work and housing. It offers a thorough indroduction to the main issues that affect people with housing needs but it also raises questions and issues that all practitioners are, or should be, concerned with. It draws on a wide range of research and pays attention to the changes in housing and social policy which have affected the housing positions of social groups, such as, young people and homeless families. Given that more local authorities will be moving towards unitary governance structure and given the needs for housing organisations and social services departments to work more closely together than ever before, this book is well timed.

Most importantly the book addresses issues in an accessible way dealing with the structural roots of inequality that underlie accommodation problems experienced by groups of people and practical ways to reach solutions. Inequality and housing rights are firmly embedded in the book and the authors successfully avoid an emphasis on the personal characteristics of social service users, which I applaud. The word *accommodation* has been used deliberately by the authors in order to focus attention on the diversity of tenures and housing circumstances that are the common features of people's lives in the housing market today. This enables Jill and John Stewart to look at the issues arising from a range of accommodation problems. The tenure issues of local authority tenants, the tenure issues affecting private tenants, owner occupiers and people living in houses of multiple occupation are discussed under chapters with organising themes that make sense.

'Moving to Independence' and 'Relationship Breakdown', are two noteworthy chapters. In the former chapter there is a concise and accurate discussion of policy and legislative change that informs the current position of young people leaving home, of a variety of groups leaving institutions and resettlement matters. In the latter the issues of women's housing rights and ex partner's rights are looked at and the chapter focuses on the need to distinguish between temporary short term housing solutions and long term resolution. The housing circumstances of those involved in relationship breakdown are affected by temporary solutions, such as, staying with friends or relatives and the authors underline the need for social workers and housing workers to be prepared to challenge housing organisation's decisions. The chapter provides basic but good information on why decisions should be chal-

lenged as well as advice on how challenges can be made. Other chapters examine accommodation needs of homeless families, older people and those in ill health. The environmental and material aspects of 'difficult estates' are also examined. In chapter six, on ill health and old age, there is a useful discussion posed in the nature of a question that asks whether some problems presented by social services users require care and/or housing solutions. The discussion is relevant to many groups, including young people where the Children Act or care in the community initiatives may apply. Interleaved with attention to Community Care Grants and pertinent discussion of local authority repair grants and assistance available from the Benefits Agency, the authors blend in information from diverse sources to demonstrate how matters can be understood and problems resolved.

This division of contents, the use of parallel themes that groups related issues together rather than picking out particular age or gender groups, is a useful way to set out the background in terms of current housing and social work policy and practice. The book is not one which deals with the individual case work concerns of social workers and there are good reasons for this since the resolution of individual problems of particular social services users are inextricably entwined with understanding the nature of the issues from which problems spring. Hence, the authors use examples from case work to point up issues and to raise questions about the direction that resolution could take. Understanding of a range of solutions helps then to inform the direction of problem solving and keeps the user firmly in mind. A useful example is that given in chapter three, 'Relationship Breakdown', where social work intervention successfully tackled a range of fuel debt and rent arrears problems in the case of a woman whose husband had left her and thus helped to avert eviction while also making the tenancy sustainable in the future.

The need for social workers to take action across a range of possibilities and to challenge decisions of institutions are key messages of the book. The authors compare the emergence of community action and collective efforts by community groups to overcome housing and environmental problems with the more individualistic style of social work. It is stated, and I think quite rightly, that while community solutions have been embraced by some social workers social work has not welcomed these activities wholeheartedly.

The book does not dodge what has been for me a very significant issue, the yawning chasm between social work and social work users where housing, poverty and material deprivation are concerned. The lack of a strategic social work approach to these fundamental problems which radically affects the abilities of groups of people in society to have access to a decent quality of life, has long mystified me and many community and advice workers whom I know. The book is intended to stimulate debate and it has to be hoped that this will become a crucial area of debate. The authors admit that citizens seeking help from social ser-

vices departments frequently receive a nil or disheartening response to requests for information and advice.

It is heartening to read Gill and John Stewart's advocacy that a social work strategy is needed. I shall certainly be recommending this book to post-experience housing and social care students. It is a book to be read rather than to be kept as a reference source of the law but it is very well informed indeed and essential at a time where joint good practice and policy decisions between housing organisations and social services departments are highly necessary.

Jean Spence

As Angela McRobbie indicates in her essay 'Jackie and Just Seventeen in the 1980s', reading is not a naive, mechanistic act. The reader actively selects and interprets the text within a particular context and meaning is constructed in the relationship between the reader and the text. My reading of McRobbie emerges from my interest in youth work with girls and young women and my engagement with her work since the late 1970s is related to the virtual absence of rigorous theoretical analysis directly relevant to work with girls and young women in the community and youth work environment. In this sense, I have often felt a degree of disappointment about her publications. Reading this collection of articles, representing the main body of her work focusing on young women is no exception. My interest was caught most fully in (re)reading the articles which deal directly with young women's lives rather than in those of which the subject is magazines or dance. In this sense my concentration was patchy and initially, for me, this collection of readings did not hang well together as a whole.

Having said that, my experience of the book is undoubtedly due to the fact that McRobbie approached the question of girls and young women from the perspective of cultural studies rather than from the perspective of youth work. To read her work as a community educator or as a youth worker is therefore to displace the main theme running through this collection. The clue is in the title. McRobbie's concerns are primarily 'Feminism' and 'Youth Culture'.

She herself, as a researcher and writer has obviously been forced to deal with problems arising from the expectations and misconceptions of the

youth workers and community activists whose reading of her work has been partial. The essay 'The Politics of Feminist Research: Between Talk, Text and Action' (first published in 'Feminist Review', 1982), represents an attempt to resolve some of the difficulties arising from the gap between youth work with girls and young women and the interests of the academic researcher whose research questions lead to analysis which does not necessarily deal with the questions of the activists. In choosing to undertake research in the youth club environment at a time (in the late 1970s) when feminist youth workers were struggling fiercely to change gender relations in youth work, McRobbie seems to have created expectations unrelated to her intentions. The disappointment was, and is, almost inevitable so long as so few academics choose to focus upon girls and young women as research subjects. It is therefore important to take from McRobbie's work what is useful, to interpret her analysis according to our own concerns and to use this to develop a more direct theoretical understanding of our own, rather than require her to fit the bill for us.

The collection in this book covers essays and articles written by McRobbie between 1977 and 1991. As a whole, it reveals her struggles as a feminist sociologist firstly to 'fit' young women into subcultural analysis and then to develop a theoretical understanding which is more grounded in the realities of young women's lives as she encounters them in the research situation and in her own private life. In the background can be discerned McRobbie's personal efforts to deal with gender inequality within the university, within social and subcultural theory and within the research environment. In this sense, the book is an interesting historical overview of political, theoretical and cultural change since the mid 1970s.

It encompasses, from the perspective of gender inequality, critiques of important publications such as 'Learning to Labour' (Willis) and 'Subculture: The Meaning of Style' (Hebdige), and in so doing, takes these analyses further. It captures key moments of theoretical development including the recognition that understanding gender requires moving beyond class analysis, debating some of the issues raised by 'feminist research', and demonstrating both the importance and the limitations of semiology in cultural theory. It also stands as witness to some of the dreams and disappointments of the last 15 years, remembering the excitement of punk and the enthusiasm of 'Rock against Racism' on the one hand but recognising the overwhelming power of unemployment and poverty to entrap young women, particularly through motherhood, and the racism and violence of white young men which parallels this.

A small but interesting observation for me was that in 1982, McRobbie could write:

> Since the widescale setting up of girls groups in schools and colleges, of girls nights in youth clubs, of social work practice for girls and young women, the kind of research I did in 1975 is no longer reflective of gender relations in the school or youth service. (p. 65)

Yet in taking notes for this review, after reading the article on her 1975 research, I wrote 'A very useful piece, and still useful in '93'. This understanding comes from my current research around work with girls and young women in the North East and points to the lack of fundamental structural change around gender relations in youth work despite apparent gains made in the early 1980s. In 1982, it did appear that the movement for working with girls and young women was changing the situation encountered by McRobbie in 1975 where young women were marginalised because of their orientation to the family and their unwillingness to conform to the activities base of youth work practice. However, in 1993, as young women become more entrenched in the family through unemployment and poverty, as youth and community work is systematically dismantled and redirected towards social control and young men, hoped for changes have not materialised. Feminism has touched young women's lives as McRobbie indicates insofar as it has undermined the mystique of marriage and suggested to women that they need not tie themselves formally into violent and unsupportive relationships. It has not changed their lives in relation to the absence of work opportunities, decent housing and childcare facilities and in the centrality of the family in the female role. Similarly, girls nights, young mothers groups and the like, have touched youth and community work in that most (but not all!) clubs and centres now provide some space and time for young women, but they have not altered the real power relations in the work or created a new methodology which challenges the conventional social construction of femininity. McRobbie's work is relevant in enabling us to understand the complexity of the social forces in which young women carve out their lives and identities. She focuses upon some key ideological issues and cultural products and movements and demonstrates how they relate to adolescent femininity in both an enabling and a repressive manner. Her analysis of the adolescent girl's use of magazines and the essay in which she strives to initiate a sociology of dance are enlightening insofar as they suggest that these cultural forms involve mixed messages at different levels for young women sometimes providing advice and information, sometimes suggesting possibilities for change and rebellion, but most often working to tie young women into traditional feminine roles and behaviour.

Some of the theoretical discussion in these essays seems to be of purely academic value, McRobbie outlining and clarifying her own position, and sometimes it is difficult to locate the central point as the author moves through the various issues which concern her. However, if the feminist youth worker reads this book with an understanding of McRobbie's main questions and with an eye to what can be gained indirectly as well as directly, then there is much in it to inform practice. For instance, we can gain a deeper and wider theoretical understanding of young women's lives from reading this book in the light of what we understand from practice. We can pick up some clues about using cultural forms such as magazines and dance in our work in a way which

does not promote the status quo but which links in with the progressive aspects of these activities.

Even though all but three of the eight essays in this collection have been previously published, it is worthwhile encountering them within the one book and attempting to read the book as a thematic whole. However, for the busy youth worker who wants to be selective, I particularly recommend, 'The Culture of Working Class Girls', 'Jackie and Just Seventeen in the 1980s' and 'Teenage Mothers: A New Social State'.

Keith Pringle

These two publications are in considerable contrast as regards breadth of focus and of audience, at least as far as the United Kingdom is concerned. On the one hand, Myers has a very specific focus and will perhaps appeal to a minority interest given that his book is surveying the legal situation in the United States. On the other hand, Moore has aimed to provide a generalist primer on a massive (and complex) topic for a wide audience.

Despite the limitations noted above, Myers' book does have considerable appeal. Partly this derives from the fact that the British and American legal systems do overlap and in these areas Myers has valuable points to make. For instance, the issues around the reliability of children's evidence in court are more or less the same and he provides a very sound overview of the research on this contentious subject, drawing on not only U.S. work but also on British studies by Flin, Spencer and their colleagues.

In fact, it is surprising how many areas of overlap exist. The implications of operating within an adversarial system are very similar as are the discrepancies which occur between judgements in criminal and civil proceedings due to differences in the levels of proof required: in Britain and the U.S. 'beyond reasonable doubt' for criminal cases and the 'balance of

probabilities' (U.K.) / 'preponderance of the evidence' (U.S.) for civil ones. Another reason for the appeal of the book is that where there are major differences between the two legal systems, those differences are instructive - usually highlighting why the U.K. system is so inadequate in terms of meeting the needs of children. For instance, in most U.S. states 'Reporting Laws' exist for 'professionals' which clarify the situation considerably compared to the confusion which often reigns here. Moreover, in the U.S. there seems to be more latitude and balance regarding the use of 'leading questions' and 'anatomical' dolls when interviewing children. Once again, this appears to be a far more sensible approach than that taken in Britain where the 'strait-jacket' of the guidelines in the Home Office/Department of Health 'Memorandum on Good Practice' make many child protection investigations virtually pointless in terms of protecting children. Most telling of all, however, is the sensitive and sensible American attitude towards videoing young people's evidence which is given admirably clear exposition in this book. The awareness that disclosure of abuse is a *Process* and not an event is, by contrast, largely ignored in British official guidelines to the massive detriment of justice for children.

On a more general level, the book has useful and simple practical chapters on topics such as how to give expert testimony, the nature of cross-examination, and lawsuits against 'professionals'. I have not seen such an informative and succinct exposition in British texts on child abuse and neglect. Unfortunately, it is hard for a lay-person to be sure to what extent one can translate that advice accurately to the British situation.

It was disappointing that issues of gender and 'race' warranted virtually no comment throughout the book. Is American justice more sensitive to these subjects than the undoubtedly insensitive judicial system in Britain? I am sceptical about that - and it would have been good to know from this book.

Myers does make the odd mistake when mentioning the situation in Britain: for instance, where he tells us quite seriously that 'In the England of King Arthur, the government and its employees could not be sued'!

However, the book is generally very reliable and user-friendly: it is a pity there is no directly similar text written for the British legal system.

Part of the problem with Jean Moore's book is signposted by the title: is it really possible to provide an 'ABC' for such a complex subject as child protection? Judging this book I think the answer may well be 'no'.

That is not to say that the publication does not have some great virtues. On a number of issues Moore writes with considerable insight and sensitivity. For instance, her section on social work staff 'burn-out' is an excellent summary of research and full of good sense: I would recommend it to any worker about to enter the field of child protection for the first time.

Unfortunately, the problems with the book outweigh the positives. On many occasions Moore introduces concepts and interpretations which are open to considerable debate as if they were near-certainties. For instance using the image of a 'slippery slope' Moore seeks to classify 'types' of sexual abuser (pp. 51-59). Such a typology is based on research, but research which is open to doubt: for a start it is based on populations of abusers who have been apprehended - we know that the vast majority of perpetrators are not caught so how representative are these populations? Caveats like that are generally missing from Moore's text presumably because she wishes to provide clarity for her intentionally broad audience. How acceptable are such omissions? I would argue they are not acceptable since sexual abuse is an area where the dictum of a little learning being dangerous can be particularly true. For example, the problem with Moore's abuser typology is that workers may ignore signs of abuse because the potential perpetrator does not fall in to one of the 'types'.

The conflict between the need to simplify and the need to do justice to the subject of abuse occurs over and over again in this book. On the page after the discussion of the 'slippery slope' Moore casually refers to 'the sexually abusing family' (59) with no explanation as to what she means by this. Yet the concept of such a family is at the heart of the most fundamental debate in the field: the relative merits of two causative models of sexual abuse - one which focuses on the nature of particular family dynamics, the other (feminist) model which emphasises the role of male socialisation. What is especially confusing is that elsewhere in the book Moore clearly draws heavily upon feminist analyses despite the fact that here she seems to subscribe to a very different approach.

Moore's exposition on the situation of non-abusing mothers is more successful (61-62) but again does not do justice to what is a very complex issue - and the problem once more is that such simplification could lead inexperienced workers to make false judgements about individual mothers. The issue of racism is frequently missing from books on child abuse. That is a major omission of which Moore is not guilty. However, her way of dealing with the issue is questionable: she interpolates two sections on black issues by David Divine and by Emmanuel Okine into her own text. Both sections are extremely useful - in fact they are the parts of the book I would highly recommend to practitioners. Yet the overall effect is unsatisfactory in two ways.

First, and most important, it would surely be preferable for an awareness of issues of racism to permeate the whole book rather than confining it to about 15 pages in a text of 178 pages - and thereby also enable stronger links to be made between racism and other forms of oppression. 'Ghettoisation' of black issues in two discrete, small sections can surely be misunderstood as itself a symbol of marginalisation and so would be better avoided. Secondly, the style of the two sections is very

different from Moore's own style. Divine's and Okine's writing seems far more hard-edged than the main author's relatively relaxed, almost colloquial approach. The former actually feels more appropriate to the issues under discussion than the latter - and so tends to highlight the fundamental tension in the body of the book between accessibility/simplicity on the one hand and actuality/complexity on the other.

One of the most successful parts of Moore's own contribution is chapter 8 where she provides an overview of issues relating to face - to - face work with children which is succinct. Once again, though, the reader will need to look to the more substantial works of Axline, Oaklander, Bannister etc. to gain a useful appreciation of the creativity, subtlety, and breadth of strategies for working with children.

Moore again relies on an 'outside expert' to cover the legal issues of child protection: Caroline Ball. No doubt it was a difficult subject to tackle, given the lack of time which has occurred in which to judge the reality of the Children Act 1989. Even so, a book published in 1992 ought to have been able to pinpoint some of the (many) problems with the Act - or to have at least anticipated them. Yet on the whole Caroline Ball is remarkably uncritical of the legislation. For instance, the notorious central plank of the care proceedings machinery in the Act, the concept of 'significant harm', warrants only this response from Ball: 'It would seem inevitable that in due course a body of case in law will refine these definitions'.

Moreover, the book presumably appeared too early to include any critique of the Home Office/Department of Health 'Memorandum of Good Practice' issued in 1992 which, as noted above, has massive (and largely negative) implications for child protection in the United Kingdom. This is now a major omission in a publication such as this which is focused on child protection and considerably reduces its value to students and practitioners.

In summary, there is some good material in Moore's book (especially that by Divine and Okine) but there is also much that is simplified - probably too simplified. On balance, I would recommend more substantial texts on particular aspects of child protection to students and practitioners rather than this 'primer'. In the area of child protection over-complexity is a problem which is preferable to that of over-simplification.

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Bryan Langley

REVIEW

It seems that the fall of Rome and the rise of Hitler have at least one important common factor; the repression of culture. Rule by idiosyncratic, whimsical edict became the norm. In those dark ages, thought and philosophy were abused and ignored, whilst action and physical power were applauded. Do something! well - anything! - seems to be the present cry. Could the barbarians have passed through our gates, and even be at the heart of Government. How devastating to hear our Prime Minister abhor knowledge, as he did recently:

Society needs to condemn a little more, and Understand a little less.

Perhaps John Major feels less threatened if he is surrounded by ignorance and incomprehension, but most decent, thinking people would surely disagree. Whether or not we are intellectuals, most of us prefer to collect information, organise it, consider its implications and then draw conclusions. This is essential for natural justice before condemning and presumable punishing anyone.

'The School Years' throws a brilliant spotlight into the shadowland of adolescent, showing that above all, problems associated with this group require that those concerned with it are sensitive, well-informed, articulate, and caring. The arbitrary use of the jack-boot, short-sharp shocks or born again borstals must remain mythical solutions confined to the ethereal and de-phlogisticated air of Tory Party Conferences. Readers in the Cabinet should be obliged to study this book. It may acquaint them with the complexity of our society, and the basic scholarship that is essential if it is to be properly served. They must ignore John Major's protestation.

'The School Years' is arranged as a series of well argued, thoroughly researched chapters dealing with a comprehensive range of developmental aspects of adolescence. Each contributor is an acknowledged authority in their field and speaks with the clarity, confidence and expertise to be expected. They write on moral development, gender role learning, the development of the self, the peer group, juvenile delinquency, and home-school links. Each chapter has a similar pattern; introduction followed by an extensive specific review and then general conclusions with practical relevance. The consummate skill demonstrated in translating theoretical and very technical research to new ideas informing youth and school work, is outstanding.

A myriad of texts abound in social sciences, crammed with data but out of touch with face-workers. The genius of Coleman lies in his ability to mesh scholarship with feasible, sensible work practice. On every page,

wisdom, science, humanity, experience and common-sense blend without a join showing. We feel that the contributors are of our own flesh. Certainly they are better read - Yes!, they are more articulate, but clearly they empathise, seeing and feeling as we do. They know the same youngsters e.g. who complain firstly about 'custodial supervision' and in the next instant about being ignored. For the first time, the book acknowledges that we adults could be experiencing traumas not unlike those of adolescence. Many workers undergo maturational stress linked with premature retirement, redundancy, professional frustration, health problems, marital and family instability etc. Even to have this noted and recognised is quite a boost to morale. Above all the book loudly proclaims the huge successes gained by the provision by adults of loving, effective models for young people to experiment with as they seek self-fulfilment and enhanced self-esteem. In this respect, the role and duties of parents, family and 'significant other adults' e.g. teachers and youth workers is constantly emphasised. Thankfully youngsters suffering from even the worst parenting imaginable can be compensated if they experience high quality schooling and youth work. Sadly, for under-privileged young people, LMS and open, competitive enrolment and LEA youth provision economies are likely to remove this form of compensatory education. The sorts of institution likely to provide appropriate models are not those blindly racing backwards to become 'grammar schools'. Rutter et al (Fifteen Thousand hours, 1979) states:

...after all, it is scarcely surprising that children benefit from attending schools which set good standards, where teachers provide good models of behaviour, where they are praised and given responsibility, where general conditions are good, and where lessons are well conducted.

Indeed this is obvious, but of course it MIGHT have been equally obvious if we had found that the most important factors were: attending a small, purpose built school in modern premises, with a particularly favourable PTR, a year based system of pastoral care, continuity of individual teachers and FIRM DISCIPLINE in which unacceptable behaviours were severely punished. In fact, none of these items were significantly associated with good outcomes, however measured. Schools can do must to foster good behaviour and attainments, and that even in a severely disadvantaged area, SCHOOLS CAN BE A FORCE FOR GOOD.

Modelling is a theme throughout the book, in both cognitive, affective and moral domains. There is a theoretical underpinning of Piagetian developmental psychology, but in this book it is set in a meaningful context.

There is a very topical and crucially important discussion on the relationship between delinquency and moral development. Kutnick considers that in the wake of the break-down of traditional family structures and the disuse of religious and other moral institutions, the genuinely

'moralizing' effects of schools becomes increasingly important, but care is required:

*The social learning approach may be difficult to maintain in that it is easier to identify incorrect behaviour and threaten punishment (**not** as effective as positive reinforcement) than to plan and pursue a programme developing positive character virtues.*

Teachers and youth workers are also reminded that they should not confuse programmes for moral development with the indoctrination of societal values at the expense of autonomy, freedom and creativity. There is a prevalent, mis-guided view that 'telling young people what is right and wrong' is all that is required. The whole of the National Curriculum is based upon; this prescriptive didactic proposal. Kenneth Baker (BBC1 - Question Time 25.3.93) considers the problems of Aids, and unwanted pregnancies can be solved by telling young people that sex should only occur in stable, loving, long-term relationships, and that to teach safe sex is to advocate promiscuity! It is sad that Mr Bun's folly very nearly squeezes out any possibility of actually developing proper, moral education. Whilst Baker and Patten look to 'tablets of stone' for moral re-armament, Coleman believes that inherent goodness should be allowed to grow and be recognised and encouraged. The Government seems intent on telling professionals and young people what is good for them. No debate is encouraged, no advice (apart from the right wing 'thinkers') accepted, and the result can only be likened to the 1993 Grand National. The KS3 English Anthology illustrates admirably the lack of understanding, so earnestly proposed by John Major. Wordsworth's worst poem is in there, and so is a relatively inconsequential poem by Larkin. Presumably, being a Thatcher acolyte accounts for the albeit posthumous honour, but 'Cut Grass' seems innocuous and irrelevant. What sort of controversy and thought would have been triggered by the much more appropriate poem, actually written for adolescents:

This Be The Verse

They fucked you up, your mum and dad
They may not mean to, but they do.
They fill you up with faults they had
And add some extra, just for you.

But they were fucked up in their turn
By fools in old style hats and coats
Who half the time were soppy stern
And half at one anothers' throats.

Man hands on misery to man
It deepens like a coastal shelf
Get out as early as you can
And don't have any kids yourself.

This poem would encourage thought and certainly would allow poetry to be seen as a dynamic medium for communicating ideas. It is as though the establishment is frightened to stimulate, excite and challenge. We seem to be not educating but preparing a compliant work force, docile enough to serve in alien, de-unionised, manufacturing centres. This is exactly the strategy to antagonise and promote delinquency, especially if the odds against any form of employment are huge.

Farrington, in an extension of the Cambridge Study on delinquency strongly associates the inability to manipulate abstract concepts with anti-social and even delinquent behaviour. Whilst we concentrate on transmitting our prejudices via the curriculum, we constrict young people's minds in the way the Chinese used to bind feet. It seems so obvious, if we improve thinking, and hone minds we improve the quality of life throughout society. There is a clear, inverse relationship between being able and wanting to think and delinquency.

Some schools are swimming valiantly against the stream by formalising attempts to promote thinking skills. The Somerset Thinking Scheme and Thinking Science have some really exciting material and processes for the classroom, but with the grammar school role learning implicit in the National Curriculum, schools find it difficult to find time to include generic, stimulating work such as this. Adherents to the conspiratorial theory of History might suggest that although thinking would reduce delinquency, it will also reduce the potential number of Tory voters - an unpalatable trade-off. Having some personal knowledge of Thinking Science, and having worked with senior staff involved with the Somerset Scheme, I can confirm the positive response and involvement of youngsters not normally fully engaged in the role learning cycle. Farrington links the confidential handling of abstract concepts i.e. 'Thinking' with reduced delinquency and consequently with the other associated social problems. Helping youngsters reason in a formal operational mode, he suggests is a genuinely glittering prize:

Any measure that reduces delinquency will probably also reduce alcohol abuse, drunk driving, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, family violence, truancy, school failure, unemployment, marital disharmony and divorce.

The chapter on 'The Home and the School' gently airs the fundamental flaws in exposing schools with delegated budgets to the law of the market place. It outlines the huge differences in levels of attainment achieved by youngsters due to factors which are directly attributable to home circumstances and over which schools have NO CONTROL WHATSOEVER. The role of The American HEAD START and FOLLOW THROUGH programmes were discussed and the general observation is made that alleviation or reduction of poverty, and parental training programmes improve achievement of youngsters at school. UK and other European studies bear this out. The suggestion that Food and Family

Studies should be included in the core curriculum is absolutely right; how odd that the DFE has almost crushed these areas to extinction! The argument is clearly for compensatory education and social provision for economically and culturally deprived areas. Instead of this happening, the money - following pupils LMS formula is ensuring that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Discerning parents in poorer areas will remove their youngsters from struggling neighbourhood schools - the schools performances will deteriorate - they will get less money - get worse, lose more pupils and so on. Economically impoverished areas will be burdened with failing, dying educational institutions. It seems a simple equation. Good, effective, well resourced schools can provide hope for those from even the most desperate and stressed backgrounds. Schools having 'failure' rammed down their throats are likely to have adverse effects on proper socialisation and are bound to increase delinquency. The lack of a philosophical, professional base for the involvement of parents in the Governments plans for the indoctrination of young people is especially obvious in the relationship with the main parents organisations (NCPTA, ACE and CASE). Patten appears happy when consumer-citizens (formerly parents, not, note pupils!) are dissatisfied with producers (formerly teachers and/or schools). However, when these organisations have a non-Tory party view point and attempt to discuss concerns with the Secretary of State, they are dismissed as Neanderthal, and suddenly a new, right wing group springs up to support the Government policy in all aspects - the Campaign for Real Education. How surprising to find the CRE bitterly attacking the proposed actions of teachers' professional associations as school staff struggle to get the best education for young people. The whole book addressed the mismatch between the education and training to which young people are entitled and what an old fashioned out-dated, biased, ill-informed government offers. The potential for young people of going through the guided, supported process of self-evaluation, essential for the production of individual RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT is emphasised. Going through the crude, none subjective, none specific 'hoops' to prepare a document which for many would be a record of academic NON-ACHIEVEMENT would convert such a document from a treasured, positive success story, to a worthless re-emphasis of failure. Another seemingly obvious yet crucial observation for contemporary society is that being YOUNG is perhaps an almost insignificant criterion on its own. Chronology is only important when considered within a complex social context which includes at least race, gender, class and financial status.

There are petty irritations with the book, but these are minimal. Some of the writing is jargon laden, even gibberish (e.g. p42):

> Peer-instigated compliance was used with reference to pro-social behaviour that met 'others' needs and one's relationship with or liking for another person

Similarly, in the review on gender the Freudian concept of 'penis-envy' is given a healthy airing. Perhaps such clap-trap has been afforded too

much publicity already and should be destined to the same rubbish-bin as Patten's doctrine of 'original sin'?

The School Years has a major role to play in reminding us how important is the learning, exploring, experimental, developmental phase of humanity that we term adolescence. It should not be thought of as a juvenile state into which doctrinaire decisions could be arbitrarily inflicted. It demonstrates young people need to be understood, researched, cared for and encouraged to participate in a quest for TRUST, KNOWLEDGE and GOODNESS. To condemn, censure and blame delinquents WITHOUT attempting to understand is both ignorant and wicked. To encourage others to do so is to invoke the forces of darkness. My fear is that the attempts to 'castrate knowledge' and impose on the youngsters of England and Wales a Victorian curriculum, with testing and assessment to keep non-academic peasants in place, is a well engineered political plan. John Major et al are merely fronting very clever strategists who are turning the country into a Conservative Party State. Our only hope is to explain things to one another and seriously attempt to understand in objective, scientific, rational, honest ways, the complex problems of contemporary society. John C Coleman has performed a great service in using scholarship, industry, commonsense and vision to expose incompetence, ignorance and regression. Major's minorism can be refuted for the price of a paper back!

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Andrew West

I opened this book with keen anticipation, hoping to find the Preface fulfilled: that it would provide 'a comprehensive overview of adolescent sexuality' and 'the most current information available' in order to 'lift the veil of ignorance around this subject matter' (viii). These were met but generally in a rather mechanical fashion; my disappointment concerned the lack of conceptual framework to draw all the themes together. This lack was evidenced by implicit contradictions between parts of the book, particularly resting on disagreement over the extent of biological or social causes of adolescent behaviour.

This lack of conceptualisation is perhaps partly due to the number of contributors, but some discussion of a framework would be expected in editorial meetings. This book has three editors, eight chapters and fourteen authors', it is also the fifth in an Annual Series entitled 'Advances in Adolescent Development'. The need for a framework to hold the themes

together is indicated, albeit in a small but significant way, by the lack of definitions of adolescence. The term anyway is vague and open to dispute, but its use here predicates a viewpoint concerning the existence and nature of a category called youth, and some sort of statement is required; the contributors presumably, had something to guide them.

The book opens well with the first chapter by Downs and Hillje on 'Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on Adolescent Sexuality: An Overview'. This reviews the literature and examines the scope of the subject, drawing attention to the Euro-centric nature of most historical sources and (a little late in the section) the speculative nature of much archaeological 'evidence' - explanations often made from the standpoint of the 20th century. From a useful survey of historical material, noting limitations as stated above, the authors move onto theoretical perspectives which, they state, they will not evaluate but 'review briefly pertinent theories in groups based on areas of emphasis used in the theories' explanations' (p 21). This is a key construct throughout the book in largely reviewing and reporting rather than evaluation (with one prime exception - chapter four). Here the lack of evaluation shows up, for many of the (psychological) theories surveyed are cultural-specific (that is Western or Euro-specific), but make statements in terms of general or world applicability - to all those of certain age - despite the authors earlier and later warning of cultural variation. This chapter effectively forms the introduction to the book and encompasses its strengths and weaknesses in its reviewing format and acknowledgement of cultural variation but lack of evaluation.

In Chapter Two Patricia Hyjer Dyk takes up the biological side of sexuality in 'Anatomy, Physiology, and Gender Issues in Adolescence'. This offers a description of biological processes, especially endoncrinology, couched in medical terms. (The endocrine system 'consists of a collection of glands that produce hormones that regulate the bodys rate of metabolism, growth, and sexual development and functioning' (p. 43) in case you don't know as I didn't). Again there are general statements, for example, that girls tend to be sensitive about early and boys about late development, with no cultural relationship stated. A biological basis for interest in hormones is given, in the extent to which they may influence adolescent sexual behaviour. There is a suggestion that a full theory of adolescent sexual behaviour would need to consider a variety of biological aspects, but the author also (almost as an aside) cites research where 'sexual intercourse was found to be primarily influenced by social processes' (p. 48)). The gender identity part of the chapter discusses the role of biological factors, gender assignment at birth and when such self-identity is formed (generally fixed by the age of three). Again there are some apparently cultural-specific references to how boys and girls explore their genitalia; curiously bold statements and unreferenced, given the caution of other parts of the chapter. However, reference is later made concerning the extent of which variations in behaviour patterns between boys and girls are biological or social, also

suggesting that the best predictor shown by some research was social. Some acknowledgment of cultural factors is made in the conclusion, in noting that young people develop the equipment to perform adult sexual roles whilst still defined as a minor in western society; a problem is that the social construction of 'adult sex role', pivotal to the theme of adolescent sexuality is nowhere really addressed in the book.

In Chapter Three Miller, Christopherson and King discuss 'Sexual Behaviour in Adolescence'. They focus on heterosexual behaviours taking a biosocial stance to the process of sex (from hand-holding to intercourse) to establish through published surveys, normative sex among young white and black people in the U.S.A.. This includes some curious statements such as 'having intercourse also lowered the importance of going to college among white females and depressed the school grades of white males' (p65). The source of this research is given but some evaluation is surely needed, or at least a cross-reference to the chapters on pregnancy and on aberrant sexual behaviour with their material on social contexts.

'A Developmental, Clinical Perspective on Lesbian, Gay Male, and Bisexual Youths' by Savin-Williams and Rodriguez forms Chapter Four and is the best written part of the book. The authors begin by emphasising the prevalence of heterosexism and the invisibility of lesbian, gay and bisexual adolescents. This leads onto consideration of the problem of sexual identity especially given the reported numbers of identifying gay and lesbian people who had engaged in heterosexual sex between the ages of 14 and 23 years. The problem of self-sexual-identity is then discussed particularly in the context of 'passing', that is ignoring or denying same-sex attraction. This introduces a section on sexual identity and psychological health including coming out to others and, especially important, coming out to self. The authors emphasise the need for change in cultural attitudes and policies and for development of psychological and social support systems. They briefly examine cultural differences, noting how for example, ethnic and gay identity might be in conflict. Finally they consider strategies, noting that passing is the worst for the individual but if it is not to be followed, then where is the support in the forms of visible social agencies such as youth groups? A plea which would find recognition in Britain although based like most of the material in the book, on the U.S.A..

In Chapter Five Jorgensen picks up the social/cultural emphasis of Savin-Williams and Rodriguez in his discussion of 'Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting'. He notes how the incidence of adolescent pregnancy has been described as being of 'epidemic' proportions (in the U.S.A) at various times over the past two decades, and how this has been shown to be a moral panic (in comparison to periods in the past and in view of a long-term decline over the 1960s and 1970s). However, he notes how another worker has agreed with the view of panic in ideas of epidemic and crisis, but has also suggested that the incidence needed to be

brought to attention for reasons of, it seems, increasing individual choice. Jorgensen discusses abortion and adoption decision-making and the consequences of parenthood, focusing especially on the social contexts of each and showing the relationship to poverty, unemployment and culture. Here the term 'adolescent' appears to have 19 as an upper-age limit. Jorgensen also emphasises the need for socio-cultural change for there to be any impact on adolescent pregnancy rates.

Rickel and Hendren discuss 'Aberrant Sexual Experiences in Adolescence' in Chapter Six. They focus on abuse (particularly incest), rape and prostitution. Like the proceeding two chapters this is informative both for reporting survey material and introducing varying perspectives. The rape section examines 'date rape' or 'acquaintance rape' (also briefly considered in Chapter Three) and which has been given some media attention over the past year. They note the problem of definition of rape experienced by adolescents - 'what constitutes rape ... when committed by a date or "friend"'(p. 143) and especially the feelings of reporting rape and the problem of date rape mythology and its effect on juries. (Such mythology including that men cannot stop once stimulated, or the language used by young women as somehow contributory, such as telling the assailant to 'fuck off'). The discussions of incest and of prostitution, especially in considering the difference of male and female experience, are also useful.

Chapter Seven 'Sexually Transmitted Diseases' by Leukefeld and Haverkos is essentially medical in character. It is also rather general in discussing disease rather than young people and presumably indicates a lack of research in this area, although the authors do give rates of some disease among some young people. A letter from a father to his children (by one of the authors) is given (previously published by the U.S. National Association of Social Workers). The letter explains AIDS and how to use a condom, highlighting the different feelings of the writer as a father and as a public health worker. This is the only direct consideration of young people and is limited in extent; whilst it briefly considers the role of education in prevention, it does not, like the letter, discuss alternative sexual practices to penetrative (and implicitly vaginal and heterosexual) intercourse. This chapter also includes a poorly produced graph which loses its meaning by being so difficult to read.

The final chapter picks up the theme of education in 'Promoting Sexual Responsibility in Adolescence' by Blau and Gullotta. They begin with three stories of unknown pregnancy, abuse and promiscuity, and sexually transmitted disease and ask how these can be prevented, how teenagers can learn to make responsible decisions, and what adults should be doing to help. The strategies listed are: Education; Competency promotion (for example, in learning what to say yes to, rather than simply no); Community organisation and systems intervention (especially looking at the discrepancies between media use of sex and stated 'family' type values); Natural caregiving (the idea that prevention can occur through social support and family networks, but about

which there has been little research). The final conclusion concerns what the authors note as the 'moral issue of teenage pregnancy' and the social reluctance to confront it, coupled with the need for more research.

The conclusion is disappointing in not considering or drawing together all the themes of the book, and in giving a prominence to pregnancy which does not reflect the earlier content. The initial chapter by Downs and Hillje outlines the enormous scope of adolescent sexuality from dating/puberty rituals through teenage pregnancy and parenting to sex and gender identity. Not all of the themes listed were picked up in the body of the book, but the chapters deserve some final attempt to draw together and summarize the threads, and to develop some sort of conceptual framework within which to consider the breadth of the subject. This shortcoming is exacerbated by the need for continual reinforcement of the cultural-specific nature of the material, a specificity too often glossed over by some and reducing the worth of the book. A further difficulty is the lack of attention to social policy (for example laws regarding age of consent and marriage). There is some reference to this in the first chapter but the promising start soon withers away. Despite this, the book has some good material, and is generally very useful as a review of literature, surveys and ideas; but it needs to be read with caution and awareness of its U.S. - and Euro-centric, often heterosexual, bias where this is not made evident by the authors.

Eamonn Rafferty

West Belfast's well-chronicled history often fails to acknowledge its complexity. What can emerge instead is a one-dimensional picture of an area upon which the wrath of violence has visited, leaving its scars in the wake. True, there are scars, but, as the authors remark, the 'troubles' are only one aspect of a complex picture.

Since 1969, redevelopment - that byword for everything a community doesn't want - has left West Belfast an area bounded by motorways and enterprize zones; local economies virtually destroyed and a social profile of rapid and alienating change. On top of this the 'troubles' do cast an unwelcome shadow. 'Trying to ignore the troubles is like trying to ignore an elephant in your living room,' it has been said elsewhere. Yet a troubles-free West Belfast would not necessarily have saved it from the planners and social engineers, but it does rob local people of a unified voice and consigns them to the ignominy of a divided community. From this

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perspective a one dimensional view of sectarianism and killings emerge. This is a 'problem' area, defined in terms of its security needs and the problems its residents, particularly the young people, cause the state.

West Belfast still remains a sizeable chunk of the city that expanded on the back of the Industrial Revolution. It is bounded on the one side by mountains, which acted as a natural barrier to its expansion. Within its heartlands lie two very distinct areas - the Catholic Falls and Protestant Shankill. These have assumed more cultural significance over the years as the borders between the two have become more physical - Peace Walls and night-time barriers.

The authors have focused on the Shankill and Catholic area bordering it, the Upper Springfield. The Shankill is one of the oldest parts of the city, supplying the labour for the shipyards and linen mills from the 19th century. Its rows of terrace houses gave way farther up the road to more middle class houses, some of whose wrought-iron grandeur still remains.

The Upper Springfield of the study is largely a series of post-war and 1950s developments to where Catholics from the housing waiting list moved. The estates of Ballymurphy, Moyard and New Barnsley were built quickly, suffered damp and were too small for the many large families that moved in.

From these two contiguous areas, the authors draw together a useful pen picture of their history, culture and the economic and social legacy that has been bestowed upon them. They chart the post-1969 (troubles) rise of community development and relations, pointing out how they have become a fairly cheap means of managing unemployment through workshops and schemes. We find that organised youth initiatives were rare before 1969 and on the Shankill largely confined to the uniformed groups and church clubs, while in Ballymurphy formal youth work was non-existent.

But with the onset of street violence in 1969, it was clear that young people were becoming involved to a degree that seriously worried the authorities. These worries translated into a more structured development of youth work and as the authors say, 'it was not surprising that the state-funded Youth Service developed dramatically during this time.'

In the late 1970s, I was briefly attached to a youth club in West Belfast. It was my first experience of both. This was by most accounts a well-run club, with good youth workers and a charismatic leader. It was essentially activity based, so prowess in football, boxing and the like was important. There was room for a little 'groupwork', but the impression was that 'doing' was better than 'talking'. The local estate suffered from the usual bouts of shootings and bombings, but strangely the club seemed almost untouched by these. Occasionally, members were 'lifted'

(arrested) by the army, but I was always struck by the sense of 'normality' in the face of so much adversity.

Reading this book, I'm tempted to think now that the 'normality' that perplexed me in 1977 was really the normality of any 'well-run' club, with its rules and regulations. One anecdote sticks out. The club, low-rise in construction, had high windows with 'unbreakable' glass - probably some from of Perspex. When they were fitted, the leader took a few of the 'likely lads' out and asked them to try to break them with stones. They couldn't. Their chance over, everyone was warned that throwing even the smallest of stones at the windows would in future be a barring offence. So, by the time you've barred the stone-throwers, told the drinkers not to come back, weeded out the lazy, ignored the unsporty types, then the chances are it's just the 'normal' who remain.

I'm hesitant about ascribing to the authors the view that youth work is about working with the 'normal', or, in management terms, those that don't pose any problems. Yet it remains a glaring statistic that organised youth work has been historically, and still is, a minority activity. With up to 70 per cent of young people not involved in clubs, one must wonder why?

The authors believe that a 'significant proportion of working class youth exclude themselves, or are excluded by others, from formal youth work because it is not relevant to their needs and aspirations'. That means there are a lot of 'outsiders', who have chosen to spend their time at other things; they are not, say the authors, apathetic, lazy or irresponsible but have different needs.

In the Shankill, youth work is still largely church, voluntary or uniformed; whereas the Upper Springfield tended to have a more 'professional' full-time approach. This was reflected in the size of clubs, with those on the Springfield often having six times more members than their Shankill counterparts. Formal youth work qualifications were more prevalent in Upper Springfield than the Shankill. When it comes to activities the differences are fewer: games tended to dominate in both areas

More than 250 youth club members were interviewed for the chapter on Formal Youth Club Participants. It provides a breakdown of attitudes to topics as diverse as their nationality, career ambitions, attitudes to authority interwoven with details of socio-economic factors. Categories include 'frequency of attendance by father's occupation', 'Mother's occupational status and area' - nearly 60 categories in all. If one were to do no more than absorb this chapter alone, it would be useful. Such a detailed analysis from a healthy sample should ensure these particular conclusions will be constantly drawn on by other researchers.

Less quantitive, but as qualitive, are the interviews done with the euphemistically 'unattached' - those that do not attend clubs - which forms the basis of the chapter on Youth sub-culture on the Shankill. For

sheer pathos, this takes some beating. I doubt I have ever read a greater insight into the lives of young working class Protestant youths.

The chapter on their Catholic counterparts in Ballymurphy may not just be as enthralling, but out of the pages the impressions of values of life there emerge.

In part, and in whole, this is a useful book. It is not merely descriptive and analytical, though that forms a useful part, it is prescriptive as well. The authors are clear in the way they marshall their evidence that the formal youth service has failed many young people and is a part of the 'acculturation' process, which denies them a stake in their future. They have recommended a proposed 'social contract', based on youth work elsewhere and adapted for Northern Ireland, which crucially (for me anyway) calls for young adults to be involved in the formation of social policy and given the freedom to develop alternatives.

John C. Coleman and Chris Warren-Adamson (eds.)
Youth Policy in the 1990s. The way forward
Routledge 1992 London
ISBN 0-415-05836-8 (pbk)
£14.99
pp. 250
                                                              Mark K Smith

The lack of a substantial, exploration of youth policy in the United Kingdom has long been a problem for those wanting to further debate and understanding. So much of what passes for policy discussion in this area fails to attend both to the impact of wider social and political concerns, and to the detail of what is happening in different welfare sectors. Thus, a book which promises, in the words of the cover blurb, to bring together 'leading experts who believe that youth policy deserves better than random notions culled from party dogma' immediately raises expectations. Unfortunately, although there are some useful contributions, the book does not really deliver the goods.

For those verse in debates around youth policy, the book does not get off to a good start with Warren-Adamson's call for the appointment of a minister for young people - and the application for a 'youth impact statement'. This old chestnut appears with some regularity - and at first sight seems to be a 'good thing'. For those wanting the needs of young people to be attended to more closely in policy making, having a minister with responsibility for youth matters appears to be a necessary step. However, it is a proposal that is fraught with difficulties and of little practical use. This can be seen in the experience of the 'Minister for the Disabled'. This post had a much smaller and more easily defined constituency and remit than a Minister of Youth could expect, but quickly ran into problems. Such creations, by having to operate across long established administra-

tive boundaries are doomed to marginality. A Minister of Youth could neither control the relevant budgets nor have access to key areas of decision-making. Client-centred ministries cannot be simply bolted onto existing structures. Rather, they involve a fundamental reordering of government activity. Even then there are bound to be border disputes - how would a Minister for Youth fit in with the Minister for Families, for example. Would organisational boundaries be such that major cross group questions such as poverty fall through the same gap that young people apparently do at present?

However, things immediately improve with Coleman's chapter on the nature of adolescence. He provides a succinct survey of the origins of the notion, psychoanalytic and sociological approaches to the subject and the research evidence concerning these. He pays particular attention to concepts such as the generation gap, status ambiguity, and the needs of young people. For those not wanting to go through the full 256 pages of Coleman and Hendry's (1990) standard text on these matters *The Nature of Adolescence,* is a useful summary.

Schooling is next in line. However, Walkling and Brannigan's chapter is rather unsatisfactory. It examines Tory ideology, Conservative practice, education through the market place and the question 'who are schools for?'. A great deal of ground is left unexplored e.g. testing, parental choice, and the content of the National Curriculum. I don't think that the authors place education policy in a proper historical or comparative or socio-economic context - but this would be a difficult task given the space at their disposal. It is at this point that one of the major flaws in such a sectoral approach to exploring youth policy becomes revealed.

When approaching youth policy one of the fundamental questions that we must ask concerns the extent to which there has been a consistent approach to policy across different welfare arenas. Many of the other contributors have to address the impact of Thatcherism (and especially the major legislation of 1987-1990) in relation to their own areas. What was needed in this collection was a substantial comparative piece which examined the nature of Thatcherite thinking and practice and the way it has been worked through as a project for welfare as a whole. Writers concerned with the different welfare arenas could then approach their subject in the knowledge that readers had a solid grounding in recent social policy debates.

Following on the heels of secondary education come chapters on youth employment and training, and sport and leisure. The first, written by Banks, is, as one would expect from someone centrally involved in the Economic and Social Research Council's 16-19 Initiative, a solid exploration of the area. It's shape is a model of what a chapter in this sort of collection should be. Banks begins with a historical survey of the youth labour market and training policy; and then proceeds to look at policy developments in the 1980s and the experience of key initiatives such as YTS. Comparative material is introduced, and the position in Scotland is addressed. He concludes with an examination of recent developments

and trends. In a similar fashion Hendry looks at the position in sport - and this is a much needed summary. Unfortunately, the orientation to sport does mean that key changes in young people's use of leisure and the associated policy environment are neglected. A later chapter by Stewart on adolescents as consumers, while containing useful material, does not fully bridge this gap.

Other chapters in the collection deal with the Youth Service (Paraskeva), mental health services for adolescents (Williams and Skeldon), empower-ment and child welfare (Stein and Frost) and housing and income (Killeen). The quality and coverage of these chapters is somewhat vari-able, although each would contain something of worth for students new to the respective areas. However, there are two further chapter worthy of note. The first is Tilford's discussion 'health matters'. Much of the atten-tion on health in relation to young people is rather of the 'sex and drugs and rock and roll' variety. The orientation to moral panics in these mat-ters is not at all conducive to developing a rounded understanding of this vital area. Tilford provides a discussion of the epidemiology of youth health; a historical survey of youth health within education, health care and related sectors; and an exploration of policy developments in these areas during the 1980s. She rightly places these in a proper international context and discusses possible future policy developments. This chapter is a good addition to the literature deserving a wide readership.

The last chapter worthy of attention is Pitts' survey of juvenile justice pol-icy in England and Wales. Again, given what Pitts has published else-where one would expect a competent survey of the area - and this is exactly what the reader gets. He briefly examines debates around 'radi-cal non-intervention', systems management and alternative tariffs and then looks at the individualization of practice. There follow sections on Thatcherism and juvenile justice, intermediate treatment, the problem of crime, and social prevention.

As has already been argued these sectoral chapters needed to be aug-mented by other thematic pieces. The impact of Thatcherism is one that has already been mentioned, but there are a number of other candidates including young people and citizenship; European youth policy; and the nature of policy and policy making structures. There were also one or two areas that fell through the cracks between the chapters. Perhaps most significant of these concerned young people, poverty and income support. In designing the collection the editors had some difficult deci-sions to make and I suspect that the book would have been more helpful if the desire to cover the various sectors had been curtailed somewhat - and a better balance struck with cross sectoral themes. This was the direction that Davies (1986) took in *Threatening Youth. Towards a national youth policy* and the result was a far more satisfying book.

The editors also had the perennial problem of variable contributions. Either the brief given to writers was not detailed enough or the editors had difficulties in getting contributors to write to a consistent pattern -

and this had a knock-on effect on coverage. I wonder whether the whole exercise was flawed from the start. I suspect that the book that is needed cannot be produced at this stage as an edited collection. It requires the sustained attention of one or two writers who are able to make the links across sectors and draw out themes. Overall, then, the book is something of a disappointment but there are some good chapters, and there is enough in it for it to appear on student reading lists.

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Dexter Whitfield
The Welfare State
Pluto Press 1992
ISBN 0-7453-0080-4 (pbk)
£19.50
pp 545

Howard Glennester
Paying For Welfare: the 1990s
Harvester Wheatsheaf 1992
ISBN 0-7450-0998-0 (pbk)
£10.95

Tony Jeffs

Understandably many are concerned as to the future direction, even survival of the welfare state. As welfare workers I wonder what proportion of Youth and Policy readers believe their job to be secure? How many in the voluntary sector are seriously concerned about funding over the next year or two? How many on fixed-term contracts expect to be kept on? How many in local authorities have seen colleagues made redundant and posts left unfilled? How many have wondered; 'am I for it in the next round of cuts?'; 'am I too near 50?'; 'have the wrong skills?'; 'been too critical of management in the past?'; 'under-qualified?'; 'over qualified and too expensive?'. Finally how many have any lingering faith in the integrity of their employers and managers? Are confident that those above would not negotiate a management buy-out behind their back? Or seriously resist the imposition of inferior wages and conditions upon those beneath them in the 'chain of command'?

All too often speaking to colleagues one is left with an impression that the fun and enjoyment has evaporated within both youth work and higher education. That far too many are going through the motions with little expectation that the 'world outside' appreciates their efforts. Or that it is worth investing undue energy in their work because so little that is achieved today will survive to benefit others in the future. Apathy is not a contagious disease but a realistic response to powerlessness. We are apathetic about

what we cannot influence or change. The apathy now perculating all levels of youth work reflects a rational assessment. One that recognises that in the short-term at least the government has largely closed-off the options. That in taking power to the centre, in destroying the integrity of local government and in crushing and marginalising so much opposition it has imposed a grey uniformity which stifles creativity amongst welfare workers. Curling up with these texts will not provide an instant antidote for such feelings of anomie and alienation. Each will though help to explain the prevalence of such feelings. One importantly provides a rare yet encouraging insight into how through collective action we might begin to counter apathy and despondency. In short how we might more effectively oppose those who seek to dismantle the welfare state.

Both Glennester and Whitfield seek to explain what is currently happening to the welfare system. Each also tries to predict what may happen during the coming decade. In terms of style they have little in common. To begin with one might be described as a student text the other as an activists handbook. Let us being with the student text.

Paying For Welfare is a new edition of a book published in 1986. It represents such a substantial re-write that even those who possess an original are unashamedly urged to consider investing afresh. Actually I suspect that such individuals will need little persuading as to the value in doing so. For those unfamiliar with it the importance of this text lies in the way in which it focuses on the funding of welfare. The raising of income rather than its distribution is always the starting point. Predictably it includes an overview of the ever shifting balance between different modes of taxation and ways in which fees and charges have been employed to raise income and discourage use. For those unsure of the financial relationship between local and central government here is a ready guide. Also on offer is a lucid account of how central government seeks to contain and monitor welfare expenditure. As an accessible guide to how welfare is funded it is probably unmatched. Equally as a quick way of finding out the alternatives to what exists both in relation to the raising and distribution of welfare funding it is indispensable. Apart from offering an overview Glennester provides chapters which consider in turn each of the discrete service areas such as health and education. At times it exhibits a somewhat self-conscious anxiety to be even-handed and balanced. You can almost picture the author counting the words to ensure that the case for student loans is offered the same prominence as the case against. One suspects that he prefers collective welfare to the private variant but has resigned himself to living with a mixed economy of welfare. Albeit one that is shamelessly manipulated by the government to give preferential advantage to the private sector.

Whitfield in The Welfare State does not feel obliged to seek out the spurious tightrope of objectivity. Instead he offers an unrestrained attack upon the privatisation of public assets and welfare services. This is both a work of reference and a guide to action. First it provides detailed analysis

of many of the under-the-counter deals and accountancy fiddles that have been an essential prerequisite to the disposal of public services. Second it seeks to explain why privatisation has been such a central strategy for the present government. To provide an account of both the ideological and the fiscal motives that have fuelled privatisation. Finally it offers examples of the ways in which those who are so often the losers in the processes, vulnerable clients and low paid workers, can begin to fight back.

Oscar Wilde once pointed out that you either observe fox-hunting from the perspective of the fox or from that of the hunter. Likewise privatisation - you either view it as a golden opportunity to exploit the public and your colleagues, or as something which will create even greater inequalities and further punish the poor for their poverty. Amongst youth and community workers there are those who relish the opportunity to organise 'a management-buy-out'; to bid for youth work cash from a central fund-holding agency stuffed with toadies hand-picked by the Minister; to negotiate with unelected bodies such as Development Corporations and City Challenge for juicy little earners; and above-all acquire the trappings of management - the wall-to-wall leather office, company car and electronic filo-fax. Such will not find this a comfortable read. Others will, especially those anxious to undermine the ambitions of the new breed of chunky power-dressing managers. Managers anxious to have us all hacking it in the 'real world' on short-term contracts, with no or minimal employment rights, clothed only in a mission statement with matching business plan telling you how to fool young people into raising their own cash for everything they do. Oppositional characters who don't share this vision will find that Whitfield provides a text which is designed to forwarn and forearm them. One that actually discusses not only how the tide of new managerialism and privatisation might be halted but also the ways in which we might begin to create new more accountable public services and once again 'capture the imagination' of those they work with and for.

In these uncertain times both Whitfield and Glennester are essential reading. Each compliments the other - strange that!

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Barrie Wade & Maggie Moore
Experiencing Special Education:
What Young People With Special Education Needs Can Tell Us
Open University Press
ISBN 0 335 09679 4 £12.99
pp 192

Jenny Corbett & Len Barton
Struggle For Choice:Students with Special Needs in Transition to Adulthood
Routledge
ISBN 0 414 08001 0 £10.99
pp 131

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In these days of spurious Tory rhetoric about consumer choice and a citizen's charter, it was interesting to come across two books which dealt with the views of one of the most disadvantaged groups in our society, that is young people with special educational needs.

It is always worth reminding ourselves that although Tory rhetoric about choice is specious and hypocritical cant, there is a long history of disadvantaged groups enduring negative experiences of the activities of welfare and educational agencies and professional groups.

Both of these books deal with the treatment of young people with special educational needs, although they do it in different ways and they look at different phases of the educational process. The book by Wade and Moore is concerned to explore the perceptions of young people themselves about the statutory period of schooling up to the age of sixteen. The book is constructed around material generated from interviews and questionnaires. The research was carried out in the UK and New Zealand. In contrast Corbett and Barton focus on the 'transition to adulthood' for analysis. They consider the range of problems faced by young people in this group who transfer from school into further education or training.

Wade and Moore are concerned to address both the moral case for asking young people about their school experiences and needs and the practical benefits of so doing. In contrast teachers lack of commitment to consulting pupils, is demonstrated and confirms research by others that there is a distinct lack of enthusiasm by teachers for this process.

In ironic contrast to the teacher's viewpoint, the consultation with pupils show that their view of the world is mainly positive about their individual teachers. Young people also demonstrate a clear understanding of the conditions under which most teachers work, again a finding which corresponds to the outcome of other studies in mainstream schools. The young people interviewed also had a well developed sense of the kind of educational experience that they would like.

One minor caveat that I would like to enter concerns the section on the young peoples' views about their parent's involvement with schools. Attendance at school by parents was used by the authors as a criteria against which children's views of their parents could be developed. A significant proportion of the young people reported that their parents were too busy to attend parents evenings at school. It is not clear here why attendance at school be should be seen as an indicator of parents willingness to be involved with their children's education. I am not saying that this is the author's intention here, but it is a common reaction by teachers to parents lack of attendance at these occasions. There are a host of reasons for this, including the need to work. We know from other studies that families with a disabled member are likely to be poorer than other sections of the community, it follows that paid work is likely for some to be more important than attending school. Equally it may be

something about parents evenings which is not conducive to parent involvement. There is so often something ritualistic about them which has more to do with teachers checking parental commitment than the exchange of useful advice and information. Perhaps more schools should be experimenting with other ways of involving parents with outreach work for example. This issue indicates where the book might have been strengthened, there could have been a stronger methodological section providing a more rigorous analysis of the underlying themes of the questioning, thus providing a stronger rationale for their inclusion and also perhaps a critical evaluation of their use.

Overall this book is a useful addition to the literature on young peoples experience of the school system despite remaining at the rather descriptive level.

The theme of asking young people about their own needs and involving them in decision making is one element examined by Corbett and Barton. They applaud the spirit of the moves towards 'self-advocacy and empowerment' which have accompanied recent developments in services for people with special needs. However they also raise a cautionary voice about some of the outcomes of this movement and raise the following questions: To what extent does the promotion of empowerment become a more subtle form of professional control? Can a focus on empowerment of the individual lead to an oppressive outcome? (p.33)

They point to the need to consider the context within which the process of 'empowerment' is to take place. The phrases become meaningless rhetoric when the realities of social inequality are not also addressed. The authors project is continued through an analysis of the concept of adulthood, curriculum issues, vocationalism, differences in the community and equal opportunities. In each of these cases they are concerned to place the discussion of special needs within a broader political and social context, in the process exposing the contradictions between the relentless bombast of the Tories and their apologists and the reality for young people with special needs.

Overall Corbett and Barton are concerned to examine the task of co-ordinators of special needs provision within Colleges of Further Education. As a conclusion to their argument they point to the need to engage continuously in a struggle both within and outside these institutions.

I agree entirely with their analysis and conclusions. The existence of the distorted emphasis on individualism in Further Education and Training is hardly surprising. The focus on 'individuality' in the political agenda of the Tory party, as within the centrality of concepts like 'community', is an overt hegemonic project. It enables both the dispossessed and those in power at the level of the state to mutually point the finger of blame at professional groups and see the solution to social problems as somehow lying in a 'wrestling of power back' from professional groups and giving it to the citizen. The fact that this both distorts the analysis of the realities of power and also shifts the focus of blame is entirely to the Tories benefit.

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In their introduction Corbett and Barton offer the tentative view that they may be criticised for 'taking a negative stance'. I feel that they have no need to apologise for their admirable strategy. It offers a model for all those engaged in areas of work which offer the great temptation to succumb to romanticism and sentimentality. It could be argued that the single factor which has shaped public services for most people in the UK is a cosy smugness allied to a sense of moral rectitude which has undermined the ability of professionals to engage in the kind of critical reflection on their work which is not simply a reflection of the rights of the public, but is in fact the duty which professionals owe to themselves.

In conclusion then I shall let this text speak for itself about its achievement in providing 'an antidote to those approaches which offer a non-problematic view of the world... We see it as morally unacceptable to simplify what is a complex and contentious process. Vulnerable groups must not be made more vulnerable by the imposition of idealised and romantic views of the world' (pp 34-35). Amen!

Richard C. Cervantes (ed.)
Substance Abuse and Gang Violence
Sage Publications 1992
ISBN 0-8039-4284-2 (pbk) £17.50
pp 179

Shane Butler

Despite the best efforts of its editor and the quality of some of its constituent chapters, this book emerges in overall terms as an unsatisfactory attempt to produce a single coherent text from the proceedings of a conference on substance abuse and gang violence in the U.S.. The contents, ten chapters in all, are presented under four headings: *Research Issues, Legal and Policy Issues, Prevention and Intervention Strategies and Survivors of Gang Violence.* The last section has a rather specific clinical focus on the psychological trauma experienced by victims of gang violence and is, although interesting in its own right, rather disconnected from the preceding three sections.

Reading through the first three sections one is struck alternately by the overlap and repetition contained therein and by the occasional contradictions and inconsistencies. Both chapters six and seven, for example, present potted rather monotonous versions of the major sociological theories of gangs and gang violence, and practically all of the chapters in the first three sections examine gang violence in terms of wider structural factors, such as socio-economic disadvantage and ethnic prejudice, and eschew the use of oppression of force as a major approach to dealing with these problems. A significant exception, however, is to be found in chapter four, which is written in rather more popular language, with Martinez, its author, advocating the use of armed security personnel in the school system and speaking approvingly of an organisation known as S.M.A.S.H., the San Bernardino County Movement Against Street Hoodlums.

Convincing evidence of the pervasiveness of gang violence is presented throughout the book, and it is noted by Martinez that gang-related homicides increased from 176 in 1979 to 771 in 1991 in Los Angeles County, a district which appears to have the dubious distinction of heading the U.S. league table in this regard. Much of the violence is based around drug trafficking, and appears to consist to a large extent of 'drive-by' shootings. Again it is Martinez, whose chapter admittedly smacks more of moral panic than that of any other contributor, who suggest that teenagers, who are not gang members, may inadvertently place themselves at risk of being shot by wearing sports-related clothing commonly recognised as the 'uniform' of a particular gang.

One of the most interesting chapters, which perhaps could have served as a summary for the entire volume, is that of Juarez, which uses a public health model to look at gang violence. This model draws on the traditional Agent/Host/Environment framework, concluding that the most promising, albeit the most politically difficult, interventions are those in the social policy and community development area, which target the environment rather than victims or aggressors. Juarez has no difficulty in recognising and criticising the folly of the War on Drugs perspective, which has been at the heart of U.S. drug policy for so long and which exaggerates the causal role of drug use in violence and in other social problems. What is interesting and provocative, particularly for European readers, is his argument that a direct attempt to limit the availability of guns would be of little value, given the centrality of guns in American culture and society and the Constitutional 'right of people to keep and bear arms'. Perhaps he is right, but his recommendation for the provision of firearm safety courses seems implausible in view of the overall picture of gang violence painted in this book.

The first section of this volume describes attempts to study drug use among ethnic minorities in the U.S. and the application of this research so as to ensure the provision of interventions which are culturally sensitive. However, it is fair to say that in general, the authors only reflect American views on drug and alcohol problems and show little or no awareness of the radically different perspectives which have been evolving in the U.K., in much of the rest of Europe and in Australia. This is particularly true of chapter five by Al Wright, which is a description of an alcoholism recovery programme in Los Angeles know as the Community Recovery Centre. Wright purports to describe an alternative paradigm to conventional treatment approaches, but in reality what he presents is yet another version of the disease concept of alcoholism, drawing explictly on Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and the related drug-free therapeutic community tradition. Clients of this programme are described in the following terms:-

> Participants are imbued with a sense of mission and destiny in fighting alcoholism - their own and that of others - and in this they transcend self and find purpose in life. The result is a feeling of warmth and empathy in the program, and enthusiasm among individuals who have been empowered by the self-transcendent perspective and the mutual-aid process. (p. 75)

From an ideological point of view, many European youth workers would be uncomfortable with this reduction of complex social, political and economic issues to an individualistic medical basis, and would probably feel that it was dishonest to offer their clients a meaning and purpose to life which was absolutely dependent on their acceptance of a disease label. From a practical point of view, what Wright fails to point out is that disease models of the kind he favours are notoriously poor at engaging and retaining clients, particularly young clients who are antagonistic to the notion that they are powerless over alcohol and must commit themselves to a life of total abstinence. Porché-Burke and Fulton, the authors of the chapter immediately after Wright's, point out that: 'As our society becomes more conservative, people tend to favour intrapsychic as opposed to environmental roots to social problems' (p. 98). Where the editor has failed, in the opinion of this reviewer, is by including naive populist chapters by Martinez and Wright cheek by jowl - and without editorial comment - with more serious and sophisticated papers such as those by Juarez, and by Porché-Burke and Fulton.

One wonders what these American authors would have to say about the controversy and debate which currently exists in Europe concerning the use of ecstasy by young people. It is argued by some drug and youth workers that, far from leading to violent behaviour, the use of ecstasy in raves and other group settings creates feelings of love and warmth and has no negative behavioural consequences. Similarly, it would be interesting to see how they responded to the pragmatic conclusion of some youth workers that it was best to allow their charges to consume alcohol in pubs or other retail outlets, on the basis that the controls and sanctions which exist in these conventional settings are safer and more effective than those which might be created in a deviant drinking location. The fact that, in condoning such youthful drinking, these youth workers are sometimes ignoring the legal norm on underage drinking is, of course, an additional complication. And, finally on this note, one wonders what these authors would make of the advice of some professionals to solvent users that, if they intend to persist in this practice, they are safer to do so in a gang or group rather than in a solitary way.

Ultimately, while this book avoids the worst excesses of the War on Drugs and while it contains some subtle and interesting chapters, it lacks consistency and, for those ideologically committed to a harm reduction approach to drug problems, is an unsatisfactory read.

Hazel May

REVIEW

The aim of this book - to highlight the issues related to the provision of education in the US for homeless children and youth - is tackled in four ways. Firstly by offering background information relative to the problems of homelessness and education, secondly by providing an analysis of educational policy as it relates to this specific population, thirdly by offering practical strategies for effectively serving homeless students and finally by reviewing emerging homeless education programmes that appear to be successfully addressing the educational needs of homeless children and youth.

There are three sections, each providing an issue-based umbrella. Part I, Homelessness in America: The Educational Context, discusses the background issues - the reasons for homelessness and the educational policy backdrop. Part II, Education for the Homeless: Overcoming the Barriers, looks specifically at provision and appropriateness of education services. Part III, Education for the Homeless: Access and Equity Issues, looks at existing service delivery models.

Homelessness in America: The Educational Context

This section has five chapters all dealing with the realities of increasing homelessness and an educational system that is not geared to help any minority - which includes the children of homeless families. As Patricia First (The Reality: The Status of Education for Homeless Children and Youth) puts it:

> the reality is that large numbers of homeless children are growing up uneducated. The reality is that the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (1987) created an entitlement programme administered by a clumsy governmental bureaucratic structure that is repeating the implementation mistakes of the Great Society programmes. The reality is that we have not learned from the past. The reality is that little children are homeless on our streets, their life chances drastically curtailed (p.79).

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (1987) was in part a response to a combination of organised advocacy and a media focus on homelessness. It established that homeless children and youth should have access to free and appropriate public education and that any state having a residency requirement as part of its compulsory school attendance laws should review these to enable this right of access. As Virgina M. Helm discusses, it soon became apparent that establishing a legal right of access was not enough in itself. The 1990 McKinney Amendments

broadened the policy statement to require states to review attendance laws and other laws, regulations, policies and practices that may act as a barrier to 'enrolment, attendance or success in school of homeless children'.

But Helm argues, while it is clear that the McKinney Act 'clearly reflected a humane and caring attitude' (p. 28) no stick has appeared to ensure states respond and the carrot has been meagre. In his chapter The Background - History and Problems of Schooling for the Homeless, James H. Stronge points out that because of the lack of stick and therefore no definitive policy 'even if a state assures access to free education, school districts may interpret state procedures in a manner favourable to their own purposes' (p. 20). As the very existence of this book testifies to, passing legislation alone will not solve a problem; but such legislation provides a framework within which a constructive discussion can continue.

Education for the Homeless: Overcoming the Barriers
This section looks at educational opportunities for different segments of the homeless student population. As Stronge discusses in his introductory chapter 'the homeless are not a unified mass but rather several distinct sub-groups at the margin of society' (p. 8). This is true of homeless children. Not to recognise this is to again in part fail to provide a comprehensive educational policy. The categories addressed are elementary education, secondary education, special needs education and (although not exactly a category of homelessness itself) the types of support services necessary to ensure education is appropriate for homeless students.

The first chapter, Children and Homelessness: Early Childhood and Elementary Education by E. Anne Eddowes is an excellent check-list of the psychological, physical, emotional and creative needs of young children that are met by education. When these needs are not met, and their situation is compounded by homelessness, Eddowes argues children become lethargic, experience regression, act aggressively, display stress and anxiety and are often depressed.

Eddowes then goes on to discuss the problems involved in providing successful educational programmes, and strategies towards solution. Issues raised include availability and accessibility to both child care and elementary education, health concerns, appropriateness of class placements and the difficulty in fulfilling homework requirement.

In a way, this chapter unintentionally introduces the next - Adolescence and Homelessness: The Unique Challenge for Secondary Educators by Jane L. Powers and Barbara Jaklitsch. They first discuss the problem: the increase in 'throwaway youth', their failure at school, or more likely their non-attendance of school and their inability to access health, sex and general life skills education as a result - hence a high incidence of AIDS, STD, pregnancy, drug and alcohol dependence, other substance abuse, crime and prostitution. This is the only chapter of the book that deals specifically with homeless youth living independently from parents or guardians.

Powers and Jaklitsch outline two model programmes they believe implement the recommendations of improved networking and communication between community agencies working with young homeless people and education agencies, educational and training of school personnel, relaxation of legal barriers, alternative schools, mentoring programmes, access to Counselling, life skills training and youth involvement in the decisions made by the various agencies involved. The first model programme is in New York, the other in Topeka, Kansas. They both integrate housing, educational and social needs as well as providing advocacy support.

Education for the Homeless: Access and Equity Issues

This section is made up of four chapters concerned with educational opportunity. This includes a discussion of trends in advocacy, a discussion of the unique problems in service delivery for homeless children in rural settings, and a review of successful service delivery models. But the outstanding chapter is the Educational Climate for the Homeless: Cultivating the Family and School Relationship.

In this Maria Lusia Gonzalez firstly debunks the myth that the parents of homeless families are uninterested in their children's Education. She argues that the barriers to a strong school-family relationship must be understood within the theoretical framework of the 'theory of incompatibilities' - proposed in the late 1970s to explain the incompatibility existing between schools and Mexican American children, as well as economically disadvantaged children. Although the theory originally posed five areas of incompatibility Gonzalez argues there are three relating to homelessness: poverty, mobility and social perception.

The relevant aspects of poverty are lack of adequate housing, poor clothing, malnutrition and poor health - all of which can cause constant absenteeism. Homelessness can also produce constant mobility which breaks up education and prevents family and child building a relationship with the school. Societal perception about poverty and homelessness compound these problems - learning is not possible when a child does not feel a sense of belonging, and both staff and other pupils can easily promote a negative attitude to such newcomers.

Gonzalez outlines a model of support which can present the framework to meet all the diverse needs of a homeless child. This incorporates leadership from the school principal (head teacher) to coordinate all other aspects of the model, support from the parents or guardians, training for staff - both office and classroom, the establishment of a support service team (composed of the principal, a nurse, a community liaison worker, a member of the district educational personnel and the district educational psychologist), and finally the integration of the entire programme into a wider community awareness.

Finally Gonzalez argues that schools can also develop specific strategies that cultivate the family-school relationship, which is vital to the mainte-

nance of the support model she outlines. These are broken into three stages: the entering stage, the schooling stage and the existing stage.

The entering stage is crucial for not just the child but also for her/his family for it sets the stage for the future school-family relationship. At enrolment all the family should be encouraged to come along and be given assistance with filling out forms. This should immediately be followed by an orientation phase in which the principal should meet the family in an informal capacity as well as an unofficial meeting with the support service team.

During the schooling stage the child's academic programme should be developed under guidance from the support service team. Before - and after - school programmes should also be encouraged - and not just for homeless children - as a time where children can get extra help, take on extra-curricula activities, or just complete 'home' work. Constant monitoring is essential not just of the children's progress but in assessment of the service provided to them and their families.

The existing stage is just as important as the previous two for it should leave a lasting memory of positive experience. There are two components, firstly office check-out strategies which help parents complete the paper work, enable them a final meeting with the support service team and also gives them a chance to feedback to the school. The second component is the formal farewell strategies - this gives the student the opportunity to get classmate's autographs and have their photograph taken. The final activity is a photo of the child and family, while still at the school, and the child can then put it on the class bulletin board. This offers a sense of permanence to both the child and family, acts as a reminder to those left behind and also as an encouragement to new homeless pupils.

These strategies may sound like common sense - but it is the fact that they are written down that transforms them into a code of good practice. It also helps schools to benefit from the experiences of others rather than constantly having to reinvent the wheel. The increasing rate of homelessness means that many schools are receiving homeless students for the first time - to show there are ways of ensuring a positive experience for the children, their families, existing pupils, and the school that also has a reasonably low resource implication seems like a good use of common sense.

This book itself is a collection of common sense ideas translated into low cost strategies which schools and teachers can adopt to ameliorate an unsatisfactory situation, and is backed up by recent educational and social policy research. It provides a means by which practitioners become aware of the issues facing all the professionals involved and the needs of children. So while there is a different legislative background in the UK, the problem of homelessness and the needs of children are the same. The book is prone to repetition - for example many of the articles

explain the implications of the McKinney Act, without bringing any new perspective - it clearly and concisely address the issues facing many families, children, schools and teachers both in the UK and the US.

The book does not claim to be a solution to the problems - but argues it can offer advice to various practitioners while recognising their constraints. There is something for everyone in this book, which at the same time makes it an appropriate broad introduction to the issues and the ways in which we as individuals can impact on the reality of homeless children's educational experiences.

Clive Sellick
Supporting Short Term Foster Carers
Avebury 1992
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£30.00
pp 124

Pat Cox

This book is Clive Sellick's thesis and it arises out of his practice experience as a social worker and manager working with short term foster carers and more recently as a student researcher. The book is divided into three parts, with appendices and a bibliography.

In Part One, Chapter One, 'A personal introduction', the author describes his practice background and how he came to write the book. He defines terms used in the book and why; for example: 'foster carer' rather than 'foster parent' (p. 4). He writes that the reason for using this term is that it: 'places foster carers alongside others who are paid to care for other people's children such as day care and residential workers' (p. 4). The term 'child or children's social worker' (p. 4) is used for those who work primarily with children and their families and the 'link social worker' for specialist staff who recruit assess and support foster carers. Throughout the book 'temporary' is used by the author as a variant on 'short term'. This section concludes with a summary of recent British studies which address issues of short term foster care, and to which the author refers most frequently in the text. In this chapter Clive Sellick puts himself into the frame of the book rather than maintaining a spurious 'detachment' and, to me, this was an incentive to read on...

In the remainder of Part One the author reviews available and relevant literature. Apart from the introduction mentioned above, there are nine short chapters in this section and the literature survey is divided between them. Topics covered include: the case for support; the provision of support; support from social workers; other means of support; training; finance and foster carer support in practice. Most of the chapters are subdivided with different headings, so it is easy to search out a particular topic. This section is one of the most 'readable' reviews of literature I have come across and provides an excellent guide as to what is extant

about short term foster care. Unusually for a literature review, I feel that this section can be read by a wide range of interested parties: foster carers, educators, students, social work managers and trainers.

Part Two also consists of a series of short chapters, this time ten in number. This section of the book describes a small scale, qualitative piece of research into the extent and 'content' (p. 49) of support which a number of short term foster carers discussed with Clive Sellick.

The first chapter in this section sets out the research methodology. It describes the agencies which recruited these particular foster carers and the foster carers themselves. Then the experiences of three sets of foster carers are examined more closely. The remaining chapters outline various methods of support offered to foster carers; their experiences of support from social work staff; support between different sets of foster carers, both formal and informal, group support; respite support and specialist and financed support. Each form of support is scrutinised for 'facilitating factors' and 'hindering factors', about which the foster carers are very forthright. The penultimate chapter in this section examines the 'mixed diet of support' (p. 91) and in the conclusion Clive Sellick summarizes the three main 'messages' from his interviews with these foster carers.

This central section resonates with the experiences and the voices of foster carers themselves: their views about partnership with agencies and about support for the children in their care and for themselves as carers. In describing their working relationship with social workers one carer commented: 'It's about acceptance of each other's roles ... they are equally as important as the other one' (p. 64) and their foster children. Another carer remarked: 'He has no idea about kids ... He has no idea of that kid and it bothers me ... He's so thoughtless. I don't get any feedback' (p. 65). Carers were very clear about how support is best manifested: 'I think one (a social worker) that is interested in the child and one who listens' (p. 64). Without reproducing all the quotations in full, it is difficult to do justice to this section. These chapters should be required reading for practitioners, students, specialist fostering staff, managers, trainers and educators.

In Part Three Clive Sellick evaluates the comments of the foster carers and considers how their views are similar to, or different from those expressed in the studies of experience and knowledge he reviewed earlier. He pulls the two strands together in five chapters which include: towards a comprehensive foster care support service; providing support; facilitating support; empowering support and managing a support service for foster carers. In this section there is also a checklist for agencies and or foster carers to consider. The author argues for a service which is accessible, accountable, supportive and collaborative. He acknowledges that at present policies, practices and workload make it difficult to provide and sustain the sort of service which would satisfy foster carers. He concludes that it is impossible to: 'over-emphasize the value to the recruitment, development and retention of foster carers and the consequent services to children and families which spring from support' (p. 116).

This book achieves a rare combination that of being both informative and readable. It is a book to read through, and a book to dip into for reference. As mentioned above, it can be read by anyone involved in, or interested in, the process of fostering.

However, I have some reservations. In the central section which describes the experiences of foster carers Clive Sellick produces a table of foster carers which includes their 'race' and the sex of the principal carer. Yet when discussing the many different aspects of support, the author does not comment as to whether or not the black foster carers either wanted or received support from other black foster carers or black social workers. The majority of principal carers in the research are women, reflecting the gendered nature of caring in our society. This issue is not addressed in the discussions of forms of support for carers. We learn from the table that some of the foster carers have partners and some of them are single, but we do not learn whether or not any of them are lesbian women or gay men: we are left to assume a heterosexual 'norm'. Gender, 'race' and sexual orientation are issues which currently concern social workers and foster carers: consideration of these and other issues forms part of anti-oppressive practice. Knowing this, I am surprised that they have not been addressed in more detail in this study. I urge Clive Sellick to include consideration of 'race', sexual orientation, gender and other anti-oppressive practice issues in another edition of this study.

In spite of these strictures, I feel on balance that this is a stimulating book with a wide potential readership. In these times of debate about where children are best cared for, this book acts as a timely reminder of the need to think about how to support the carers.

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