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COMPARATIVE YOUTH SKILL ACQUISITION IN GERMANY AND ENGLAND:

Training As A Process Not An Outcome

SHANE J. BLACKMAN AND KAREN EVANS

Introduction

This paper presents a qualitative investigation into the socialisation processes through which young persons in Germany and England become occupationally skilled. Our aim is to get beyond the stereotypical notions that proclaim European training systems, such as the German dual system, as role models to follows.

The first part of the paper offers a critical introduction to the macro-theoretical issues of education, training and employment policy in the two countries. The second part discusses how young women and men themselves perceive the question of training at school, college and work.

The conclusion reached is that problems are integral to both the German and the English systems of training. There are significant structural problems operating within the German system, while the current radical overhaul of the English system seems to be at variance with young people's demand for progression and learning.

Role Of The State In Training Part 1

UK Tradition Of Adhocery

In the UK there has been a tradition of ad hoc youth training, which requires that training for the job should be the responsibility of the employer and should be conducted on the job, namely in the workplace. In practice, that responsibility has been exercised by only a minority of employers, and any attempt to ensure the employer role through legislation has been resisted. Abbott (1993) notes 'It is clear that industry as a whole does not recognise the senior full time courses as a suitable avenue to industrial employment' (p.114). Even after the second World War there was a 'lack of enthusiasm with which industry generally viewed full technical education after the age of fifteen to sixteen' (p.189). The traditions of laissez-faire economic liberalism and voluntarism meant that training remained patchy, at best, in some sectors and non-existent in others. In fact, the 1962 Conservative Government proposals Industrial Training CMND 1892, stressed the mounting problems associated with ad hoc employer-led training.

> *At present, training for industry in this country is primarily the responsibility of individual firms, though Government, local education authorities and other agencies such as the City and Guilds of London Institute are helping ... A serious weakness in our present arrangement is that the amount and quantity of industrial training are left to the unco-ordinated decisions of a large number of individual firms.*

It is surely incorrect and perhaps ironic to suggest that vocational training has been employer-led, when evidence shows that such a tradition has never existed. The inadequacy of relying on voluntarism was recognised and acted on in the 1960s, with the first large scale attempts at Government intervention and introduction of a

training 'system'. In 1964 the Industrial Training Act came into force, in which levies were raised on employers, and grants returned for training undertaken. In practice the system did not work very well - it was bureaucratic and inadequately monitored, and open to abuse by employers claiming to be carrying out training when they were not doing so, or doing so to a poor standard. Despite this the Industrial Training Boards had some positive effects on attitudes and approaches to training in some sectors. The 1973 Employment and Training Act brought the levy/grant system to an end, effectively and all but one industrial Training Board, the CITB have been abolished. Yet the public policy thrust of the three Conservative Administrations has been to argue that training is employer-led. It would be more accurate to describe vocational training as market driven under circumstances dependent upon the strengths and weaknesses of regional local labour markets. The 1980s saw the beginnings of massive Government interventions in training, largely via 'Special Programmes' for those affected by rising unemployment. (This, too, was ironic in view of the statement of the newly elected conservative Government, in 1979, that special schemes would be phased out and replaced with 'real jobs'. Far from being phased out, the Youth Opportunities Programme, for example, underwent expansion and transformation into a one year and then two year scheme over the next five years). Governmental strategy, therefore, was one of massive public financial support via the Manpower Services Commission, to create a constantly changing series of training programmes in direct opposition to the general policy position of non- interference advocated by the Government. Initially, such large scale state intervention was justified as an attempt to control outbreaks of rioting and to halt the continuing rise of youth unemployment (Jordan 1986). This policy position became untenable by the late 1980s as the neo-conservative influence within the Government demanded a new national framework for the attainment of vocational qualifications. Schemes of Youth Training, initially used to soak up the growing pool of unemployed youth, soon became a vehicle for transforming access to, and the nature of, skills training as one of the means of achieving an enterprise economy with a free market in skills training. It provided a means to put in place new occupational standards and arrangements for accrediting these, in a way which marginalised the role of education and rendering irrelevant the process by which 'standards' of performance are acquired. The other half to this is that the neo-liberal wing of the conservatives, as Quicke (1988) states:

> *are happy to see a non-educational state institution like the MSC facilitate the autonomous development of privatised employer based training scheme and eventually draw off from school those who, in the new right's view, cannot and indeed do not wish to be educated. (p. 15-16)*

Here Jones (1989) argues the third head within Conservative education policy which shapes the vocational curriculum was that of the modernising tendency led by Lord Young and his team at the Department of Trade and Industry. This approach put an emphasis upon state intervention to achieve an enterprise economy, through a free market where knowledge would be democratised. Thus, the modernising tendency was contradictorily in support and in opposition, to the neo-conservatives such as the Hillgate Group and individuals such as Roger Scruton, and to the neo-liberals such as the Centre for Policy Studies, The Adam Smith Institute and individuals such as David Willett (Chitty 1992). The setting up of NCVQ is a key development in public policy production that carries the mes-

sage of the market. It was claimed that employers wanted new types of skills and this was articulated through different training boards. It was then transformed by NCVQ not merely into a new programme of the required standards but a new training arrangement whereby an individual can effectively select her or his own training needs. While NVQs have been claimed to reflect employers needs and demands for new kinds of skills, in practice they have been introduced via state funded schemes and have encountered considerable employer resistance outside these arenas [Green 1992].

NVQs were introduced through state funded unemployment schemes such as YT and ET. Of the most recent development, MacDonald and Coffield (1991) argue:

> *The TECs are in essence the last desperate throw of the voluntary system of training in Britain. In more detail, TECs can be described as a national network of independent companies, led by chief executives from private industry in order to deliver training and enterprise locally (p. 31-32).*

Employer-led vocational training supported by state funding, within a voluntaristic and ad hoc framework has been criticised in a series of government commissioned reports, such as **A Challenge to Complacency** (1985 Coopers and Lybrand), **Competence and Competition** (1984 MSC). Therefore, although employers are perhaps the most visible target of criticism it would be misleading to see employers as representing one homogeneous group. Good training facilities have always existed within a limited number of firms within certain occupational sectors. Employer ineptitude towards training is a key factor in the UK training crisis, but this argument cannot be used as the central explanation for our failure to train. The primary explanation needs to be sought in the role of the state, on the basis that there exist a number of key players within a particular state system which houses several state apparatuses, where conflicting and contradictory sets of relations, ideals and actions co-exist. The role of Government within the state is clearly visible in terms of policy orders. However, the implementation of this policy by other state apparatuses such as Manpower Services Commissions, Training Agency, National Council for Vocational Qualifications, Further Education Unit, Confederation of British Industry, ITB, Industrial Lead Bodies, Colleges of Further Education and so on, effectively mean that searching for one dominant explanation or an attempt to group such institutions together by suggesting they possess a common purpose or function is wholly insufficient. Our focus here remains on a critical analysis of the new vocationalism under NCVQ. For a more detailed discussion of the Neo Marxist debates see Hollands 1990; Green, A. 1992; Edwards 1993 and Blackman, Brown, Evans and Germon 1994. As Dale (1989) makes clear what is clearly missing from the analysis is the role of capitalist accumulation in shaping Government policy, and the realisation that certain state apparatuses will be both indifferent and in opposition to the goals of capitalist accumulation. McMurtry (1991) argues that the movement towards justifying excellence within education and training, as being necessary to compete within the market place is contradictory.

> *The better the education, the more its bearers become independent to think and act on their own. The better the market, the more its agents depend on the products and services of others to perform their thinking and doing for them (p.213).*

Employer reluctance to invest in training and the lack of a real training tradition is offered as one explanation of the long term failure of British training. A second explanation, sometimes offered, blames the victim with the argument that the fault lies with young people who select jobs with no future training. This latter explanation is another search for a single variable, i.e. youth as the explanation for employers' failure to invest in their young employees. In order to understand why young adults do or do not develop their skills it is necessary to explore the pull of the wage and the access it brings to adult pleasures and commodities. Why do young people leave school and pursue high wages within restricted occupational sectors where a low premium is given to training? Why do young women and men enter jobs in gender segregated and segmented labour markets where a process of closure functions to reduce occupational opportunities? A third explanation centres on 'fragmentation' and competing interests within and between agencies involved in various aspects of skills formation. The fact that all three are offered as explanations reflects the weak institutionalisation of the processes of youth transition and skills formation in Britain (Coles and MacDonald 1990). This is rooted in social/economic history and it is in this area of 'institutionalised transition' that the comparisons with Germany are most illuminating.

Role Of The State In Training Part II

German Structure

The transition of young people to economic independence is more strongly institutionalised in Germany than in Britain. The differences reflect the legacies of German bureaucratisation, on the one hand, and British laisser-faire economic liberalism on the other. Centralised interventions in training have always been resisted in Britain and have eventually foundered or been replaced - see for example Industrial Training Act (1964) and more recently the rise and fall of the MSC (Ainley 1990, Holland 1990).

Similarly, interventions in the social support of youth stemmed largely from voluntary roots at the end of the last century as philanthropists and others responded to the 'moral panics' such as the creation of juvenile delinquency amongst working class youth (Gillis 1975). These interventions eventually took the shape of a weak institutional 'Youth Service' operating as a loose partnership of statutory and voluntary organisations at the margins of educational and social welfare policy. In Germany, youth has historically been a target for intervention and protection. Centralising and regularising state interventions are characteristic of Germany, yet these co-exist with a decentralising tendency reflected in the Federal structure and the execution of state functions by a range of autonomous institutions. This results in greater devolution of power, in some respects, than we find in Britain. The Lander Governments are responsible for school/college education. Training policy and standards are the responsibility of the Federal Government, through BIBB, which focuses on content rather than standards. Each Land has a vocational education Committee (tripartite) and at local level Chambers of Commerce and Craft Guilds carry major responsibilities. Control comes through legislation in Germany, and through regulation of qualifications in Britain.

Dual System

Apprenticeship is highly developed in Germany. It covers all occupational sectors and is entered by the large majority of young people leaving school before the age of 18/19.

Employers sponsored apprenticeship is entered at age 16/17 via the Realschule (Intermediate School) or Hauptschule (General High School). Training is undertaken for three years involving 3 or 4 days per week in firm-based training and the remaining 1 or 2 days in the Berufsschule.

Training in the dual system both 'certifies' and 'qualifies' (Jallade 1989). Acquisition of skills is certified by the Diploma, which qualifies young workers for entry to skilled worker grades through mutual recognition by the social partners. Jallade states that 'the involvement of the social partners in defining the contents of training and the weight given to firm- based training ensures a good match between certification and qualification' (p.123).

This system contrasts radically with Britain's 'mixed model' in which a proliferation of post-16 provisions offering varying degrees of vocational education and training sprang up in the 70s and 80s. This was in response to the problems of youth unemployment which, at their peak, virtually eradicated the traditional 'route' of direct job entry for 16 year olds in all but the most prosperous labour markets. While Germany has a 'dominant mode' of VET in relation to which other provision can be planned, Britain does not (Raffe 1991).

The greater uniformity and regulation of the German routes reduces local labour market effects, in that systemic factors determine the forms of vocational preparation available, mediated by local labour market conditions. In Britain training arrangements in any particular locality are more closely tied to local labour market conditions than they are to anything resembling a national system (Evans and Heinz 1991). This study of Swindon as a (then) boom town showed that market led vocational preparation under those conditions polarised into:

(a) direct job entry reflecting high wages in youth jobs, and

(b) 'traditional' VET courses offered through colleges, either full time or by day release.

Skill formations leading towards skilled worker status is far less standardised than in Germany, taking place through YT Jobskills with training, or through traditional apprenticeships where these remain, through fulltime vocational courses, and through some forms of firm-based YTS.

Young people on apprenticeships in Germany receive theoretical and practical training which is usually well integrated. They are unlikely however to experience the degree of responsibility and remuneration afforded by their British peers (Roberts, Dench and Richardson 1987). Young adults experience slower progression to responsibility but greater depth of education and training, combined with the expectation of ongoing development through training into their early 20s. The last point is of great significance, in that culturally accepted and expected timescales for preparation and accession to adult roles and responsibilities differ between the two cultures. For German young people, the steps taken between 16 and 19 represent only the first stages in a transition process which continues to higher levels of training and qualification. Young people in Britain may well be employed with adult status and pay, but also with some supervisory responsibilities by age 19, particularly in the more buoyant labour markets. In general British young people enter the labour market at least 2 years ahead of their German coun-

terparts. We have conceptualised these differences as **Extended v Accelerated** transitions elsewhere (Evans and Heinz 1991). 'Training as a preliminary to employment has still not penetrated very deeply into the British psyche. The prevailing view still seems to be that whatever you need to know in a job can be taught on the job itself; getting the job is what matters!' (Bynner and Roberts 1991 p.xxiii). We ask whether this acceleration takes place at the expense of depth and breadth in vocational preparation, and in the formation of occupational identity.

There is an expectation in Germany among both young workers and employers that continuous training and upgrading will take place subsequently. The stronger base of academic **and** vocational training is seen as providing potential to benefit from further education and training as adults. Three times as many Germans have a vocational qualification through apprenticeship incorporating theory and practice and assessed by external examination. 'Half the British labour force has **either** a practically oriented vocational qualification or an academic qualification; in Germany half the labour force has both'. (Rose 1990, p.23).

German arrangements ensure that lower ability young people are trained in order to make use of their potential. Where British young people **do** receive training it would be a mistake to assume that this has the same scope and standard as the German 'equivalent' particularly where there is a significant in-company component. In Britain this is still largely left to ad hoc training arrangements and there is nothing to parallel the 'meister' system. Germany is engaged in a 'virtuous' circle in which an already strong manufacturing base requires higher skills levels from its workers and these are expected and sought by the workers themselves. This is the social consensus around training as process and outcome that does not exist in England (Finn 1987).

RVQ To NCVQ: Issues Of Standards, Learning And Organisation

While German VET has been relatively stable over time, the UK VET has changed substantially. In the UK the change to a competence- led model of vocational qualifications can be traced to the New Training Initiative of 1981. The document advocated 'standards of a new kind', although it did not specify what they would be; this was left to subsequent White Papers of 1984, 1985, 1986, which introduced the framework and rationale for the new vocational qualification.

The NCVQ was set up as a direct result of a study undertaken in 1986 jointly by the Manpower Services Commission and the Department of Education and Science from which emerged the Review of Vocational Qualifications (RVQ); its brief was to develop and operate the new framework of vocational training. The intention of NCVQ has been to establish a coherent national framework for vocational qualifications, relating those qualifications to the standards required for competent performance in employment.

It is a minor interest that the interim report (1985) of the RVQ does not mention the necessity to create a body called NCVQ, the report just suggests an 'option for a new structure of vocational qualifications and mechanism to bring about change' (p.8). Thus, somewhere between the end of the interim and final report (1986) NCVQ had been invented. Furthermore, wholesale change was not advocated by the RVQ, it proposed moderate reform. The RVQ (1986) states - 'We have no wish

to urge uniformity upon a system that has many different needs to meet' (p.16). Further - 'The design of a new structure to replace existing qualifications was not thought to be either practicable or desirable' (p.55). The reports consistently elaborate on 'the strengths of existing arrangements' (p.15) for training. Indeed, the RVQ is not alone in specifying such a claim. There were some good practices during 1950s and 1960s such as training schemes within the iron and steel industry and the National Coal Board. In some cases the effort of an individual firm was backed up by the industry as a whole, for examples the National Foundry Craft Centre established in 1948 to encourage the development of training in the industry (Carter 1966). Also in some areas of the country local authorities played an important role in setting up different types of training schemes (Cotegrove 1958). By the mid 1960s the publication of recommendations on standards had started and the first Industrial Training Boards had begun to issue their guidance to firms on the type and quality of training provision for which they were awarded monies. It appears that both RVQ and NCVQ missed the significance of the successful development by many ITBs of standards based training and qualification schemes. The ETIB introduced its standards based module scheme in 1968 and other ITBs followed this model. Also further work and research undertaken by ITBs in the 1970s seems to have been ignored. Marsh and Holmes (1990) reveal that,

> *The first review of training arrangements, undertaken by a joint CBI and TUC working party in fact concluded that the current arrangements arising from the 1973 Employment and Training Act were working quite well. The MSC made recommendations that in no sector should the current statutory industry training boards be abolished without more detailed proposals being developed by employers associations seeking such abolition (p.18).*

This failure to credit the development of previous standards within training is not the only area where NCVQ shows a reluctance to acknowledge previous good practice. Two additional flaws in the NCVQ model which suggest that its theorists have only recently discovered the past, rather than move towards innovation, is in the areas of learning and organisation theory. Here NCVQ have decided not merely to turn the clock back, but also to reinvent the wheel. It is well known now that the NCVQ model for assessment relies upon consideration of outcomes, i.e. observable behaviour. The demonstration of evidence to the standards required is enough, without even having to undertake a programme of learning. Indeed, Jessup (1991) the chief architect of the NCVQ model, champions both functionalist methodology and psychological behavioursim; through his desegregation of skills into small components and his celebration of outcomes. This is not the wealthy inheritance of current psychology, but a replay of classical behaviour psychology as represented by theorists such as Skinner and Bloom, where priority is given to the outcome of learning as laid down in objective criteria and indifference is shown to the process of getting there.

During the previous three decades theoretical and empirical advances within both psychology and sociology, revealed the paucity of such simplistic notions of learning. Furthermore, these advances have also been accompanied by a broader set of techniques with which to measure learning. Movement away from testing towards a broader based assessment with testing as only one aspect of measurement, has

brought a more substantive picture of an individuals different capacities (Broadfoot 1986). Unfortunately, assessment of training now centres around behaviour psychology which as Marshall (1991) asserts, assumes an unanimity of behaviour.

It is quite apparent why the TA and NCVQ have chosen such a grand theoretical scheme. It has appeal, the main attraction being that it offers definite answers. The Guidance Notes produced by the Training Agency (No. 2, 1989) for NCVQ rigorously specify a particular approach towards work and organisations.

> *Functional analysis then, must identify those functions which lead to business/public service/etc. Performing effectively or satisfying its mission. The analysis is a process of defining this in greater detail, so that competence standards can be defined for outcomes which contribute to some part of the overall missions. It follows that functional analysis is best carried out with a Top-Down approach, starting with a statement of the overall function of the area being analysed (p.9).*

As Hyland (1991) asserts this approach has 'an obvious attraction for management adherents of concentrating on the quantifiable and measurable' (p.19). Psychological behavioursim or, indeed functional analysis as such are not 'out of date', they represent useful perspectives but only as one paradigm to set alongside other developments. These advances include the late 1960s USA ethnomethodological view of individuals within organisation as developed under Garfinkel (1974) and colleagues, or in the UK by Silverman (1970) who set out an action approach as an alternative to the determinism of the dominant systems approach. Marsh and Holmes (1990) argue that -

> *In holding to such a rigid structural-functionalist perspective on organisations and work performance within organisation, the Training Agency and TDLB has limited its ability to analyse real human work performance in a way which takes full account of its complex reality (p.11).*

By breaking down the primary functions of an occupation into a hierarchy of functions in order to isolate each performance criterion and demonstrate how each of these fulfils a function within the whole, i.e. indicating competence; is a strategy seen by Gleeson (1989) as not of this world. The NCVQ view of the world of work, with its underpinning of functionalism replicates the faults within that grand scheme, i.e. **people have disappeared**. Here training, education and employment lack an understanding of the social-meanings and social relations of work. The Training Agency has defined skill as an atomistic - individualistic task orientation, in terms of a prescribed rationalist analysis of means, ends, goals and aims based upon hierarchy (Blackman 1988). Using a Weberian analysis Moore (1987) argues that the labour market has been redefined in terms of the rationale of competences, collected together as units, elements and range statements. The function of this list he suggests, is to 'measure the individual against the **ideal worker** which the skills matrix represents' (p.230). Production becomes an ideal social construction.

In summary, the Training Agency has remained quiet on the issues of previous standards development, advances in learning theory and more elaborate understandings of organisation theory. Avoidance of acknowledged elements of good training practice, and ignoring of the studies which demonstrate empirical and the-

oretical advances, have characterised organisations such as the Standards Methodology Unit with the Training Agency. Whether such avoidance disguises a partisan ideological programme or merely indicates an abdication of scholarly duties is unclear. Jarvis and Prais in the Financial Times, July 1990 claim that training under NCVQ would lead to a: 'Certified semi-literate underclass section of the workforce inhibited in job flexibility and inhibited in the possibility of progression'. As already mentioned a principle feature of an NVQ is that you do not have to undertake a course to receive certification; merely to demonstrate job competence. Thus some NVQs require no reading or writing by the candidate, and the NCVQ is prepared to validate qualifications on that basis eg Retail Distribution Level 1 and 2, and possibly Engineering (Prais 1989). Fennell, of the Training Agency (1989) states: 'It would be unfair to penalise a candidate because of inadequate literacy when this is irrelevant to the job' (p.10). Thus, it is possible to see emerging from state run institutions such as the Training Agency, Standards Methodology Unit etc, messages which are not merely critical of the role of education within training, but regard education within training as an anathema.

Under the influence of the conservative modernisers such as Lord Young it is possible to see the radical nature of the NCVQ programme, which intends to remove barriers, both academic and practical, so that students can demonstrate all kinds of achievements and stereotypically self select their occupational aspirations (Blackman 1992).

The new General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) has been presented as an attempt to forge closer links between the academic/vocational divide. In public policy terms the new qualification is a response to the 'poorly received' NVQ, the GNVQ will not be narrowly focused but will have more generalised vocational training. Thus the GNVQ neatly fits the gap within Conservative education policy between NVQs for the practically minded and the 'A' level 'gold standard' for the academically gifted. In effect there now exists a broad neo-tripartite structure of educational attainment. Hyland (1992) suggest that the introduction of GNVQs serve to reinforce rather than challenge existing divisions or status differentials. He goes on to state, 'The provisions of work-related vocational studies for those pupils falling outside of the academic stream is likely to be increased' (p.75). The GNVQ needs to be rescued from becoming a lost opportunity, as it stands, it relates too closely to the occupationally specific NVQs and, therefore, mirrors the prescriptions implicit in the NCVQ model of learning. Reform of the system of vocational education in the 1990s has taken place through a complex interaction of different state agencies. Public debate has been shaped and then closed by the way that the policies confronting the training systems are based on sets of ideological concepts. These policies have been presented as objective, however, as Dale (1989) argues 'attempts to reduce complex political problems to technical problems tend to have conservative implications' (p.36). Through commitment to idea systems such as functionalism, and psychological behavioursim, demonstration of objectivity becomes 'real'. There develops from this a galloping eagerness to replace the socio-politics of assessment and training with rational technical solutions which are pre-given.

However, there remains much still to be overhauled as Raffe (1991) makes clear in his distinction between an **internal** and **external mode** of VET. The internal mode emphasises competences relevant to an occupation rather than more general notions

of potential emphasised in the external mode. According to Raffe, internal mode is characterised by normative and structural diversity and horizontal differences matter more than vertical differences, with a characteristic bias towards short term needs of employers. In an economy with a low skills equilibrium, such an approach is found to re-enforce and perpetuate the status quo (Brown & Evans 1992).

Raffe argues that criteria for access to internal and external modes differ radically, as well as the emphasis within the modes themselves. For these reasons, he argues -

> *an effective programme of reform ... cannot simply specify its aims in terms of required 'outcomes' and leave the means of delivering them to look after themselves (p.310).*

Under NCVQ, the 'mantra' for neo-vocationalism has become very deterministic. As Grosch (1987) states, the vocationalists' view is that 'everything becomes merely a means to a collection of preordained ends' (p.141).

Micro Views On Training:
How Young People Perceive Their Acquisition Of Skills.
Since 1988 we have been exploring the ways in which young people from Germany and England interpret their acquisition of skills. One particular methodology which we have utilised is that of close matching (Brown, Behrens and Blackman 1991). Here a small number of individuals, are broadly matched in terms of educational occupational and organisational backgrounds, within the similar local labour markets of Swindon and Paderborn. Initially, the young people were contacted by letter and questionnaires then followed up by detailed ethnographic interviewing. Here we shall select a series of themes that emerge from the matched pairs, in the tradition of grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

The matched pairs are as follows: 2 Electricians, 2 Nurses, 2 Insurance Clerks, 2 Toolmakers, 2 Finance Clerks.

For the sake of clarity, we have decided to choose fore-names that correspond with the letter of each respective town: thus all Swindon youths have names beginning with S and all Paderborn names begin with P.

Socialisation Processes
Initially we were convinced that there were a range of different routes to skilled employment available for young people. Now we feel it is time to revise this argument. Perhaps, we were too influenced by the more structured German procedures. In England our findings suggest that it is not so much the routes to skilled employment which should be stressed but rather the importance lies in the socialisation processes towards skill formation.

The Paderborn electrician considers that he builds upon his school years, whilst his Swindon counterpart undervalues himself and his school experience. Peter shows no sign of poor self- evaluation as a teenager. His self-esteem is quite strong. In contrast Simon suggests that he was grateful for his 'start'. This relates back to his school performance: he left school with only a few educational qualifications. He thought this was largely because school work was in conflict with his leisure activities as a teenager. 'Then came the third year at school. I met girls, and that was it, you know, I didn't study or nothing. But I could've done better - wish I had now'.

Philosophically he added 'but at the time I didn't regret it - I loved it. But I don't know, if I get the breaks it'll be alright in the end'. As a consequence, of his negative secondary school experience it's the family which guides his career prospects;

Cos my uncle's an electrician, and he said, 'It weren't too bad'. He was a very good one actually. It seemed quite interesting, you know - I wouldn't be in the same place all the time, and I thought I'll go for it, I didn't really know what to do, so I'll go for that.

Familial influence in youth skill acquisition is well documented, and has a strong history in certain locations. (Young and Willmott 1957). In general, the English young people thought that Maths and English (along with an occasional other subject) were influential in their development but they felt somewhat discontented with learning at secondary school.

Steve, an insurance clerk, is very positive about the vocational education he did receive and maintains that studying the subjects on BTEC 'you learn ... they are changing all the time, because the world around you's changing all the time'.

He considered the BTEC approach more relevant as an employee needing to know 'what's going on around you in the world today'. He also perceived a disparity between the approaches of college and school: 'I think BTEC is more aware of your abilities'. In fact he found doing assignments a pleasurable and interesting experience. This was in contrast to school:

there wasn't much learning ... you just used to copy from the blackboard just to revise for exams ... just to put it into my head for that particular one exam and then wrote it straight down onto paper and that was it - now I can't remember anything hardly ... which I feel is disappointing really. Alright you might have those qualifications ... they're a waste of time really. I feel I can't remember anything ... it's as if there's a big gap, as if my memory's gone.

Steve's feeling that 'BTEC gave you a broader outlook on life in general' is complemented by Paul from Paderborn who stresses the value of occupational knowledge, in what he calls 'the vocational approach' which deals with up-to-date problems. He says 'we could use this knowledge in a conversation with a customer. I mean I had this sometimes. Then people ask me questions concerning these reforms (health insurance) and in these cases I would be able to answer these questions straight away'.

The courses undertaken by both appeared to be quite similar and closely related to their work activities. Steve drew special attention to the assignments and presentations undertaken on the BTEC courses, as these proved to be a 'real boost to your confidence'. Although Paul was critical of how some teachers dealt with the real problems, he understood this as relating to teachers complacency: 'I mean these are teachers who have the same teaching plans for ten years, and they're not fit to change this. There are great differences between teachers'. Rather than see the teachers at fault, the Swindon apprentice says:

If you're doing a Maths subject you just get a syllabus. You learn it no matter what. The year below you have gotta learn the same as you, so it's just constant syllabus all the way through.

The force of peer group pressure as an influence upon skill acquisition is acknowledged by all youth from both countries, although in England after compulsory schooling, this influence is strongly connected to the subjective meaning of adult status. The lure of extra money from less skilled work was felt by Stuart the Swindon toolmaker earlier in his apprenticeship. This was largely due to the social influence of his peer group, who had a greater disposable income to purchase a wider range of commodities.

In contrast Patrick from Paderborn did not feel exploited through being underpaid: 'It is fair what I'm doing at the moment is most useful to me because it is related to the firm. I'm scarcely deployed in such a way that I am really useful for the company ... but we can be quite satisfied with what we get'.

In contrast, although Stuart did not want to move from the company he did feel some resentment when he compared his pay with those who had already served their time: 'Yeah, I'm pissed off with the wages for what I do, because I'm not as quick as some of the men, but I'm just as good'.

The difference between the apprentice and the skilled workers' wages was thought by the trainee to be around £50 - £75 a week. However, he also contextualises this to the cost of his apprenticeship. He assessed that the firm pays for the first two years of training and that the company recoups that money during the final two years when the trainee is more confident and experienced. In particular, Stuart thought that: 'It you consider the amount of jobs that I throw away in my early training when I'm learning it must cost the firm a bloody fortune!'.

Between the two countries the greatest difference in the toolmakers training is the degree of integration between the separate education and training components. This is highlighted by Patrick at Paderborn: 'We have our own company technical college ... the teachers and training officers have constant contact; co-operation and co-ordination can be achieved'.

Patrick still felt that there was a problem in the transition from school into an apprenticeship, although there was a similar approach to learning at school and college; 'The changeover ... was not so great'. In contrast, Stuart thought Swindon apprentices had few problems in adjusting to the training, but the way in which approaches to learning differed between school and college presented some problem of adjustment:

> *the biggest problem that some of my friends had - they went straight from school and nobody ever told you what it was like going to college and it's so much more relaxed - some of them failed it.*

Patrick had only minor criticism of his college course, largely due to the general education components of German and Religion, but both trainees agreed that the best feature of their training was peer group companionship. Being with the same age group was understood to create a positive 'atmosphere in the class', Classroom friendship was also significantly continued into leisure based activities.

Training As A Process - 'Gradual Responsibility'

Young trainees see immense value in the different stages of their transition to fully skilled worker status.

The electrician from Swindon (Simon) asserts the value of working in a small company: 'it's a good start, sort of tight-knit, and you know everyone. It's not very big - about 5 people'. On the subject of his apprentice years he states:

> *Well, the first year I suppose I was getting an introduction, really, and I didn't do much, just watching and holding things. Second year they were getting me a little bit more involved, with the lighting, wiring sockets. Third year I went onto all the metal-work, that's trunking and conduit, this is in industrial places; and the fourth year I was virtually out on me own, once I'd passed me exams. And now I'm running - well, you know, I'm on me own now, running the jobs.*

Undertaking an apprenticeship in a small firm, he recognises and celebrates the gradual move towards working independently, which brings full adult skilled status. In Swindon an initial difference in the training may arise as a result of the initial year on YTS (now called YT). Here the former apprentice states that YTS is 'underpaid, obviously, but otherwise, yeah it was alright - they sent me to college, give me a start'. (See MacDonald and Coffield 1993).

The English nurse from Swindon also sees training as a gradual movement towards an increased responsibility. Sally states,

> *As third years you are treated as a qualified member of staff but I found through the years as a first year, you're not really seen as anybody. It gets better really, but it also depends on where you're working. In some places you're taken on quite high regard and in other places you're not. The first year you are really just talking to the patients and you're doing the same sort of thing in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year. But you're working up to management and the running of the ward. The running of the hospital and really looking into the changes that can be brought about on the ward. You're not just working on the ward; you're working to see if you can change it really.*

During the early stages of their respective training, each Insurance Clerk outlines how they are processed through the different departments, with the final outcome of this training, and indeed their preference, being to work independently. Paul states that during the first six months: 'I went through all departments, and observed what people had to do in different departments. For example, Personal Life Insurance, or Accident Insurance and so on. I observed people and looked at what and how they did their jobs'. In a similar vein, Steve, who was initially on a two year Youth Training Scheme, states:

> *I was in a different department in the first year to the second year. Like, in the first year I was in the Claims Department, which is I think more of team work. What they are trying to do is put people in different departments to get a taste of what it's like.*

He goes on to specify that 'I thing I prefer working on my own, really, 'cos I like to be my own boss, and people telling me what to do, I don't like that much. I like doing work for meself'. Paul shows the same preference; 'I can work on my own and nobody watches me ... at the moment, I'm in the department dealing with life insurances and I handle applications. I very much work on my own and independently'. Although in general, both carry out similar work roles, such as dealing

with customer enquiries, customer complaints and the checking of applications, the Paderborn apprentice receives a more thorough and varied form of training. A significant difference is that after the first year of YTS training, Steve 'was taken on, and I was in full employment. They didn't allow me to do some of the YTS courses, so I had to give up a few of these courses that would have been available to me if I'd carried on the YTS'. Thus we see an example of employment as a hindrance to the development of training 'I think I developed more skills on the first year on YTS than I am in full employment now'.

Both finance clerks follow a familiar pattern of being processed through a succession of different departments within their financial organisations. Pierre state:

> *at the beginning of each year of training you receive a detailed plan of what you will do. On average you can say that we spend about 4-6 weeks in one department or at one branch.*

He asserts that all aspects of Bank Training are recorded in a 'big book' and can be divided into the areas of, 'practical training, technical college and internal instruction'. Sam also 'travels around different sections in the Building Society', under what is called a 'training package'. However, this is where the similarities end.

Sam complained that 'not much training goes on, well sort of yes and no really, there is training going on, but it's when the section leader or supervisor gets around to it'. Furthermore, he stressed that 'over the three years I've been here I haven't had an amazing amount of training, I've had to pick it up. Which I didn't like very much 'cos I like to be trained'. Thus the major difference between the Paderborn and Swindon system of financial training, is that, in Paderborn training is planned explicitly whilst in Swindon it is in the uneasy hands of voluntarism and personal initiative. However, these difficulties were only the 'tip of the iceberg', according to Sam who saw management itself as the underlying problem:

> *There's a lot of things about Management that people don't like ... the way things are done, the way things are organised. The things that get chucked on you when I mean you say you don't really want to do them. I mean that's the way the Management do things and there's a lot of resentment towards the Management over it, and that's one of the reasons for high turnover.*

Disincentives To Train And Progression

When interviewing the English apprentices we discovered many examples of individuals experiencing a disincentive to training. Such a problem was never mentioned by the young people from Germany. Under the YTS, Steve, the insurance clerk from Swindon, completed his BTEC National Certificate. However, when he was taken on into full employment, his employer prevented him from gaining further external qualifications, even where they were directly related to his employment: 'It's a shame, 'cos I could have done the BTEC Higher straight after the National, 'cos it did qualify me to go and do that, but I couldn't get the time off work, so I was a bit disappointed in that'. YTS is clearly being used as a probationary period with this company.

Such restrictions had a negative effect upon Steve; 'I don't thing there are promotion prospects here'. Indeed he was considering a change of employment: 'I'm not happy here at the moment, definitely not. I've gone as far as I can go, and now the

boredom's starting to creep in now. I feel as though I want to change really'. Lack of opportunities for promotion and further training, combined with routine work had significantly influenced Steve to the extent that he was reduced to:

> *Doing a part-time job at a supermarket, just stacking shelves. It's a large, well known Supermarket, and I've recently been accepted at one round here.*

Optimistically, he is hoping to do Retail Management training at a large Supermarket 'that's why I've got a job, to see what's going on'. However, he remains very uncertain about his career prospects: 'I'm not sure what I actually want to do. If I don't like that's where the problem's going to lie, where I'm just gonna be looking for jobs of what I'm doing now, which I don't really want'.

Paul did not express a similar interest in leaving the world of insurance, although he was quite critical of the education and training route towards becoming skilled. 'For me it gets boring ... and sometimes we have one topic or two or three times and then one sits there and say's "I have to get through this"'. However, he insists that 'in the insurance business, all apprentices, or most of the apprentices, have the Arbitur'. This means that unlike the English apprentice who has minimal qualifications to turn to for security, the German trainee has credential reserves to develop personal progression.

An important issue mentioned by the Swindon nurse is employment of support workers who do a special vocational course and whose learning is limited to particular aspects of nursing.

She considered that this may have a negative effect:

> *People are going to be discouraged from doing training aren't they? If they can go and do one of those courses and do similar sort of work, or if they've got a choice of working for three years - what are they going to choose really?*

Becoming a nurse and carrying out duties without following a training course is identified here as not merely deskilling the profession, but ultimately as becoming a disincentive to training, and especially training beyond the immediate occupational skills. There are no agency nursing staff in Germany, but support workers are employed. With only 2 weeks theoretical and 6 weeks practical training they are considered semi-skilled. Such support workers are only allowed to perform the duties of a first year nurse in training.

A significant issue contributing to the high turnover rate of trainee employees within the financial sector was seen as the outmoded grading system for progression. New employees 'come in on Grade E. We've then got a training package which the Section Leader will supervise and sets up for different individuals, what they do and what they go through for F grade'. Sam has applied for four supervisors positions and has 'been turned down every time'. He went on, 'I think the problem is my age. I mean I'm only 20 and they say you need to mature'. However, he was critical of the precise nature of internal firm progression:

> *I found out that experience isn't what they re looking for. Really, I mean I've gone through the whole department, but they're looking for people*

with supervisory qualities. I see people who come in, work for 6 months and get a supervisors job. Whereas you're plugging away thinking 'cor blimey, this is getting ridiculous', and it does get you down.

He reflected that his company were looking at employees in their middle twenties for supervisory roles. even if these were much more recent recruits. This was seen as a disincentive to young trainees:

I'm getting despondent now. The problem is I'm stuck - I'm at G grade now 6 months or so and I feel as though I'm stuck in a rut now, until I can get somewhere else. The management are saying to me 'you're not old enough' so I'm stuck there till I've grown another two years! So what can you do?

Learning And Theory

Apprentices from both countries saw **learning** as the central feature to both education and training, qualifications being merely the outcome which signalled their learning. Aptitude, reflection and ability to learn were identified as crucial to further development of both their skills and confidence to achieve progression.

Here the Swindon Electrician states that he thoroughly enjoyed his college course in City and Guilds Electrical Installation and considers that it had a direct relation to the work he carried out:

Learning. They were learning you how to wire lights. It was only a board in front of you, but basically what wires you needed to wire it and then when I got back to work put into practice the real life situation. So it was, yeah, it helped a lot.

Peter also appreciated the value of college in terms of learning the theory, because otherwise: 'I don't get any theoretical experience when I'm working on the building site, or in a new house'. The importance of learning theory and contextual information is mentioned further by Simon:

I was interested because we used to get assignments to do every week, that we had to do at home all week. The different types of lighting, machines, things like that. You'd have to come out and go to the library and write about a ten-page essay on it. That was every week of the year, and that was part of the exam. You had to draw diagrams. There's a lot of formulas involved in what I was doing, especially in the thirdly year, and I've always enjoyed maths, because I got O-level Maths, and so I was quite happy with that. And then on the practical side ... like anyone can put wires in, but you've got to know what ones to put in, what sizes; if you put the wrong size in, you can burn down the house. It's of value to have theory which goes beyond the practical application, definitely, because it sort of separates you from the DIY (Do-it-yourself) electricians, you know what I mean. If you know more than them, basically that's what I get paid for'.

In relation to the profession of nursing the Swindon nurse suggests that the English approach has a more holistic aspect to the training, which also incorporates a more abstract notion of care in relation to its organisation. However, this may be

related to the current changes in the nursing profession which are being undertaken through **Project 2000**. As she describes: 'Nurses spend more time in the classroom and less time on the actual wards, so you're seen as more of a student. We don't have a wage, we have a grant, but we work the hours that the student wouldn't work'. She assessed this change as an attempt to make nursing into more of a profession, like that of doctor or teacher.

In parallel with recent advances within the motor vehicle industry both nurses agree that probably the most significant skill which is developed, is the ability to 'work as a team with other people' together on wards or in departments.

This is borne out by Petra from Paderborn when speaking about the relationship to doctors:

> *We have a lot of young doctors here, and it's more a kind of teamwork. You can say, we stand next to each other. It's not as if the doctors think they're like demigods dressed in whites. You can really talk to them normally without having the feeling you're only the labourer.*

The Swindon nurse develops this point further:

> *the junior doctors answer to you really. They ask you things because you've got much more experience than they have. It depends on the personality of the doctors really. Lots of them you get on really well with and others you don't so much. Which is like anyone else really.*

In addition to the development of her abilities to work in teams the Swindon nurse also found the knowledge of Social Sciences learnt at College relevant to her subsequent nurse training, as she considers:

> *In practical as well as theoretical? Specially in some things like Psychiatry, in Sociology lessons I did a lot of Psychology, and Delinquency, Alcoholism, Youth Culture, all things like that which has been really useful. Specially with nursing going towards more essay writing and research based things, it's been really useful.*

She thought that learning theory was fundamental to her future career prospects, but also considered it most relevant to current practice.

> *It's difficult to put theory into practice really, when it comes to the reality of what's going on in the ward really. There are many things that you'd like to be able to do, and you know that they're right, but you might not have enough time and you might not have enough staff ... and I always thing that I'd like to know more theoretically about all different sorts of diseases and how they're being treated.'*

This understanding is clearly related to her career aspirations, as she said, 'I should like to try and move up and be a sister of I'd like to go out into the community and do Paediatric Visiting.

Both trainee Toolmakers emphasise the importance of 'watching' (sitting next to Nelly) in the early years of learning their apprenticeship.

However, theory was considered vital by Stuart in terms of progression, whether this means leaving a firm when 'you want to learn more broader horizons' or gaining higher qualifications. Stuart spells out his career prospects:

> *I want to take my - I don't know if I'm going to do it - I want to take my ONC, and then my HNC, that gets me off the shop floor and then I also want to take Management And Business Studies to give me an idea of how the shop works, so that when I go for a managerial job straight off the shop floor, I'm gonna say to the employer 'I've done this, I know how it works on the factory floor, I've covered every aspect you can think of, of Engineering ...' I consider myself as an asset to most engineering firms. And then I'll go up the ladder even further.*

Patrick has a similar positive self image and is also keen to emphasise the status of the toolmaker. He sees toolmaking as the epitome of skilled status, and as such the learning of theory contributes to this image. He contrasts this with changes to other apprenticeships:

> *to shorten the length of an apprenticeship will mean a lowering of the standards ... if we continue to shorten this some people will say we can cut down the deployment within the company. This is to say that the commercial apprentices only use their training within that company exclusively to consolidate and they don't necessarily learn something new. They only consolidate those skills and the knowledge which they have learnt in their apprenticeship.*

Patrick appreciates that progression is important, with the skills and knowledge learned in an apprenticeship being a departure point for possible further education and training. This accords with wider concerns in Paderborn that the toolmaking apprenticeship should be flexible and accommodate 'changing knowledge' in order to make skilled workers employable for a longer period of time.

Conclusions

Our evidence suggests that the German 'dual system' is in need of renewal. Its impressive performance through the late 1970s in producing a high general skill level, virtually throughout the workforce , and its performance in the 1980s in protecting skilled training in the face of unemployment, should not obscure this fact. The major challenges relate to issues of integration, the danger of too narrow an occupational focus and the need to promote adaptability. The German system has some significant advantages to draw upon effecting such a renewal, but these tend to be attitudinal rather than relating to the existing content as such. Firstly, there is the commitment of the 'social partners' to education and training. Government, both regional and federal, employers and trades unions all strongly affirm the value of education and training. There exists a 'training culture'. Secondly, virtually all young people expect to be in education and training until at least 19. Thirdly, completion of any apprenticeship is valued by major employers, because of the signals it gives about the qualities, such as commitment and willingness to learn. This means that there is an in-built transferability (into semi-skilled employment in other occupational areas), which gives completion of an apprenticeship a general labour market utility as well as a specific occupational one.

There is no reason to believe that a successful renewal of the dual system cannot be brought about, but it must be recognised that the system is in need of renewal and should not be regarded as an exemplar of where other countries should aim to be. It would, in any case, be singularly inappropriate to try and copy the outward forms of the German system, since it is the underlying attitudes and values that are critical and it is these that are responsible for the degree of success of German VET in helping produce an economy with a high skill equilibrium. We would go further, in that commitment to the underlying values is such that overall the German system works despite formal inadequacies in large parts of the dual system. In particular, the narrowness of some occupationally-specific education and training is compensated by the way this can be used as demonstrating a capability to learn. It should also be remembered that a substantial general education component remains within the Berufsschule provision and that the dual system does not have to compete with a market of youth jobs offering short term attractive remuneration. German youths without a training contract have to enter remedial bridging schemes by law.

In Britain, in the last two years, there have been considerable revisions to the original aims of the National Curriculum and Assessment within schools. On a similar basis there have been changes and revisions to the NCVQ system, as its weaknesses and erroneous assumptions began to show at the level of implementation.

We consider that one critical flaw in the NCVQ approach has been to think that learning programmes could be peripheral to vocational training rather than central to it. The comparative data here points to weaknesses in the neo-vocationalist view of training, by its emphasis upon training as an outcome rather than as a learning process. Four broad issues emerge from the young people in our sample. Each problem has considerable resonance for training as conceptualised according to the NCVQ framework. 1. Transferability; 2. Progression; 3. Theory; 4. Team work. The UK trainees all seek something which is an everyday feature of German training, the development of broad skills which extend both their personal and occupational capabilities.

In contrast to such breadth, the fundamental strictness of the performance criteria becomes its own straightjacket, because the candidate cannot take the same performance criteria to the next job. What is taken to the next job is the tacit quality of the candidate's application, which was learnt in the lived social environment of work (Ashworth and Saxon 1990). The reliance of NCVQ on the sum of discrete elements of competence derived from job analysis is far too insular and individualistic.

European vocational qualifications also include instruction and tests in general educational subjects, such as native language, mathematics, social studies and sometimes a foreign language. Britain is out of step with Europe in this. There is no place in NCVQ criteria for non-occupational skills, and therefore, there is no requirement for knowledge or understanding beyond the needs of the employment to which the award it relates. This is not an educational model for progression. In contrast, it is not possible for a person to pass a Business and Technical Education Council (BTEC) qualification without undertaking the course. BTEC does not sepa-

rate the award from the means of achieving it. A wider understanding would help candidates to proceed to higher levels of vocational education of Higher Education. So problems of status lie ahead for a low level NVQ, seeming to confirm that the individual is of limited ability and also acting as a restriction on progression. The NVQ will encounter fundamental status problems, unlike BTEC, which has a credible and acceptable route into HE and the commercial sector.

The UK trainees raise many similar points when speaking about their acquisition of skills. However, one emphasis above all others, is the importance all trainees put upon learning theoretical knowledge. In some cases this can be learnt at work, as well as in College where a more founded understanding of skills is gained. In each case we mentioned, trainees identified that the opportunity to gain further learning and especially theoretical knowledge, was absolutely fundamental to their further progression either through skilled employment or on to management. The position of NCVQ as outlined by Black, Wolf and other in 1990 reveals that NVQS are not attempting to measure general knowledge or understanding, but only the specific knowledge which is necessary to be competent on the job. Ironically, Hodkinson (1992) goes on to suggest that an NVQ- dominated 16-19 curriculum would thus be as narrowly self- defeating as our current academic model, in different ways.

From the data presented in this paper we assert that for NCVQ the focus of attention in learning and assessment is on the individual. This means that emphasis upon individualised competences, where team work is essential to performance, can distort or misrepresent the reality of employment. Many areas of employment have begun to identify that the ability to work in teams, to manage teams and to direct teams as crucial to future production. Here a person's prior learning experience may be relevant for all other workers or individuals, undertaking a learning programme. An individual's expertise can be delivered to the whole group of employees or students. Thus, team co- operation and development are in opposition to the NCVQ individualistic notion of accrediting competences to an individual who is then exempt from contribution.

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Appendix 1

Germany

Academic	Apprenticeship	Vocational Schools Remedial Scheme

England

Academic	Youth jobs with training Full-Time Vocational courses Traditional Apprenticeships Some YT schemes	Transitional courses (Prevocational/YT) Low skilled work

'JUST IN TIME' OR 'A WASTE OF TIME'?

An Approach to Policy Analysis of the Youth and Community Work Apprenticeship Scheme.

JULIE KAVANAGH, MALCOLM RITTMAN AND LESLEY SMITH

Introduction

17 Youth and Community Work Apprenticeship Schemes were established in England and Wales during 1989 and 1990 as a result of a Department for Education initiative. The aim of these schemes was to provide a three year work based training programme for young adults living in inner city areas to become qualified Youth and community workers. Many Local Authorities involved in running such schemes have produced evaluations and reports, highlighting the many achievements and difficulties experienced with their particular scheme. In Essex we produced such a report, adopting the standard method of evaluating outcomes in relation to the scheme's original objectives. When using this paradigm we were aware of taking for granted a number of assumptions concerning policy. For example;

- there is a simple progression from policy intention to outcome;
- there is a consensus around the meanings of such key words as work based training and portfolios;
- that wider socio-political and economic contexts are a mere backdrop to policy implementation rather than a key determining factor.

Whilst not wishing to undermine the many individual achievements of the scheme, we try in this article to develop an alternative policy analysis using a different paradigm. Our analysis focuses on:

1. the fact that 'reading off' policy from original intentions ignores the complex ways in which policy is reshaped at many levels;
2. the importance of deconstructing the assumptions behind the language, policy and practices (or discourses) embedded in the schemes;
3. a belief that the political-economic context of the New Right is a key determining factor in reshaping both policy and the discourses around it.

On the last point, some writers (Jacques and Hall, 1989) have used a 'post Fordist' analysis to understand changes in the world of work and production. In this article we have found it useful to draw comparisons with this industrial model in terms of 'flexible specialisation', the restructuring of work into core and peripheral workforce and the production of what we call 'just in time' policy making.

In taking this alternative approach we may sound unduly critical, but this seems to us to be a necessary stage in analysing why so much innovatory work, energy and resources have seemingly had so little permanent effect on the politics of training. In fact, in working through our analysis we saw how we were drawn into much of the language of 'just in time' policies and practices of the New Right and consequently wasted much time, effort and resources which took us away from develop-

ing a more radical approach to training and collective community action at a time of concerted attacks on youth and community work values and provisions.

A Brief Word on the Apprenticeship Schemes

For readers unfamiliar with the Apprenticeship Scheme, this was a 'one off' three year work based training programme funded by central government and local authorities, following competitive bidding. Successful authorities were expected by central government to recruit black and white young adults with experience in youth work, but limited educational qualifications and living in inner city areas. The rationale behind the recruitment process was expressed by Nigel Foreman MP in his address to the Third Ministerial Conference

> *These young people not only provide new blood for the Service, but they are also closer to the experience and culture of young people from the inner cities and Welsh Valleys, and are therefore better able to win the trust of their clientele.*

Schemes are best able to judge for themselves whether they saw being 'better able to win the trust of their clientele' as an outcome or indeed a policy intention. In this article we draw on our experiences of the Essex Scheme, which used the Open University for its education and training. We recognise that some of our conclusions are specific to Essex, but our general analysis could be applicable to similar schemes, and wider educational and training policies.

1. Accreditation: An Example of Policy Reformation.

Our introduction referred to the complex ways in which policy is reshaped at many levels. In this section we attempt to describe some aspects of policy reformation by examining an area of policy, namely accreditation. We try and show how the Local Authority's intentions in their proposal were reshaped by the interactions of individuals and agencies within a set of discourses and importantly within a specific socio-political context. Table 1 sets out some of the elements in this process. We recognise the problem of 'fixing' relationships and characteristics that in fact changed over time. We also need to acknowledge that these are our perceptions of the various discourses and agencies, rather than the 'facts' about them. However, what does emerge from the table are some patterns, for example, what a colleague has called the 'Cheshire Cat Syndrome' of disappearing bodies (Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work and National Council for National Academic Awards), and on the other hand some apparent coherence in the discourses around the scheme.

Table 1 **Influences on Policy of the Essex Apprenticeship Scheme (1989-1992)**

Discourses	Agency	Restructured into:	Wider Socio-political context
target work, crime prevention, innovatory work practices, learning outcomes, performance indicators, competency based training	Department of Education and Science	Department for Education	fears of black disorder, inability of Youth Service to respond to inner city problems,.
monitoring of professional standards, empowerment through equal opportunities and starting from strengths	Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work	Training division of National Youth Agency	central government seeking more control of the Youth Service via funding and defining outcomes.

cont

quality assurance in maintaining academic standards, open access through credit accumulation,	Council for National Academic Awards	disappeared absorbed within Open University	standardisation of courses, widening access into higher education, Government encouraging progression rates and competition amongst Higher Education Institutions.
quality assurance in maintaining academic standards, access courses, credit accumulation.	Community Education Department of Open University	Community Education absorbed	funding councils exerting control over Universities making them more accountable for resources
outcomes, innovatory work practices, work with disadvantaged groups, work based learning.	Local Education Authority	in process of reshaping/elimination?	reduced financing from Central Government, need to evidence work of the Youth Service, constant pressure to reorganise and review.
competency based training, partnerships, targeting resources, crime prevention,	Central Government	persist despite election and votes of confindence!	public sector to emulate industrial models, commitment to reduce inflation by public expenditure cuts, election commitment to urban regeneration in terms of law and order.

In Essex, there was a marked difference between the original proposal and the actual practice in terms of accreditation. We list below some of these differences:

Proposal	**Actual practice**
Certificate in Youth and Community Work	Diploma in Youth and Community Work
no Diploma of Higher Education	Diploma of Higher Education
no exam	oral exam
one essay a year	four essays a year
several work reports	one work report
group project	no group project
opportunity for development of personal interest	personal interest only accepted in essay form
some peer assessment	tutor assessment only
parity in status between work-based and academic assessment	work based assessment irrelevant to O.U. accreditation
portfolio central to assessment	portfolio only recognised in the final year as one essay.

In explaining these major shifts in practice we recognise that no one was standing with a gun telling us to make these changes, nor did anyone consciously renege on, or misinterpret the original proposal. So we need to look to discourse analysis and the effect of the wider political and economic structures to account for this. Also important are the roles of the individuals involved and the relative power of agencies, which as Table 1 illustrates changed over time.

Individuals within the local authority wrote the original submission intending that work based training could lead to more innovatory practices. As time went on, it became clear that another follow up scheme would not be established, and under considerable pressure of internal reviews, cuts and reorganisation, the Local Authority, not surprisingly relinquished many of their powers to the scheme coordinators. References were still made about the importance of a work-based scheme, but officers also wanted it to have credibility and status. This meant scheme coordinators negotiating with validating bodies for Diploma status.

The scheme coordinators were thus key players in the way the accreditation policy was reshaped. We had already made the decision to reject the competency route which seemed to us mechanistic and depoliticising. We felt that the academic route offered some space for critical thinking and awareness of political context. Even so, there was a certain ambiguity in our thinking as we struggled to make sense of the additional assessments being demanded by the academic institution. Aware that workers in training had been recruited to the scheme believing it would be unlike traditional courses we were reluctant to impose upon them additional written assessments. Also, when writing the submission we had a vision of challenging the academic discourse through encouraging alternative ways of evidencing critical reflection, other than by essay writing.

However, it was difficult to challenge the academic discourse whilst at the same time trying to use it to ensure the scheme was not perceived as second rate. In any case offering a training programme to black and white young adults that was not academically validated was both patronising and disabling, limiting access and employment opportunities. There are also undertones of racism in assuming that schemes which had attracted many black workers should end up with an inferior qualification. Another key factor was the political context in which a leaner and meaner youth service was being created by many authorities making the 'employment currency' of the training even more important to the workers in training. Thus for the Essex scheme the prime objective shifted to offering the best possible qualification, and thereby maximising the number of credits awarded by the Open University.

In the ensuing negotiations over accreditation, some Open University colleagues were critical of the academic discourse where assessment and accreditation was awarded exclusively on the basis of written assignments and examinations. But their enthusiasm for trying to modify the more rigid demands of the 'OU bureaucracy' was dampened by reductions in personnel, as the community education department where the scheme had been located was absorbed into a bigger one. It became more difficult to convince other staff that academic standards were not being sacrificed, and in the inordinate number of meetings held to discuss accreditation, resistance to the academic discourse was weakened as we bargained for academic currency.

Another measure of the importance of this currency was the way that we turned to the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) to award a Diploma of Higher Education to ensure that the scheme was worth two thirds of a degree. These negotiations were necessary because the Open University's bureaucracy was unable to accredit work based learning.

The CNAA on entering the accreditation process at this late stage agreed to validate what had become a rigorous and academically led assessment procedure. They were being absorbed into the Open University and this together with the one off nature of

the scheme made negotiations a relatively easy process. Inevitably though, it added to the academic bias of the scheme, a bias which ironically had become more acceptable to the workers in training who because of diminishing employment opportunities were seeing the Diploma of Higher Education as potentially more useful than the Diploma in Youth and Community Work from the Open University.

This brief account of the accreditation process is used to illustrate some aspects of the complex process of reshaping the Essex accreditation policy. Individuals involved in this process were not passive players, but for a variety of reasons were drawn into a specific discourse which placed prime importance on credit accumulation, learning outcomes and access to higher education. We discuss in the discourse section of this article, the effect of being drawn into this language which, we believe, prevented us from fully developing a learning programme more appropriately based on the integration of critical reflection and community action. The point we wish to stress here is the importance of evaluating policies in terms of discourse and the socio-political context. Simply reading off the policy outcomes gives the impression that Essex was very successful in negotiating a Diploma rather than a Certificate.

Indeed for the workers in training it was a success, but this successful outcome failed to challenge the inherent conservatism of the academic model, where judgments are made on the basis of a well constructed essay. In the same way ' a successful' competency route based on a skills checklist would have failed to challenge the inherent conservatism of a more vocationalist training course. Having looked at some of the policy shifts in relation to accreditation we now examine in more detail some of the discourses embedded in the scheme.

2. Deconstructing the Discourses

In the previous section we argued that approaches to policy analysis which simply 'read off' outcomes in relation to policy documents fail to capture the complex processes involved in policy implementation. We described how a variety of agencies shaped the accreditation process. These agencies were themselves all being reshaped by the political and economic context. Central to this context is the emulation of the business model with its Orwellian lexicon of control. As often happens this control is not complete - different individuals bring different understandings to a discourse and in this section we analyse further some of these differences.

(a) The 'Apprenticeship Model'

One of the concepts in the Essex document (1989) was the 'Apprenticeship Model' which was seen as providing a strong tie between learning and work. What we all shared, but rarely articulated, was the historical meaning of apprenticeship, associated with entry by the working classes into a skilled craft trade, where elite workers, usually white males controlled access to their craft. Interestingly, of course, this kind of apprenticeship has substantially declined with the erosion of the manufacturing based industries, and the growth of youth training schemes. Indeed some workers in training felt that despite its more generous pay and learning opportunities the scheme was nevertheless ' a glorified youth training programme'.

The term apprenticeship fitted in with the New Right discourse as it sought to establish competency based training within professional groups. It is not stretching the imagination too far to see how an Apprenticeship Model formed part of the anti intellectualism of the Thatcher era. Within this discourse, vocationalism and

competency based learning is neither about valuing work experiences and thus ending the status divide between academic and vocational course, nor is it about challenging the conservatism underpinning academic understanding of 'what counts as knowledge'. But it has much more to do with controlling knowledge, ideas and skills that develop both within and outside the workplace. Thus it is easy to see how vocationalism and work based training are a part of a wider policy to bring educational institutions back in line with the needs of the economy.

This said, like many others within the scheme we were attracted to the model because it offered the opportunity to unite 'thinking and doing'. Also it could challenge the academic discourse not in an anti intellectual way but through valuing radical community work as much as the ability to write about it. It afforded a chance to radicalise and challenge workers as well as enable them to develop a sharper understanding of the political and economic context in which they were working.

Not surprisingly other players had different understandings and expectations, for example, and this is a fairly crude characterisation , for some work supervisors an apprentice was an unqualified worker, an extra pair of hands, making no demands on their budgets. Hence the parallel drawn with youth training schemes as workers in training were line managed, and as apprentices, not expected to question the 'craft' let alone radicalise it. Some workers in training on the other hand had expectations of learning by 'sitting next to Nellie' or in our case 'Nobody' as work supervisors were rarely involved in the actual practice of their craft. They were, after all, the managers not the practitioners.

Inevitably these different understandings produced many tensions. Sitting uneasily with all these perceptions, was the further policy intention of the National Steering Group for the Apprenticeship Schemes that the model should provide a vehicle and impetus for 'innovatory approaches to youth work'. The contradictions around how a worker in training could influence a powerful craft or agency, as an apprentice, young, black and working class was never fully revealed within the apprenticeship's discourse. A further contradiction of this model lies in the way some of the workers on other schemes articulated much of the language of the New Right as they developed 'competency led' training programmes. This is not to deny the value of these programmes, many of which were implemented in imaginative ways, but it is a further example of how neither the academic nor the vocationalist discourses (both of which are deeply conservative) were seriously challenged. Arguably opting for either of these routes and the struggles they entailed diverted radicals from developing more politically active work with communities.

(b) Equal Opportunities in the Unequal 1990s

The contradictions inherent in the Apprenticeship Model were also apparent within the equal opportunities discourse. Some professionals were using the equal opportunities discourse to legitimise targeted work with young lesbian/gay groups, very young mothers, and more generally with disaffected black and white young people. On the other hand many County Councillors rejected specific equal opportunities statements on the 'liberal' grounds that they were limiting the range of practice. However, this universal approach when tested in our case over the specific inclusion of work with gay groups revealed fears and prejudices throughout the organisation. These fears were reinforced by the scheme being discouraged from having its own equal opportunities policy, whereas a more limited code of practice was acceptable. The dominant discourse within the County seemed to be

that individuals should have equal opportunities and on this basis targeted work was acceptable. A more overtly politicised approach that emphasised the collective oppression of some groups was not within this discourse.This left the workers in training having to manage these contradictions in their practice.

On the level of recruitment it was not long before the workers in training were questioning the integrity of the equal opportunities basis of the scheme, and its legitimising role within a society that had become more unequal and divided. Access to a profession was opening up to them as individuals, at the same time as they were being encouraged to develop work with 'targeted' disaffected young adults within their own communities or to use Nigel Foreman's words 'their clientele'. As inequalities grew, more Authorities were using equal opportunities policies, not because they were becoming more radical, but because they offered one way of legitimising the selection process of a shrinking workforce. This is not to suggest that equal opportunities had become a key concept within the New Right discourse, but ironically it was being reshaped and re-articulated so as to legitimise inequalities and detract attention from growing structural inequalities.

In an early document by the National Steering Committee for the Schemes reference was made to a shortfall in youth and community workers, and in our own case, the local authority was finding it difficult to recruit from outside the authority. Arguments for equal opportunities recruitment at the time were therefore pragmatic. Now in a period of cutbacks and job losses this aspect no longer pertains. So far none of our workers in training have a permanent contract within the local Youth Service, and only one is working in the County. Those in a position to move have got jobs (this includes Germany, New Zealand and the USA), this clearly questions even a basic 'access' understanding of equal opportunities. In short, the discourse of access and equal opportunities recruitment was used in policy terms without reference to a declining economy and a shrinking public sector. Again, the contradiction of this was not lost upon the workers in training, who were receiving a training for a profession which was so undervalued and with such an uncertain future.

(c) Curriculum and assessment

Whilst the policy intention behind the scheme was to create innovations in practice and in learning and assessment approaches, agencies clearly had their own histories and agendas which shaped the development of the Scheme. The first year was dominated by debates on curriculum content, and assessment methods referred to earlier. Academic institutions concerned to maintain standards across all the courses they validate, saw assessment within a framework of standards, whereas the employer was prioritising a practice led curriculum and assessment approach. Ultimately, as the validating body, the academic institutions wielded considerable power in this discourse. However, as happens in all policy implementation, concessions were won by the individuals concerned struggling in local committees over the form and process of assessment. These were very minor concessions, for example, replacing an oral for a written exam. The Open University assumed the dominant role in defining and carrying out the assessment process and this meant devaluing work based learning in favour of academic modes of assessment.

Although we can identify different approaches to assessment, these differences were still held within a discourse of assessment drawn from traditional educational frameworks - the 'teacher' judges the students interpretation of the teacher's knowledge.

This constrained our ability to question, at the time, the reasons for assessment, who was doing it and why. For example, if as youth and community workers we should be accountable to our communities, why were no community representatives involved in assessment? Why wasn't the examination board made up of community activists rather than academic and professionals? The Essex coordinators tended to place assessments within a liberal humanist model, in which the assumption was that workers in training should be assisted to pass, rather than assuming some would fail. However, in practice the more 'liberal' forms of assessment were more demanding than those faced by students on traditional courses, where students do not fail because they turn up late for lectures, nor are they expected to reveal their inner selves within a portfolio. Besides failure on an apprenticeship scheme is a double one as students both fail a course and lose their job and income.

Within the dominant discourse on assessment, individuals brought different meanings to the concept. For example, some work supervisors who had responsibility for assessing work based learning gave priority to assessing work dispositions rather than assisting with a critical analysis of work, or the ability to challenge the status quo. Success meant adopting not challenging the work based culture. Clearly workers in training struggled to manage the contradictory messages: while the off the job learning was emphasising the development of critical analysis, and the courage to challenge, the on the job learning demanded quite different skills. There was also a desire on the part of a few learning managers to be able to fail people, as this was part of the discourse of assessment where there was talk of a 'sacrificial lamb'.

The dialectic relationship between curriculum and assessment means that it is hard to identify which element led the other. Not surprisingly, arguments over what counts as 'knowledge' were never resolved. The curriculum itself was developed at times in an ad hoc manner, given the time constraints of the scheme. The scheme's original policy of establishing a locally negotiated curriculum was thwarted by the assessment process which required a predetermined curriculum. In fact we made these struggles explicit within the scheme's curriculum in order to examine with workers in training the political relationship between knowledge and power.

In relating these struggles to general changes within education such as modularisation, flexible learning and credit accumulation we are struck with the similarity to the 'post Fordist' world of flexible work and production processes which we explore further in the next section. Increasingly knowledge is being packaged for sale in the free markets and while this commodification is justified as leading to a more open system, it is very effectively being controlled by the largest multinational in the manufacturing of ideas namely 'New Right' think tanks! Also the scheme typified other changes within higher and further education which could be seen as producing 'just in time' modules responsive to the changing needs the economy generates by its endless pursuit of profit.

The scheme's experience in challenging the curriculum and assessment discourse had little effect in developing radical education and learning strategies. We were drawn into an assessment discourse that offered no radical challenge to what counted as knowledge. In our attempts to challenge the academic discourse by arguing for the portfolio approach we ended up increasing the amount of written assessment rather than questioning the basis for it.

3. 'New Right', 'New Times' and 'New Training'?

Our third approach to policy analysis focuses on the wider political and economic context. Clearly at the 'bidding' stage the intention of many authorities included finding ways to increase their workforce. However, very soon local authorities were undergoing fundamental change, rarely of their own volition, and certainly not of the nature implied by the policy orientation of this scheme in the sense of more black, young working class youth and community workers, and more innovative practice. Wholesale shifts towards a more privatised and contracted out economy, and industrial management techniques heralding a leaner, meaner workforce have led to a fundamental restructuring whereby even some of those we may have once considered to be part of the 'core' workforce of middle managers have been either made redundant, forced into early retirement at 50 or pushed to the periphery. Clearly the Apprenticeship scheme policy had little to offer to authorities whose sole reason for change has been sheer survival. Far from the 'apprentices' becoming agents of change, within their own local authority, they are now competing for work in an agency changed beyond recognition. Interestingly, a reasonable (in today's terms) proportion of those from our own scheme have found work, but not within their local youth service (another policy 'intention'). Those who could 'get on their bike' have discovered access primarily through mobility, though clearly the training they received has been some recommendation too.

We have outlined some of the difficulties around the professional and academic discourses embedded in such concepts as the Apprenticeship Model, equal opportunities, and assessment. We have shown how problems were to some extent caused by the different histories, agendas and readings the different individuals brought with them. However, within the different discourses there often appeared to be a significant convergence. For example, individuals from different perspectives may appear to be using the same language of 'equal opportunities' or 'targeted work' or 'non traditional methods of teaching and learning' but this convergence is highly superficial. The convergence is only apparent when ideas and practices are disconnected from their political context.

Whilst we all struggled over the most appropriate method of assessment, trying to marry ideas of rigour with more 'liberal' ones of helping people to succeed, perhaps the context within which we were working led to the greatest frustration of all - that once bound up in a discourse it is almost impossible to stand outside of it, and ask who benefits from this kind of thinking around assessment. Whilst bound up in enormously ponderous and time consuming debates about the number of credits, and issues of parity we were clearly sucked into the wider discourse of the 'commodification' of services and of education. At a time of wholesale redundancies and vicious public sector cuts, and aware of the dangers of government one off schemes being seen as second rate, we were determined to ensure the highest 'currency' for those receiving our Diploma. In doing so we had to ascribe to other agendas of academic and professional respectability, which in turn shaped our thinking on the curriculum. All these struggles took place within a very tight time scale, curriculum decisions had to be made instantly, and earlier curriculum proposals were soon forgotten by events. This context predetermined our position within the discourse. However, there were times when we reflected on what had drawn many of us to the schemes, the possibility of a radicalising experience in the sphere of social and political transformation. But in the race towards successful completion of the scheme, there appeared little

opportunity for a collective critical position. Is it just nostalgia on our part, or was it true that a couple of decades ago, fundamental questioning and dissent was more a part of education and training than it is today?

In this respect, the scheme illustrates something about the manufacture of consent in Western 'democracies'. The debates we were drawn into about assessment and accreditation meant we ourselves were part of a discourse which takes for granted that measurements and tests are an inevitable feature of the 'real world' of the competitive free market, and that this is the only way for societies to operate. In a 'sophisticated' economy such as our own, how would we assess and accredit those brave South American 'peasants' fighting for social and political justice with their lives and livelihoods against multinational-backed government corruption? Do we inevitably lose the critical edge as soon as we start commodifying and quantifying knowledge and skills in order to find our proper accredited levels? Aren't such tendencies deeply and inevitably conservative - even - or especially when we attempt to open up access to them? Instead of being part of a critical education which may help people find answers to questions of inequality and injustice, aren't we in danger of becoming part of the problem?

There is no doubt that within the context of dramatic cuts within our field of work, the Apprenticeship Schemes were very costly experiments. At a time when governments and local authorities are obsessed with 'value for money' and efficiency drives we may be perplexed by costly one off schemes that lead nowhere. Were they simply an experiment dreamt up by a government minister, or is there anything to be gained by looking at parallel examples in work and training and their relation to the state? There are no lack of examples: the whole history of the Manpower Service Commission and Section 11 work illustrate the way that many such initiatives deal with a potentially troublesome social grouping at a time of structural unemployment, so to an extent they could be justified in terms of social control.

But we have also found it useful in our analysis to draw on wider patternings in work, production and the economy. Political analysts have described the ' post Fordist' world of work and production, and we believe there are clear parallels in the public service sector too. Murray (New Times 1989) describes a phenomenon which he calls 'flexibility through insecurity' in industrial production. It does not require too much of an imaginative leap to see this in operation in public sector projects and programmes such as the Apprenticeship Scheme, which reinforce splits in the wider labour market between core and periphery. All those of us engaged in the proliferating areas of short term contracts, work under conditions which, alongside anti union legislation, have weakened labour in many areas. There is little sense of continuity and support, or career development. Solidarity with oppressed communities is made more difficult as there is no history of labour struggle or achievement.

Such new and subtle means of disciplining the workforce are increasingly evident in many areas of work, both public and private sector. These work models are designed to achieve greater flexibility. The flexibility gained by the State is presumably the ability to deploy workers in whatever 'new' symptom of capitalist crisis gets media attention - homelessness, black youth, inner city unrest, drug abuse, juvenile crime, HIV amongst so called 'at risk' groups. The short term approach means that little is offered to the workforce in return, no job security and no time to develop practices which reveal and tackle causes rather than symptoms. This

policy approach, we argue, mirrors the 'just in time' production mentality of post Fordist industrial methods whereby industry needs to stimulate and provide for the whims and changes of consumer tastes, so its production methods have to respond to overnight changes in demand.

Inevitably such profitable techniques are paid for at the expense of labour, which is seen as flexible (ie expendable) requiring flexible skills and conformity. In the public sector such short termness and 'flexibility' prevents workers and their community groups from having the time and opportunity to develop a sustained critique and oppositional practices. Although many schemes appeared to have a great deal of central funding this was an illusion. By the time the several schemes in operation throughout the country could develop an analysis the funding period was over.

Conclusion

Finally, we are critical of the kind of short term, ad hoc thinking which seems to characterise the New Right approach to economic and social policy especially in the fields of education and training. Given the levels of funding attracted to the scheme radicals on the left could have diverged substantially from the Right by developing their own agenda of well thought out long term, and politically grounded strategies for training and practice, not bound by the narrow and discredited vocationalist discourse of recent decades. If we were to start from an agenda of social, economic and political transformation, and a belief in the ability of oppressed groups to understand and change their situations, if we were to think of training and work in a way which makes connection with wider contexts instead of continually breaking them, and if we looked at how certain groups within marginalised communities are organising and working on an oppositional agenda, couldn't we come up with a very different set of plans?

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COUNSELLING TRAINING AND PRACTICE WITHIN THE NORTHERN IRELAND YOUTH SERVICE.

PETER MCKEE & PAULINE IRVINE

Introduction

Unlike the Youth Service in England and Wales the Northern Ireland Youth Service operates a core curriculum similar to that which applies to the Teaching profession. The core curriculum, which followed government policy was introduced in 1987 by Dr Brian Mawhinney, the then Secretary of State for Education in Northern Ireland. Outside Northern Ireland the core curriculum attracted some criticism for its prescriptive nature but in Northern Ireland it has been largely accepted and operated. Although counselling young people was included within the nine elements of the core curriculum there was no definition of counselling nor was there any differentiation from other helping strategies. Definition was left to youth work staff and employing bodies.

The operation of all core curriculum elements takes place within existing youth work provision and in effect this results in youth clubs and groups offering counselling. Youth workers are expected to offer counselling as part of a range of other activities determined by the core curriculum. Northern Ireland has been under developed in the provision of specific counselling agencies funded by the Youth Service and at the time of the study there was one small underfunded voluntary counselling agency in Belfast.

It is worth noting that administration of the Youth Service in Northern Ireland differs from other parts of the UK. It does not rest with local Councils but rather with government appointed Education and Library Boards. This has led to an artificial demarcation between youth work and community work in the province, which remains with district councils. Youth work tends to be less community oriented because of this demarcation.

This study set out to investigate counselling provision and training within the Northern Ireland Youth Service and was carried out in 1992. The study used quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data and a small survey of counselling training was completed.

The Youth Service and Counselling

The term 'counselling' is difficult to define. It is used in a wide variety of settings and has become an adjunct to many professions. Clearly business counselling is different from the more psychotherapeutic approaches of the medical or social work professions. Furthermore there is considerable difficulty in differentiating between counselling and psychotherapy.

Noonan (1983) suggests that counselling fills the space between friendship and psychotherapy and is an extension of all those whose business touches upon

> *the personal, social, occupational, medical, educational and spiritual aspects of people (p vii)*

On the other hand Nelson-Jones (1982, p.3) notes that the primary objectives of counselling are psychological and many leading theorists have been psychologists. Attempts to distinguish between counselling and psychotherapy have also proved difficult.This has been addressed by Eysenck (1961) and Burks and Streffle (1979). It would seem that there is a continuum with counselling at one end and psychotherapy at the other. For all practitioners the place on that continuum depends on the presenting difficulties of the client and the skill and knowledge of the counsellor. Unless youth workers are referring clients to trained practitioners then this implies a degree of skill and knowledge on the part of the worker. In counselling practice it is crucial that all workers, including youth workers, be properly trained and qualified. There would seem to be a plethora of counselling training on offer heavily geared towards the acquisition of skills at the expense of counselling theory. This skills approach to training has been criticised, among others, by Coffey (1989), for giving an imbalanced approach to workers.

Counselling training offered to youth workers within the Service has been strongly criticised. Lawton (1984) points to the inadequacy of part time counselling training over a short number of months or on a residential weekend. He further criticises counselling training on initial training courses. Clearly counselling is a complex and sophisticated activity that can only be taught through intensive training involving theory and supervised practice. The dangers of 'poor' helping has been emphasised by Egan (1990). He goes further to suggest that a conceptual as well as a behavioural understanding of a counselling model is necessary and learning does not merely stop here but continues as a lifetime process. Given that youth workers (full time and part time) are expected to operate eight other elements of the core curriculum one wonders where they are expected to find time to engage in complex and intense learning. Furthermore the delivery of counselling training within the Youth Service is questionable, and if inadequate expertise exists the monitoring, support and supervision of counselling practice is problematic.

Counselling reports within the Youth Service refer to informal counselling with young people. There is no clear indication what constitutes informal counselling. However when youth workers were interviewed by the researcher prior to the study it was described as discussions with young people in informal settings for example, while other activities are in progress. While this is described as counselling it is surely part of one to one work with young people and comes under the heading of social education? The description of social education activities by youth workers tended to be client-centred in nature. There was an expectation that if youth workers favoured any theoretical counselling approach it would be the client centred-approach of Carl Rogers

Two studies in Northern Ireland pointed to a gap in perception between young people as recipients of counselling and youth workers practicing counselling with young people. Youth workers described counselling as a significant activity in their work with young people. Studies by Warm and Mc Elholm (1991) and Mc Roberts (1989) indicated that low percentages of young people viewed youth workers as

people they would approach for help with difficulties. This may arise because of the description of informal counselling by youth workers. Informal counselling may be occurring in the perception of youth workers but as it is often a covert activity on the part of the youth worker young people may simply perceive it as a 'chat'. The other possibility for this gap in perception is that youth workers were exaggerating the amount of counselling in which they were engaged.

There is little doubt that youth workers feel pressured by a prescriptive core curriculum. They have to produce evidence to employing bodies that they are fulfilling the nine elements of the curriculum in their ongoing practice and this may contribute to 'presenting the best picture'.

The Scope of the Study.

The study set out to examine the understanding of counselling, level of practice and counselling training within the Northern Ireland Youth Service. The study looked specifically at counselling as a helping strategy. It did not focus on other helping strategies which youth workers may employ with young people. It was expected that counselling offered to young people would be low and that levels of adequate counselling training would be low. Consequently it was expected that confidence among youth workers in counselling practice would similarly be low. It was also expected that youth workers would not be proactive about 'selling' counselling to young people.

The study used self completion questionnaires as the main focus of data collection. This was backed up by in depth interviews with randomly selected full time youth workers. Questionnaires were sent to all full time workers in Northern Ireland and to a smaller sample of part time workers. The smaller sample of part time workers was chosen for two reasons. Firstly it is expected that full time workers take the lead in the Youth Service and secondly part time workers are often trained by full time workers. Both full time workers and part time workers are expected to operate the core curriculum.

The questionnaire was divided into 5 sections and asked questions about personal status including gender and age. In a section on status in the Youth Service respondents were asked whether they were in the voluntary or statutory sector, type of post and length of time in post, number of face to face sessions and numbers of young people they were in face to face contact with on a weekly basis. Respondents were also asked about their youth work training and if this had been completed in Northern Ireland. The question about training in Northern Ireland was used to investigate counselling training offered on youth work training courses. Questions were asked about counselling training on both full-time and part-time courses and counselling training on in service and post graduate courses. Respondents were also asked whether they believed they were adequately trained to counsel young people. Questions about counselling practice were used to elicit information on counselling theory and skills used, length of time counselling per week and per client. The mechanics of counselling was covered with questions on confidentiality, use of counselling room, record keeping, advertising counselling to young people, support services for

the counsellor and use of referrals of young people to other agencies or professionals. Two questions were asked on the core curriculum, one about knowledge about the core curriculum and another on whether respondents believed that counselling is a realistic expectation of youth work practice. Questions were also asked in relation to factors which hindered youth workers from offering counselling to young people.

The Results of the Study

246 questionnaires were distributed to full-time workers and 50 to part-time workers. The response rate was 49% for full-time workers and 46% for part-time workers. 46% worked in the voluntary sector and 54% in the statutory sector. Distribution was evenly matched at 59% for males and 41% for females thus reflecting the total population of youth workers. Even though youth tutors make up 31% of the full time population there was an under representation at 15.5%. Youth tutors are employed in schools who often provide a counselling service through the school counsellor. There is less need for youth tutors to be involved in counselling, even though it is part of the core curriculum.

The response to the questionnaire evenly matched the range of posts held by youth workers throughout the Northern Ireland Youth Service.

Involvement with Young People.

It was found that half of the 119 respondents were in contact with up to 100 young people per week. Just over 25% were in contact with 101-200 young people per week and a further quarter over 200. Youth workers are therefore in contact with significant numbers of young people and it can be assumed that the offer of a counselling service would be of value. 40% of the sample spent between 6 and 7 sessions in contact time with young people.

Over 50% of youth workers were in post for less than 4 years. 25% between 5 and 7 years and the remainder between 9 and 14 years. The major youth work qualification was the Diploma in Youth and Community Work (35%) followed by teaching qualifications. 37% of the sample had completed a foundation course in youth work. 79% had undertaken their youth work training in Northern Ireland.

Counselling Training.

When youth workers were asked if they had undertaken any counselling training 67% had done so. Of the 119 respondents this represented 58% of male youth workers and 41% of the females. Interestingly those workers in the statutory sector were more likely to have completed some counselling training (64%). In the voluntary sector the figure was 36%. This was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This may be accounted for by the fact that those in the statutory sector had more direct access to training within the five Education and Library Boards. Over 50% of workers had completed counselling training as part of their initial youth work training. Only 17.5% percent had completed training as part of a post graduate course and 10% as part of teacher training. Nearly 25% reported that they had undergone counselling training as part of a post foundation course. As reported earlier Lawton (1984) has questioned the adequacy of this training.

When asked to comment on counselling training for youth workers, one worker stated that he had received :

very little. At university I had a bit of a starter. After six years with the Board as a full time worker I have had one training course, about four years ago. It was set up over a two month period, one morning a week at a further education college. There wasn't even a qualification at the end of it. It was very basic. A lot of common sense stuff.

another;

it was part of the course curriculum, it wasn't a huge part, it was quite a small part. Most of what was presented (at University) was based on Rogers, Carl Rogers. I never had any formal counselling training. I have been working in the Youth Service for ten years now (Female centre based youth worker).

Despite the counselling training gained by respondents on initial youth work and teacher training there was still a general belief that they were not sufficiently trained as counsellors. When asked in the questionnaire whether they believed that they were adequately trained as counsellors 63% believed that they were not adequately trained while only 37% believed they were. Of the group who did not believe they were adequately trained 84% were full-time workers.

In terms of counselling training there are three routes available to youth workers. These include training on initial training, postgraduate training and in service training. In looking at the literature which comments on these types of training a number of inadequacies arise. Some courses offer counselling skills based learning at the expense of counselling theory. Coffey (1989) has criticised skills based counselling learning without counselling theory. He suggests that this leaves trainees practicing a range of skills without the contextual format of counselling theory. In other words they are using interventions without knowing why. In particular foundation and post foundation courses suffer from this approach. The length of counselling courses has also been criticised. Counselling is a complex activity which involves considerable and lengthy learning.

Counselling Practice.

65% of respondents offered counselling as part of their youth work practice. This was higher than expected. Of that group 92% were full time workers. 76% stated that they used the client centred approach. This proved to be the predominant approach. 16% used a co-counselling approach and 13% a cognitive approach. Interestingly 8% were offering counselling using no counselling approach.

Over 75% of respondents used the skills of listening, giving feedback, exploring with the client, observing non verbal behaviour, giving information to the client, questioning the client and helping the client acquire knowledge and skills. Between 50% and 60% summarised with the client, planned with the client and challenged or confronted the client. A smaller number of respondents solved problems for the client (15%) and gave opinions to the client (8%). The range of skills used by youth workers showed at least some understanding of the counselling process.

In relation to professional practice, 91% observed confidentiality with the client and 33% written records. Just over 33% had access to a counselling room while

only 17% advertised a counselling service to young people. In relation to time spent on counselling, 49% of respondents spent between two and three hours per week. The range extended from nine hours by one respondent to as little as 15 minutes by another. In counselling an individual young person the range varied from five minutes to two hours.

Over 75% of respondents indicated that they dealt with problems of young people relating to relationships with friends, relationships with the opposite sex and school related difficulties. Over half dealt with problems relating to alcohol, problems with the police and unemployment. Dealing with problems relating to paramilitaries, a difficulty specific to Northern Ireland was reported by nearly 25% of respondents.

Problems which youth workers report they are dealing with are not altogether consistent with a study undertaken by Ellis, Gallagher, Hargie and Miller (1991), which looks at adolescent concerns, with the exception of unemployment. This study (n=446) found that job related categories were most worried about by young people. Personal worries about self followed a close second. Categories worried about least included school and home.

Referrals to other agencies or individuals were high among youth workers at 71%. The more popular referrals were social workers and careers officers. Youth workers were asked about their knowledge of the core curriculum and this was high at 91% of which 81% were full time workers.

Asked why they did not offer more or any counselling to young people youth workers gave a variety of reasons. Of the group who already offered a service hindrances such as lack of time, pressures of other youth work priorities and other youth work expectations from employers were high. Interestingly in this group 39% and 34% respectively cited lack of knowledge about counselling theory and skills. Of the group who did not offer counselling to young people lack of counselling training, theory and skills in addition to pressure of other youth work priorities were high on the list of hindrances. Among full time workers there was a clear lack of confidence in the ability of part time workers to counsel young people. One worker commented

> *they are even more badly equipped to do it than I am. At least I have some training. They have absolutely nothing. Counselling is presented on foundation and post foundation courses and it is seen as something they should do and I don't think that should happen. I don't think they are properly furnished with the skills to counsel young people (female centre based youth worker).*

When asked about the appropriateness of the Youth Service as a vehicle for counselling there was a general belief that not only was it appropriate but that counselling was viewed as a natural extension of youth work. However they were honest in their criticism of the ability of the Service to deliver a counselling service in an organised and properly supported manner.

Conclusions.

The study challenged the hypothesis that little counselling took place within the Youth Service. Youth workers are making an attempt to offer some sort of service.

There is, however, an understandable confusion about counselling and other forms of helping, since the core curriculum does not differentiate between forms of helping. There was further confusion as to when counselling was taking place with young people particularly in the area of informal counselling as described by youth workers. In in-depth interviews some youth workers reported counselling taking place during informal discussions with young people. During these covert conversations it was evident that the young person was not clear that an attempt at counselling, on the part of the youth worker, was taking place. In the Warm and Mc Elholm (1991) study it was found that only 4% viewed the youth worker as a person to discuss problems with. As previously stated a low percentage (18%) of youth workers advertised a counselling service to young people.

The operation of a prescriptive core curriculum presents another problem. It was clear from interviews that even though youth workers were expected to offer counselling as part of this curriculum, there appeared to be no selection procedure for prospective counsellors. Most writers on counselling training including Dryden and Thorne (1991) and Egan (1990) strongly advocate a selection procedure, and Egan further points to the dangers of bad practice in the process of helping people. It is questionable whether a prescriptive core curriculum supports good practice among youth workers. As with the teaching profession workers merely become snowed under with work and consequently quality suffers.

An HMI report (1989) on counselling in England and Wales suggested that successful counselling only takes place within the Youth Service if backed up by clear policy, a strategy for implementation and the provision of back up services. If there is clear policy and strategy for implementation operated by the Service in Northern Ireland youth workers show little knowledge of it. Some evidence of back up services exists but youth workers reported that they often found these as a result of their own efforts.

In conclusion over two thirds of the sample had received some form of counselling training. However the quality of counselling training received by the majority of youth workers must be questioned. Counselling is a complex activity with a considerable theoretical base. It is derived from a psychological foundation which is often varied and even contradictory. Whether the type of courses undertaken by youth workers can reflect the complexity of counselling activity is in doubt. Furthermore, counselling courses that concentrate on counselling skills at the expense of counselling theory provide a shaky foundation. There is a danger that youth workers who undergo short courses will consider themselves to be trained counsellors although this has not been borne out in the results of the study. Almost two thirds of those who offered counselling did not believe they were adequately trained to offer such a service. Of this group 84% were full-time workers. Confidence in the ability of part-time workers offering counselling was found to be low by full-time workers in qualitative responses. The most appropriate courses on offer for counsellors were found to be those of a two year duration offered at postgraduate level. Only 18% of the sample had completed such a course.

Over 25% of the sample (n=109) did not believe that counselling was a realistic expectation of the Youth Service although those who replied in the affirmative were enthusiastic and low motivation amongst staff could not be regarded as an inhibiting factor to service provision.

Evidence from the study shows that the implementation of counselling as a core curriculum activity has not taken place in any systematic manner. There is also little evidence of targeting young people by the Youth Service. Counselling which is offered is reactive rather than proactive. Youth workers are concerned in their efforts to help young people but fail in differentiating strategies which may be employed in any systematic way. Pressure of work in delivering nine areas of the core curriculum is evident and consequently quality suffers.

If the Youth Service is to offer a quality counselling service to young people then the current operation needs to be reviewed. The following suggestions are made to assist this process;

A. that senior management of the Northern Ireland Youth Service, in conjunction with youth workers, institutes a process of definition of the role of counselling within the Service. This definition of counselling should lead to clear policy objectives and strategies for implementation.

B. that the Youth Service as part of the definition distinguishes between counselling and guidance, befriending, information giving and advice.

C. that the provision of counselling training be reviewed in order to provide effective training which provides a balance between counselling theory and skills.

D. that further research is undertaken to assess the need for counselling among youth club members.

E. that a selection procedure be devised among full time and part time youth workers as a means of identifying effective counsellors.

F. that sufficient back up resources, including staff time be allocated to support a counselling service.

G. that a properly monitored and evaluated pilot project, offering counselling within the Youth Service be established.

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CONTESTING MODELS OF YOUTH POLICY:

Problem Setting and the Australian Experience

JUDITH BESSANT

Introduction

There is a long white Australian history of 'public concern' about the young (McConville, in Davison, Dunstan, McConville, 1985, pp.69-112). Nineteenth century 'moral panics' about the larrikin pushes in the 1870s and 1880s were followed by 'moral panics' about the moral temptations placed before young unemployed women in the 1930s and the problems created by wild, fatherless boys in the 1940s. In the 1950s an explosion of concern about juvenile delinquency and maladjusted youth focused on an 'efflorescent youth culture', the bodgies and widgies (Cohen 1980). By the 1960s and early 1970s that concern and public anxiety had been transferred to other forms of collective youth action: protesting students, draft resisters, rockers, mods, sharpies, skinheads and punks constituting varying degrees of social threat (Langley, 1992; Gerster and Basset J., 1991). More recently the register of concern has been diversified.[1] Since 1975, young people have been seen simultaneously as a 'threat' as well as 'helpless and vulnerable' (*Transitions*, 1992).

If 'advanced' societies like Australia repeatedly 'discover' young people as 'problems' it is only in the second half of the twentieth century that these discoveries have been the prelude to a range of distinctive state interventions which we can now call 'youth policy' (Lagree and Lew Fai in Ferge and Miller, 1987). A history of policy interventions by the state can be situated at key points of crisis in the ongoing dynamics of modernity (Beilharz, Considine and Watts, 1992). Yet the repeat of 'problem youth' is on additional frames of interrogation. It has been argued regarding Australian 'discovery of poverty' in the 1960s that there needed to be an interest expressed in both what was being 'discovered', as well as in how such 'processes of discovery' took place, and in whose interests that discovery was made (Sharp, 1975). The question needs to be raised about how much credence should be given to the dominant accounts of social policy defining policy as a problem-solving enterprise. That dominant interpretative model which is based on liberal and empiricist readings of public policy processes assumes that there is a social problem 'out there' to which the attention of reformists, researchers and policy makers working for the State could be drawn. Even many of the more radical readings of state intervention concede 'the reality' of social problems before proposing to revise the explanation to an enlightened liberal reformist impulse with an interest in social control.

There is a need to challenge both the older style of critical theory embodied in notions of ideology-as-false-consciousness, as well as the empiricist reading of the existence of 'real problems' or the claim that young people have problems. Rather than automatically assuming the 'reality' of problems like homelessness, poverty, or conceding the proposition that 'kids at risk', 'puberty packs', or 'feral adolescents' 'have' problems in the wastelands of Australia's capital cities, we need to rethink these propositions.

Contesting 'Liberal' And 'Radical' Accounts Of Policy Making

There are a number of features which stand out about the models of policy-making and typologies of the state in post-war Australia. Firstly there are major accounts which for simplicity sake will be referred to here as the 'liberal' and 'radical' models. Apparent differences in the theoretical content of liberal and radical models on closer examination can be shown to share certain assumptions and preferences. Accounts of social policy have long been dominated by liberal-functionalist explanations that emphasised the functionality and the humanity of state interventions into the lives of 'the poor', 'the disadvantaged', the aged, the young and the unemployed (Polanyi, 1944, p.73).

In the long established liberal model, the state with its Keynesian, 'welfare' orientations was often construed as a 'structurally necessary response to human needs'. Polanyi saw the state and the need for welfare interventions as an inevitable and functional reaction to the problems of the 'market economy'. The work of Wilensky and Lebeaux also saw a functionalism in operation. Industrial capitalism invented the social problems of poverty, homelessness, neglected children and unemployment, producing 'welfare state' solutions to those systems generated problems (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965). For theorists like Beveridge and Marshall the revised role of the post-war state was an essential element in the movement towards progress. It symbolised applied humanitarianism and the promotion of social integration (Beveridge, 1953; Marshall, 1951).

Baker has called this the 'social conscience model of social policy' (Baker, 1980). In this model an elite of the intellectually trained professionals systematically survey social conditions to discover 'social problems' and/or unmet 'human needs'. The attention of the state is drawn to those social problems and the need to solve them through state interventions then becomes the next automatic step in the process. This is a picture of the policy process that begins when a social problem is 'discovered' through the deployment of the sensitive social consciences of citizens or the empirically acute research skills of social scientists. In turn the conscience of 'public opinion' is pricked. Further work by 'real world' reformers and social scientists goes on to accurately and empirically define the problem better through the use of social scientific research. From there the process entails the state addressing the problem as politicians and policy makers were (are) galvanised into taking action producing Committees of Inquiry, Royal Commissions or even legislation (Baker, 1980).

This traditional liberal understanding of policy formulation argued that policy is rationally informed by the discovery of already existing and objectively existing social problems. Policy formulation was a funnel of causality where truth and knowledge shift from the broadest possible scope such as the socio-economic environment, onto power, culture and ideology and institutions where it is contested, slowly moving on and narrowing down to what are called 'policy making processes', and finishing up with specific policies. The identification of the problems and decisions about the solutions needed are said to be based on technical expert criteria, rational, proper co- ordination, planning and considered choice (Anderson, 1984; Emy, 1974). This model retains considerable appeal for many policy- makers and researchers but it has little if any value in understanding how policies actually get to be made. In these structuralist readings there is a heavy

reliance on 'social conditions', social problems or a 'middle class' based humanitarianism that operates as one of the 'forces' that leads to the inevitable outcome - that is more and more state interventions working within a classic discourse of history as progress.

Beginning in the late 1960s this older liberal model came under severe attack from neo-Marxists and feminists. One variety of structuralist reading came to replace the older structuralism. Those new radical interpretations replaced altruism with a view towards hegemony, the principle of social order and social control. As a result we learned to see 'the state' as supportive of capitalism and patriarchy and committed to the reproduction of the political and economic order at the same time as the state (O'Conner, 1973; Habermas, 1974; Gough, 1979; Offe, 1983).

The role of the middle-class and professionals was also rewritten. No longer were they seen as repositories of virtue for social change, they were now painted as being primarily concerned with controlling the 'dangerous and perishing classes'. What had previously been seen as securing 'better' values and behaviours amongst 'working-class people' came to be seen as the 'embourgeoisement' of workers. Furthermore, it was argued by neo-Marxists and feminists that such enterprises were strategies designed to improve the middle-class professionals status and position within modernized social order. According to some writers the range of human service interventions was securely tied to the production of disciplined workers, as well as preventing threats of social order such as crime, delinquency and 'immorality' (Donzelot, 1979; Lasch, 1979). The notion of functionalist 'altruism' was revised; it came to be seen as legitimating professional and state interventions and the functionalist 'social control' model was in. Platt typifies this in his claim that the international Children's Court movement:

> *...came primarily from the middle and upper classes who were instrumental in devising new forms of social control to protect their power and privilege. The child saving movement was not an isolated phenomenon, but rather reflected massive change in the mode of production, from laissez faire to monopoly capitalism, and in the strategies of social control from inefficient repression to welfare state benevolence (Platt, 1977, p xx).*

From here it was a small step (taken by Lasch and others) to shift from an argument about social control as an objective to assume the actual realisation of that intent. For Lasch the intervention of what he refers to as the social pathologists was decisive. They became the agents of bourgeois morality, values and aspirations imposed on working-class families and their culture (Lasch, 1979 pp.4-10; Carrington, in White and Wilson, 1991). Similarly for Donzelot the family, especially 'working class' family life, was 'colonised' and 'policed by the state' in its various guises as welfare provider, educator, legal administrator, doctor, psychiatrist and counsellor all of which worked to reduce the 'autonomy of the family' (Donzelot, 1979, pp.117-149). In the work of Harris and Webb, the state exercised social control over 'the working class' through psychological, moral, ideological, material and social interventions which reinforced 'bourgeois' values such as temperance, punctuality, the work ethic, individualism, respect for marriage and family life as a venue for stability and the regulation of desire and thrift (Harris and Webb, 1987, p.1). McCalman's history of working-class life in Richmond (which otherwise rejects this notion) falls victim to the social control hypothesis when she writes that compulsory education:

... [invaded] the privacy and integrity of the working class family [and provided] for the imposition of middle class culture on the working class [which] policed the shaping of future citizens (McCalman, 1984, p.71).

This radical structuralist revision was susceptible to quite devastating critique.[2] Higgins and Van Krieken and others have indicated that it assumes a number of things that have not been established - these include two propositions that need to be demonstrated.

(i) that working-class lives were as described by the middle- class, that is dissolute, drunken, lazy, dirty, thriftless, sexually promiscuous and disorganised,

(ii) that they were victims or the subjects of a successful cultural renovation job that had been performed by the state and the middle class (Higgins, 1980, pp.1-23; Van Krieken in Muetzelfeldt, 1991, pp.1-25).

While apparently bypassing the liberal tradition and its emphasis on altruism, rationality and good intentions, such revisionist readings continued to rely on the implicit notion that there was a 'discovery' process that uncovered real social problems as a prelude to policy interventions. That is, the radical revisionists of the last two decades have also maintained the underlying empiricism of the social conscience model. Along with this they have also sustained the assumption that social problems had/have an objective existence which is independent of any processes of social discovery.

Policy As Discourse

Some commentators have argued that a range of policies are discursively constituted, suggesting how as discourses, policies are produced and set in place (Beilharz, 1987 pp.338-407; Yeatman, 1990; Watts, in Stockley, 1992 pp.35-55 p.255). It is suggested that attention paid to the character of language and particularly to the use of metaphor and its importance for explaining policy as discursive activity will prove rewarding. Metaphor for example according to Schon, is indispensable for understanding social policy. As he notes:

When we examine the problem setting stories told by the analysts and practitioners of social policy, it becomes apparent that the framing of the problems often depends upon metaphors... One of the most pervasive stories about social services for example diagnoses the problem as 'fragmentation' and prescribes 'co- ordination' as the remedy ... where under the spell of metaphor, it appears obvious that fragmentation is bad and co-ordination is good (Schon in Ortony, 1980 p.255).

It is central to understand how and what we think about certain groups of young people, how we make sense of our own realities and what sets of problems we produce in order to then find the solutions and determine policy.

While acknowledging the value of the idea of policy-as-discourse, it can also lead to a static analysis that ignores the social and the historical processes and relationships the lie beneath the surface of the text. There is value in reconstructing from the presences and the absences of a given policy text to determine constitutive politics and contestations that went into the policy making processes. However, we also need to know something about the actual social processes and contexts of a policy and something of the actual work that went into making the policy.

Given the primacy of the role of the intellectually trained in producing social science research, cultural forms and images of objects of policy, an adequate theory of policy also needs to be dealt with the intellectually trained and to identify what is specific to the work of the intellectually-trained.[3] It is in this way that the idea of constitutive abstraction can indicate some of the distinctive features of intellectual work under the specific conditions of modernity. As a notion which focuses on the conditions of contemporary sociability and integration, it may provide some insights into how 'youth' has been constituted as an object of state policy interventions.

The Theory Of Constitutive Abstraction

The argument suggest that where once the important exchanges between people took place on a personal, face-to-face basis with 'human interaction grounded in gesture, the intuitive, the body', the tendency is increasingly for abstracted social interchange reliant on impersonal technologies and media of communication (Hinkson, 1987). James spoke of the modern nation-state as 'abstracted community' (James, 1992). In that community there have been shifts from an older form of social integration which took place at the face to face level, through to a contemporary disembodied mode of integration which characterises our modernised society. This is complete with institutions which are dedicated to abstracted information dissemination.

The argument points to the impact on the larger social body of the professional. This group who once had relatively restricted activities have expanded their reach considerably. The effects of the technological mediation has produced transformative processes in an economy which is increasingly bewitched by cybernetic interchange and reconstruction. One major consequence of twentieth century intellectual practices (and by implication professional practice) has been to 'abstract people'. This means the practice of lifting people out of their established settings and to rearrange and re-engage them in different contexts and ways of being through processes of constitutive abstraction. (Young people have been just one of the population groups subjected to this process).

Constituting 'Youth': The Social Sciences And 'Adolescence'

Young people as children and as adolescents have been the subjects of a discursive treatment through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This saw a systematic reconstitution that was focused initially on the notion of 'childhood' and then on 'adolescence' in ways which reflected the increasing spread of extended social formations that characterised 'the information society'. The processes of constitutive abstraction that were once exclusively grounded in the work of the intellectually trained, have within the information society been increasingly applied and amplified by other social media.

The category of 'adolescent' was built discursively on sets of the meta-narratives about the 'societal' (associated for example with Comte, Spencer, Durkheim and Parsons). The social became correlative with a functionalist understanding of social and moral order. 'Society' became a moral or normative consensus that was achieved through processes of socialisation. That long standing dominant discourse is evident in many twentieth century social science monographs on adolescence and delinquency. Those who have worked within this tradition have

assumed the existence of a systematic, organically and interconnected whole called 'society' (or 'culture'[4]).

Biological, organicist conceptions, notions of health and diseases of society were reworked especially by Comte in his 'sociology' which dramatically shaped 'positive science' (Canguilhem, 1990 pp.39-64). Leading nineteenth century social evolutionary theorists like Herbert Spencer and the school of British anthropologists (Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, Firth et al) picked up on this and integrated it into their works. The idea of 'society' as a totalised entity that was amenable to a scientific discovery of the laws which governed its development was foundational to that discourse of society.

'Culture' became the equivalent idea that focused on the realm of meanings, including symbolic, religious, moral and linguistic phenomena. Like 'society', 'culture' was said to refer to a system of interconnected parts. 'Culture' also turned the biological into human, social or civilised groups. That kind of sociology was transferred on to theories and research into the processes of 'socialisation'. It was said young people became integrated and members of their society only through the acquisition of certain appropriate elements of the society's 'culture'. Durkheim referred to the 'blind unthinking physical forces' that bound humans to the uplifting and civilising and moral force of society:

> *The individual submits to society and this submission is the condition of his liberation. For man freedom consists in the deliverance from blind unthinking physical forces; this he achieves by opposing against them the great and intelligent force which is society, under whose protection he shelters (Durkheim, 1974, p.72).*

A meta-narrative such as this required 'the adolescent' to provide a human focus for the obsessive anxieties and pre- occupations that this particular tradition developed. The tradition about adolescence was initiated by eugenicist educators like Maria Montessori and G. Stanley Hall. By the 1940s criminologists, sociologists and psychologists had established a social scientific scheme that had at its centre 'the adolescent'. The portrait of that figure was a transitional, troublesome, agonistic, vulnerable, irresponsible, prey to all of the vicissitudes that the process of socialisation required of the adolescent as an anti-hero. The consequences of this are to be found in the closely related figure of the 'adolescent as delinquent', which was assisted in its passage to become scientific fact by the efforts of Cyril Burt's early work on delinquency in the 1920s (Burt, 1926).

The discourses about 'adolescence' and 'delinquency' yolked together a developmental psychology and a structural functionalist sociology (Kett, 1984). This model has received wide scale application in Australia as well as in other countries. It characterised the 'normal process' of socially and psychologically adolescent maturation in terms of adjustment and development into the appropriate adult social roles and psychological capacities. Failed socialisation resulted in 'deviance', and those exceptions/failures were identified in terms of the prevalence of their 'social dysfunctions'. This could be seen in the manifestations of 'symptoms' such as unhappiness in early childhood, broken homes, lack of parental - especially maternal - supervision and most importantly, appropriate moral and spiritual training.

Delinquency was seen to be the result of frustrations to do with 'normal impulses' and of anxiety. It was said that inferiority, deprivation and inadequacy would force the child to search out substitute satisfactions in 'delinquent' conduct (Manning, pp.85-86). For some sociologists, psychologists and criminologists that 'identifiable' stage in the life-cycle called adolescence was an inherently deviant phase that thankfully most young people passed through hopefully without permanent damage.

'Delinquency' became one of the markers of failure in the path of adjustment towards socially-functional roles and institutions. Allied to this underlying 'scientific-moral' vision of the 'good society' was a recurrent 'social scientific' project to discover the 'invariant' factors which determined that some people would become deviant (Orcutt, 1983 pp.2-37). This tradition has been exemplified in the 'juvenile delinquency' paradigm of Thrasher, Merton and Whyte in their stress on the precariousness of socialisation in the great task of social adjustment to socially functional roles (Downes, 1966). With a number of minor modifications this tradition remains central to much of Australia's contemporary criminology.

According to this meta-narrative, the socialisation of young people into a 'normative' or moral consensus was a critical aspect which made sure that the culture provided a social glue that was integral to social order and moral development. The emergence of the notion of a 'youth culture' assumed the existence of a discontinuity between the value systems of those who had adult status and those who did not - young people. The stable and orderly interaction of different age cohorts was seen as being an essential prerequisite for the existence of good order within the 'social system'. 'Adolescence' as it was conceptualised by those such as G. Stanley-Hall (1904) was an agonistic but necessary phase in the life-cycle. All young people were said to share a common problem in that they had to handle a difficult period of transition. According to that framework 'youth culture' was transformed into a system in its own right, a system in which 'youth values' and 'youth standards' were said to have become a means of a hopefully orderly transition to both the problems of adjustment and the soon to be assumed adult status.

The idea of a 'youth culture' also perceived the idea of 'youth' as problematic, as a phase in the life-cycle that was characterised for its irresponsibility and its deviant status. This idea has been around for some time and was documented in 1942 by Talcott Parsons who used the term and theme in his treatment of the subject (Parsons, 1942). Parsons pointed to the perceived existence of distinctive and collective differences between all 'young people' that was said to have been organised generationally as well as culturally around allegedly sets of common values, aspirations, and behaviours. Parson defined 'youth culture' as 'more or less specifically irresponsible' (Parsons, 1942).

Since the work of Parsons there have been many debates about the homogeneity that 'youth' was/is said to have confered on the whole population of young people. Similarly there has also been considerable debate about the roles played by other principles like class, gender or ethnicity. By the 1950s and 1960s American sociologists were generally agreed that adolescents formed together in a cohesive opposition to responsible adults. They were said to have possessed a:

a relatively autonomous culture, controlled internally by a system of norms and sanctions and largely antithetical or indifferent to that offered by parents, teachers and clergymen (Berger, 1963, p.327).

This is not to suggest that there was no debate within the history of functionalism about the extent to which the differences between young people was functional or dysfunctional. In the eyes of Eisenstadt for example 'youth culture' was said to have become a functional means of easing the difficult transition from 'child role' to 'adult role'. This notion of transition denotes a historical problem for any society simply because 'Youth constitutes a universal phenomenon'. Certain structural phenomena according to Eisentsadt also produced specific cultural aspects of what he names 'archetypal patterns of youth' (Eisenstadt, 1962, p.28). In his account of it the process of transition within the context of modern industrial societies begins with a disparity between what were called the 'ascriptive' and 'particularistic' criteria and values of the family. This is between the family (being the primary socialising agency) and the impersonal and universalistic values of the adult roles that were seen to have been associated with the labour market. 'Youth culture' was said to have offered a way of bridging the gap between the disparity which was said to exist:

In universalistic-achievement societies... an individual cannot achieve full status if he behaves in his work according to the ascriptive-particularistic criteria of family life... There occurs in such cases a defensive reaction in the direction of age homogenous relations and groups... The individual develops needs dispositions for a new kind of interaction with other individuals which would make the transition easier (Eisenstadt, 1956, pp.43-45).

However, not all functionalists had such a view of youth cultures. For some of them, youth cultures were deviant, they were a 'bad thing'. James Coleman was one who saw 'youth culture' as deviant, a consequence of a social process of age-segregation in which 'the adolescent is dumped into a society of his peers' (Coleman, 1961 p.4).

For Berger also, youth culture was dangerous:

from the perspective of the major institutions of social order, youthfulness is excess; it is implicit of incipient disorder; for society it is a 'problem' that requires handling, control, co- optation or channelling in socially approved directions (Berger, 1963, p.331).

For functionalists there was a distinction to be drawn between what was seen to be healthy deviance and dysfunctional deviance. 'Failed socialisation' produced 'deviance', in which the 'anti- social' was correlative with immorality. This is the representation of 'delinquents as outsiders' (Bessant and Watts, forthcoming). Functionalists had for a long time maintained a meta-narrative about how most people became 'normal', responsible and functioning members of their society and how some people became abnormal and 'deviant'. The study of delinquents became an important sub-theme in sociology, and also to a lesser extent in the psychology of the turn of the century which wound itself into the emerging functionalist discourses about 'youth culture' and young people generally.

By the 1950s a neo-Functionalist tradition which was represented by figures like Cohen, Matza and Sykes in America and by Wilmot, and Downes in Britain dominated the field of delinquency theory and research. These writers stressed that 'youth culture' represented collective solutions to problems facing 'working class' (male) adolescents. North Americans 'gangs' provided an apparently 'obvious' and objective correlate for 'youth cultures'. Albert Cohen for example, used Merton's matrix model of deviance to argue that working-class boys were encouraged to emulate the dominant (that is 'middle-class') success goals of wealth and status (Cohen, 1955). However, the nature of working- class socialisation practices ensured that by the time secondary schooling commenced the working class boys were unable either to achieve or to measure up to middle-class values and aspirations. The boys, Cohen said, 'reacted' against this discovery, replacing it with a delinquent peer culture characterised by a flouting of middle-class values. Later revisions by the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies elaborated this insight in neo- Marxist terms, and saw in delinquency or youth cultures like Punk a cultural resistance to bourgeois hegemony (Hall and Jefferson, 1976).

'Adolescence' and its affinity concepts like 'delinquency', deviancy and 'youth culture' have proved to be powerful influential elements within social science. It has been a central feature in the constitutive abstraction of the experiences of young people, in the reworking of that experience, and in the endless research carried out into young people's lives. Rose, Lewontin and Kamin explain the power of science in modern Western Society as an:

> *...institution [that] has come to be accorded the authority that once went to the Church. When 'science' speaks - or rather when its spokesmen speak (and they generally are men) speak in the name of science - let no dog bark (Rose, Lewontin, Kamin, 1987, p.31).*

One of the key forms of constitutive abstraction, that also has considerable significance for creating a basis of norms has been the imperialism of social statistics which defines the characteristics of the population against a postulated statistical norm. It means that what we come to see as a norm is an artefact of a methodology or technique; a curve on a graph, an artefact which quickly becomes widely incorporated into our beliefs about what is normal, average, well adjusted and good - such as adolescent development, behaviour and educational attainment. Variation on what is determined to be the norm become aberrations or deviations, therefore pathological and usually requiring expert treatment. Manning's classic treatment of bodgies in the 1950s cited neurosis as a cause of delinquency. With statistical, scientific backing he claimed that:

> *Of greater importance is the fact that it is statistically shown that delinquents and criminals are more neurotic than the average population. Some investigator considered here that the 'wrong thinking' which results in neurosis, plus the traumata of early childhood and infancy, are significant in anti-social behaviour... Many of them would be termed psychopathic personalities... they are vitally disturbed personalities, sometimes neither psychotic not neurotic, but social misfits and borderline cases. (Manning, 1958, p.84).*

Pointing to some of the ways that the modern state has become dependent on methodology and principles of scientific knowledge about the population indicates how crucial science has become to professional and state authority. Fixed firmly in scientific knowledge are, amongst other things, the many fears and fantasies about particular cohorts in the population. 'Breeds of misfits', 'self elected outcasts', anomalistic, dangerous hooligans and sexually promiscuous youngsters (predominantly the girls) have been some of the dominant images portrayed of problem youth in responsible social science (Walkerdine and Lucey, 1989; for an example see *Australasian Post*, 1966). The projection of fears, desires and fantasies is followed by calls for restraint and regulation through the establishment of more youth activities, compulsory national service, increased schooling retention rates or an increased police presence (*Sun*, 22 June 1966; *Sun*, 9 August 1988; *Sun*, 11 August 1966).

The Effects

Taking what were once everyday experiences, social science has reworked the figure of 'the adolescent' and the discursive conversion of it into a pathological phase in the life-cycle which has helped to reshape the lived experiences of young people. This constitution of adolescence as through social science is a classic example of the intellectual process of constitutive abstraction. What began as an intellectual strategy only, developed through the twentieth century to sponsor interventions by old agencies (like the mass compulsory schooling apparatus) and newer agencies (like the Children's Courts of the 1900s and the Psychology and Guidance Clinics of the 1930s).

What began as the abstracted interchange of intellectuals which conceptually stripped young people out of their everyday world and redefined them, ended up stripping them out of their own space and inserting them into new spaces. What was the result? What had once been normatively and practically constructed from a mixture of folk wisdom, tradition and peer groups was reworked. For example, the experiences of sexuality, relations with parents, schools, employers and state institutions (like the army) were redefined in terms of the imperatives of the discourse.

The new abstracted discourse about adolescence, which began with the premise that it was an inherently pathological condition full of threat and dangers, enlisted interventions by skilled professionals for the purpose of safely and securely shepherding the adolescent into the next phase of the life cycle. The new social scientists busily consolidated areas such as psychology, teacher education, public health and social hygiene, social work and child welfare up to the 1940s and spent a lot of their time dwelling on the vulnerabilities and vicissitudes of adolescence which was seen as being an inherently problematic part of the life cycle.

Reliance on a network of 'eyes' that extended the surveillance of the state was based on specialist knowledge and practices. The distribution of the 'client' to specialists through the professional network provided for the further extension of controlling, checking, encouragement of obedience as well as the administrative and policing functions of professional-state interests. There were many ways, such as compulsory church going, visitations to probationary officers, extra training or education to ensure that 'wayward youth' were monitored and 'got back on the straight and narrow' (Bulletin, 19 October 1960, p.6). These discourses and 'discoveries' also supported and reinforced the evolution of a distinctive 'youth policy'.

Discovering 'Youth' As Problem And As Object Of Policy

When governments set out to create policy about those whom they govern, they appear to draw heavily on stereotypical representations of the objects of their policies. Many of the stereotypes of the young which were or are drawn upon were/are not necessarily false pictures of a given 'reality'. They are elaborate discourses about young people which have been constituted as sets of knowledges that may or may not have much relationship to the life-world and the experiences of young people (Cohen 1980).

(i) The 1940s and 1950s

Through the late 1940s and 1950s 'popular concern' and policy response focused on the colourful, distinct and 'fascinating' 'youth culture' of the 'bodgies and widgies'. This was accompanied by the less spectacular, but none the less equally threatening social problem of 'juvenile delinquency' which was said to be in epidemic proportions (Manning 1958; Wordley 1958; Braithewaite and Barker 1978; Stratton 1984; Bessant 1991). By then there were numerous expert, benevolent and professional representations of young people designed to maintain these representations. The clergy, psychologists, the police, the judiciary, teachers, the media, criminologists, social workers and youth workers, were but a few among the powerful groups who saw certain sections of young people as threatening, delinquent, sexually promiscuous, drug abusers, and in some political contexts, both subversive and traitorous. The intellectually trained, particularly the social scientists, have devoted themselves to developing strategies of abstraction such as the establishment of scales of normality which embrace everything from intelligence tests, school competencies, indexes of social skills and political attitudes.

Psychometricians in particular had long designed scales for measuring and judging abnormality, feeblemindedness or deviancy and therefore quantify the threat posed by certain groups. In 1958 Manning, a New Zealand psychologist argued that:

> *It is commonly believed that the average of intelligence among criminals is slightly lower than for the average population and that there are more mental defective among those committed to criminal institutions (Manning 1958, p.84).*

Scientific case study histories which 'examined' the bodgies produced abundant 'evidence' of what were said to be dangerous pathologies. Manning held for example, 'if the parent-child relationship is examined, a cause will be found for pathological liars, sexual perverts, amoral individuals and eccentrics' (ibid).

Policy responses to 'the outbreak of delinquency' and the 'bodgie-widgie scourge' were discursively constituted, and firmly grounded in those long held discourses about 'normal-maladjusted adolescence' and the alleged inherent nature of adolescence as an agonistic, painful transitionary stage in the life cycle. Through a complex network of observers, young people in the fifties became the subject of numerous regulatory practices and coercive interpretations. They were both 'named' as delinquents and images constructed of them through the media as 'problem of youth' (Bessant 1991; Stratton 1992). The young were also a central focus of discourses centring on a 'democratic state'; and an Australian life-style

and national character. Professional based knowledge conceived, abstracted and 'sighted' many young people as 'objects-of-public-concern', and consequently, as warranting urgent legitimate political-legislative action (Faye 1991).

The various representations of 'youth' that emerged in the fifties located young people at varying points along the threads of normative behaviour, constructed out of professional normalising-judgements and opinions of law and order. These representations and the subsequent location of youth as objects of concern were a form of disciplinary power, that is, the 'offending behaviour' of certain groups of young people came to be seen as pathological and therefore in need of expert intervention and treatment (Manning 1958, Report of Juvenile Delinquency Advisory Committee (Barry Report) 1956; Cunningham 1948). If 'maladjustment' was not caused by some deficit within the young person, it was surely due to her/his faulty schooling, poor home life and bad parenting - particularly defective mothering (Bulletin, 1960, p.56).

(ii) The 1960s - Early 1970s

Popular memory and academic responses to the 1960s and early seventies have been fixed as the age of dissenting youth. This era we have been told was dominated by radical new styles of music with 'offensive' rock bands, by counter-cultural clothing and long hair, caftan-wearing young men, by explorations for sexual liberty, and the rise of the drug culture (Altman, 1987; Cockington, 1992; Gerster and Bassett, 1991). Images of youthful anti-war 'radicals' and endless demonstrations have become the dominant icons of that period (Langley, 1992; Burgmann, 1993; Hamel-Green, 1982). In the sixties and early seventies many young people were collectively engaged in new forms of critical and social action. At the time they were perceived as serious threats as adult opinion makers constructed powerful interpretations of the intentions of what was a diverse and diffuse set of youthful expressions of resistance. Government and professional regulation cannot be objective and neutral for one of its central concerns has been with pre-empting any anticipated form of sedition or 'serious' resistance (White, 1990, pp.103-201).

In the sixties youthful dissent and the right to demonstrate was criminalised; protesters became 'savages' and 'loutish militants' who were bent on staging insurrections that threatened national security. In the minds of some such as Inspector Crowley (Assistant commissioner of police, Victoria) certain groups of young were akin to dangerous wild animals. Comments such as these clearly reflect the paranoia and general concern about sedition:

> *The day or night must inevitably come when, by shrewd planning or accident, these unruly law breakers turn up en masse at a vital spot when police are elsewhere... [it is] like playing with a mad dog or baiting a tiger. On the law of averages, the day must arrive when you drop your guard and he severely mauls you (York, 1987, p.174).*

In the sixties groups like the sharpies and skin-heads were represented as novel threats, frightening and not something to be excused as simply youthful exuberance or just kids letting off steam (*Australasian Post*, 2 June 1966, p.10). The seriousness of the 'youth problem' was legitimate, made real and reinforced by scientific backing. Psychologists, social workers and other experts advanced a range of theories to

explain the reasons and motives underlying juvenile vandalism. For some professionals it was sufficient to refer the possibilities of psychiatric disturbances in young people indicating 'mass hysteria in groups of impressionable age', or that their 'deviant' activities merely provided 'an outlet for aggressive tendencies' (*Australian Post*, ibid). Through the 1960s and early 1970s student activism, the mods, sharpies and skinheads maintained discourses about young people as 'objects of fear', requiring government and professional responses which extended well beyond the 'discourse of delinquency' and maladjustment of the 1950s (Cunningham, 1951; Cunningham, 1948; Report of Juvenile Delinquency Advisory Committee, 1956; *VPD*, 1956).

Representations of the 'problem youth' in the sixties can be roughly broken into two basic genres. One was the working class lout, and the other, the more sophisticated, naive, middle class university student led astray by the subversion of academics and other possible communist elements that were said to be infiltrating the university campuses. Both genres drew on discourses related to the idea of youth as intrinsically given to trouble making or just 'being difficult', even delinquent. As one report in 1960 put it today's young people (of the 1960s) could:

> *... belong to bodgie type mobs ready to snake-dance on the slightest provocation - the kind of vandal well known in Sydney and Melbourne who hacks up Captain Cook's cottage, rips up bus seats, mires churches and schools and ruins life-saving equipment in a sort of psychopathic or sadistic fury. Added to these ... long-haired professors in teeming universities ... are always on the side of the exotic enemy, and talking of the need for 'peace', but always the backers or tolerators of Communist activities. These set the worst kind of example to their charges, whom they indoctrinate with their own 'academic' viewpoints (**Bulletin**, 30 June 1960, p.4; **Age**, 7 May 1969; **Bear**, 1973, pp.115-159; **Age**, 5 June 1968; **Age**, 18 June 1968).*

(iii) Since the Mid-1970s

By the mid seventies the 'youth problem' around the jobless young, was first expressed in the standards debate which explained high levels of youth unemployment in terms of the failure of both the education and the students (*Australian*, 7 April 1978). The alleged decline in educational standards within the schools was seen to cause a parallel, dramatic fall in social, moral and living standards within the community (Bessant, 1988, pp.63-71). School leavers were said to lack adequate basic skills which was allegedly why they were not successful in securing employment (Confederation of Australian Industry National Employers; Industrial Council, 1978). In the words of one debate:

> *... a serious problem is being faced in relation to the low level of basic skills in literacy and numeracy possessed by a not significant portion of school leavers entering the labour force **(Victorian Parliamentary Debates,** 1977, p.9646).*

The problem of youth unemployment was clearly and firmly located within the school gate, teachers and individual students. Furthermore, the problem of a faulty schooling system and low educational standards was defined as a potential threat to society, particularly to the economy which was in a state of serious decline. 'Right thinking people', the expert, the highly educated, the editors, politicians, educationalist and professionals generally stepped in to assume the bench of judgement and

define the social reality. The socially accredited experts pronounced their diagnosis and solutions (Confederation of Australian Industry National Employers' Industrial Council, 1978; Dawkins, 1988; National Economic Summit, 1983).

New ways of dealing with the new 'youth problem' evolved which saw the restructuring of the education system as a significant part of the remedy (Sedunary, 1991; Bessant, 1988). The way was paved through the standards debate for the formulation and implementation of government policies that created many changes which have resulted in a dramatic impact on the experiences of being young. Schools, colleges and universities underwent and continue to undergo major restructuring and reconstitution in order to meet the new demands of the economy, business, and 'the problem' of high levels of youth unemployment. According to expert opinions the abysmally low educational standards resulted in young people being incapable of getting work (*Australian,* 24 October 1977; *Australian,* 17 February 1978; *Australian,* 2 September 1977; Australian, 9-10 December 1978).

In a recurring pattern young people become the repositories of adult fears, desires and fantasies. The knowledge which comes to the foreground of political, public or policy discussions is most frequently based on the fantasies of the expert or professional about the young people who need to be tamed, such as 'the razor slashing menacing vandals' and 'hardened criminals' of the 1950s or the uncouth, drug taking effeminate mods of the sixties (Sun, 22 January 1955; *Bulletin,* 20 April 1955; *Sun,* 10 January 1953; *Bulletin,* 18 May 1955; *Australian Women's Weekly,* 8 June 1965; *Age,* 1 October 1967). The young were (and are) exoticised in the course of this process (*Sun,* 5 January 1953; *Sydney Morning Herald,* 6 December 1951). Their differences have been and are emphasised, as are their alleged tendencies to violence while their uncivil nature or instincts strike fear into the hearts of those who perceive in them a capacity to subvert the established order *(Sydney Morning Herald,* 4 March 1957). It is also argued that this process as with any fantasia is full of ambivalence, replete with both desire and fear, envy, fantasy and loathing, delight and disgust. Many representations about young people rely on stereotypical albeit horrifying images of savages, of undisciplined, rampaging animalistic, lustful, anarchic youth which do not entirely repress the symptoms of identification and desire-in-phobia and fetish (Bhabha, 1983, pp.18-36) Popular fantasies about youth picture them as terrible creatures while simultaneously seeing them as future citizens of a modern liberal democratic society as well as the future workers of a post- industrial capitalist labour market (Meyer, 1991, pp.35-44).

In the 1980s and 1990s the source of the youth problem, especially around teenage gangs, has been located squarely within the economy (For examples see: *Sun,* 14 July 1986; *Sun,* 3 May 1986; *Sun,* 11 February 1986; *Age,* 14 July 1990; *Sydney Morning Herald,* 25 February 1989; *SMH,* 24 December 1987; *SMH,* 12 November 1987; *SMH,* 29 January 1987; *SMH,* 9 June 1986; *SMH,* 10 May 1986). The response has been to develop youth and education policies that are directly oriented towards keeping otherwise jobless young people in education institutions and training programs and integrating those seen to be 'at risk' back into conventional and acceptable activities. Other proposed remedial strategies have included proposals to cut the youth wage, the introduction of the 'trainee wage', reafforestation, the reintroduction of national service foreshore reclamation and activities aimed at improving community amenities.

Although the general representation of young people in the 1990s is to view them sympathetically, as victims, they are still seen as constituting a social problem. Popular explanations for 'disruptive youth' in the 1990s have been located in economic recession and the high levels of youth unemployment. Deputy President of the Victorian Teachers Association, Mary Bluett was one who claimed surprise that there was not more violence in the schools because of the frustration and economic hardship caused by the recession. She claimed that the high rates of joblessness, both for the young and their parents, plus other pressures on families due to the recession, might lead to an increase in the type of violence that has occurred in some inner city and urban areas including the schools. Bluett's concern was publicly voiced after the bashing of both teachers and students with nunchukkas and baseball bats by a 'teenage gang' within the grounds of a Melbourne Secondary College (*Herald-Sun*, 19 September 1992; *Age*, 10 September 1992).

As we observe the evolution of the various 'youth problems', we can also watch the subsequent development and expansion of institutions, professional practices and services to deal with those youth problems and issues (Aries, 1973). Central to the responses of any problems around the young have been the inheritors of the nineteenth century child saver, the professionals and occupations that have for a long time been deeply implicated in the constitution of youth problems. This is not new for if we turn to our recent history a clear link can be observed between the growth of certain professions, their practices and the identification of new groups of troublesome 'youth'.

In the post-1975 period 'solutions' to the perceived decline in education standards and the rapidly increasing numbers of jobless young people took the form of major reform to the Australian education system. The curriculum underwent dramatic restructuring, institutions and professionals that 'serviced' young people were subjected to large scale alteration and expansion. We also saw the prolific growth of training programs all specially designed to deal with the new 'youth problem' (White, 1991, pp.38-102). Furthermore, with increased education retention rates meant more and more specialised educationists and trainers. In the context of a major economic recession the education-training industry flourished.

The link between the identification or discovery of new youth problems which require expert solutions and the growth of certain professional practices and institutions is clearly evident throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The value of the expert and the professional class generally have been marketed well through the twentieth century, particularly in the later half. Part of this development has also been the emergence of what Perkin described as the professional social ideal based on human and cultural capital, selection by merit and achieved through investment education and training (Perkin, 1990). What we have seen with the restructuring and unprecedented expansion of the education- training-youth industries has been the rarely questioned development of narrowly focused world views, methodologies and techniques and self interests of the professional class. This has been expressed most potently in the reign of economic rationalism along with the ascendancy of education-training as essential investments for both the individual and the nation.

The consequences of what began as an intellectual interchange can be both frightening and quite real. A discourse about securing the dependency of young people and preventing them from 'prematurely' embracing adult 'freedoms and problems' by

segregating them away from adult activities and institutions (such as the work-force, sexuality, marriage) has meant that larger and larger numbers of adolescents have either become confined to the company of adults who have the potential to do them real harm or else are put into ghettos with other adolescents and enjoined to consume television soapies, Stussy gear, American basketball, pop music and drugs. In this case it is apparent how the logic of abstracted interchange increases the means which have the potential to engulf the end or goal which they allegedly serve.

Constitutive Abstraction:
Reconstituting Youth Culturally and New Forms of Social Integration
What was only talked abut in the 1900s now rises up as real adolescent problems in the 1990s. Equally we see new modes of social integration with the evolution of the twentieth century information society. These new modes of cultural/social integration operate as extended and disembodied forms of abstraction which interact with 'youth' as 'victim', 'threat', or 'consumer'.

The construction of a post-war (1945) youth consumption market has generated new categories and meanings about young people. These have derived in part from the capacity of the intellectually-trained and their creative investment in 'products with meaning'. Within the context of a post-Fordist economy, mass production and the search for new markets, the affluence of young people in the period after 1945 became the object of interest. The creation and commodification of new 'youth cultures' with their distinctive styles of dress, music and behaviour brought with it new practices of integrating young people into their communities. What can be observed is the production of new structures of meaning along with demands for specific objects of consumption, be they bodgies bracelets in the 1950s, sharpie flairs and protest music in the 1960s, or Stussy gear and 'niggers with attitude' rap music in the 1990s. In other words, the process of cultural formation and integration have undergone dramatic changes resulting from investments in 'youth products with meaning'.

There have been major historical shifts in modes of social integration and association located within the twentieth century communications revolution and associated science-based modes of production. These have involved shifts away from the more traditional practices of integrating young people within the immediate context of particular settings like the family or work, relying instead on abstracted modes of social association involving intense psychological identification with pop star icons, or more recently with brand labels.

As we move toward the end of the twentieth century certain transformations can be observed. This includes the reconstitution of practices that rely on both the management of young people and the self-conscious deployment of notions of youth culture. Communities of adults, including teachers, parents and media commentators, as well as communities of young consumers now confront an array of abstracted attributes of exchange value for consumables. Consumer labels like *Stussy* or *Nike* now carry the same meanings and equivalent price tags for pre-adolescent consumers which labels like *Esprit* or *Country Road* clothing have long carried for young adults and 'the middle- aged'.

Such labels have become important carriers of indexed signals about new social and cultural hierarchies, including the capacity to demonstrate that as a consumer the young person is able to hold their head up in a crowd. The avid purchasing by young

consumers of *Nike* footwear, *Kentucky Fried Chicken* popcorn or *501 Levis* not only increasingly underpin the economy but also integrate groups of young people into specific and novel cultural settings. Consumer 'youth culture' objects become the medium for marketing differences, so that everyone is encouraged to 'do their own thing' in the practice of autonomous conformity (Sharp, 1985, p.68; Baudrillard, 1975).

The sign functions of objects, services or relationships focused on young people have taken on increased importance and meaning within new settings of cultural symbols, rules and codes (Gill, 1984, p.65). This logic of production of consumables which also carry a range of significations is paralleled by the production of professional services directed at young people which also carries cultural significance. Professional services like careers education, psychological counselling, mediation work, tenancy advice, police services, health workers and the like, increasingly attempt to define in normative terms the way in which young people are to relate to and experience their world, each other, the market, adults and employers. That is not only have consumer objects increasingly become signifiers of particular aspects of the 'youth experience' and of 'youth cultures' but professional interventions also have become increasingly important for the integration of young people into newly constituted cultural settings in which young people become consumers as well as consumer objects for integration in the ongoing process of cultural reconstitution.

Cultural and social agencies reconstruct and relocate social institutions, practices and rules of social integration under the aegis of new levels of constitutive dominance (intellectual culture). The intellectually trained go about the business of producing abstracted realities. Research activities involved in academic research and writing and the work of TV script writers, producers and directors mirror each other in uncanny ways. In the course of this reproductive activity, social relations and practices are extricated from their immediate settings. Personal identities are synthesised and the creations whether they be 'samples of population' or characters in a television soap are decontextualised and stripped of their immediate social meaning. Academic research, journalist's accounts of 'real life' situations and television dramatisation all involve an attitude of the life-world of people in which the writer, researcher or academic abstracts from that life-world. Identity markers are 'extricated from their contexts, their relationships in every day life' and in many cases they are also universalised.

Abstractions that are mediated by television or by print serve to represent only one way of symbolising many of the elements of what had hitherto existed only as a face to face personal interaction. The electronic and print media permit particular social and personal settings and relationships to be extended suspended, and even 'replayed' in time and space. In relation to the acculturation process and young people, this provides a framework of extensive normative advice. It provides a forum for guidance, 'modelling' and integrating young people into their communities. From the turn of the twentieth century, as numerous commentators have shown, academic research first established the norms about learning and 'appropriate' behaviours for young people. It has been the task of authoritative adults to ensure that young people achieve self-management and self-discipline under the guise of achieving what is described as responsibility and autonomy. The contemporary production of normative models means that young people can 'learn' about themselves, about their 'significant' relationships and particular 'problematic' situations through abstractions relayed back into their daily lives.

Television programmes with high appeal to teenagers like the Australian made *Home and Away* and *Neighbours* or North American shows like *Melrose Place* or *90210* play an especially important role in this way. For example, through the medium of television clear guidelines can be set up about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from young people. Viewers can learn through popular series such as *Home and Away* about their immediate social relations. It means that young people on the other side of the earth, say in England, who may be in completely different situations from the Australian teenagers they see on television, can observe seemingly universal practices of cultural integration in which TV characters demonstrate how to deal with specific situations and social relationships that English 'youth' may experience in relation to their every day lives. They can learn through the extended social relationships of a *Home and Away* character like 'Shane' (a 'rebellious' 16 year old runaway) what are the proper social practices. Young people from a variety of locations and social-cultural settings and times learn through abstracted and universalised modes of existence. They come to understand how they can or 'should' negotiate with authority figures, how to submit, how to behave and handle embarrassing predicaments, in short how to become integrated into their communities by doing 'the right thing' the 'right' way.

The intellectually trained who made the high-tech information revolution, and the more general communications revolution, have as a result of their efforts established a massively increased ability to reconstitute society which has radically different organisational principles. They have now at the touch of their finger tips the techniques of creative abstractions which are inseparable from the communications revolution. The importance of this for young people is that the ability to create abstraction about them is far greater. Furthermore, as new 'youth' categories are created, and changes in the labour market result from the loss of work in certain areas, employment options related to high-tech, human services and specifically young people expand (Bessant, 1993). New professional practices and institutions spring up to provide the services deemed necessary by that new group or type. The 'youth industry' along with the human service industry has maintained one of the few rates of substantial growth in the workforce. Even the Social and Community Services Industry Training Board recently made the comment that such rapid growth was 'an unusual phenomenon during a recession and time of government expenditure cuts' (Social and Community Services Industry Training Board, 1992, p.7). This means more intellectually trained people creating more and more abstractions as a way of justifying their work and creating more of it.

The significance of young people for an information society such as that just outlined is related firstly to the primary and long established need that 'youth' is essential for continued social development. Furthermore young people are necessary as the objects whereby the intellectually trained can engage in more practices thereby extending the process of constitution. They busy themselves carefully forming and shaping 'youth' through the various discursively based strategies.

The creation and expansion of discourses combined with other effective practices of exclusion and closure have seen the creation of new languages and practices that determine who is included and who is excluded as holders of legitimate knowledge and therefore power. Exclusionary techniques such as spiralling credentialling, 'proper' training or socialisation and legal controls over professional

groupings, determined who had/has the authority to apply their services, whose knowledge and naming of the world was credible and whose was not.

The interests of those problem setting groups are served through the constitution of 'youth' problems and issues: the media, bureaucrats, politicians, human service workers, analysts, social scientists those who directly and indirectly contribute towards the creation of 'problems' and their solutions are part of an industry centred on managing the lives of young people. (The establishment of agendas by policy makers is often made invisible in analysis of their work, and the belief is maintained that administrators and others remain rational, distanced and apolitical in the process) (Yeatman 1990, p.160). This process is particularly evident in the post-1945 period.

Conclusion

This essay has explored the discovery of social problems and 'issues' concerning young people, interpreting them as discursive claims which come out of social settings that are increasingly characterised by constitutive abstraction. It proposed that a new reading of the linkages between recent work done on a theory of constitutive abstraction, processes of integrating young people and the problematisation of 'youth'. 'Discovery' of a problem (ie: the 'deficits' in the citizen or 'deficiencies' in state provision) highlights the repetitive features in the discursive constitution of the 'youth problem'. Certain groups of young people are defined as problematic because they are seen to posses difficulties or to be a problem in themselves. Young people are repeatedly constituted as 'problems' or as 'objects of fear' as well as 'repositories of the nation's future', thereby warranting state intervention. It argues that these representations of 'problem youth' (which frequently progress into legislative or program responses on the part of the state) are one of the central dynamics of a process of constitutive abstraction around the figure of 'youth'. This exists with the dominance of a new level and forms of 'social integration'.

In particular the categories and signifiers attached to 'youth' have achieved a special discursive significance in the 'information society'. 'Youth' is a social category which has been discursively defined as a social category that is essential to the proper pathways of 'personal' and 'social' development. This is evident for example, in recent discourses about the need to develop 'a clever country' and the need to invest in the future through an investment in 'youth'.

An examination of the constitution of new more abstracted and extended relations and categories of 'youth' require that we need to consider the role of the intellectually and professionally trained. The intellectually trained are central to the remaking of the social lives of young people. Their activities are integrally related to structural processes and they are integral to the emergence of an information society. This can be seen for example in the new and central role ascribed to education/intellectual training. Possessing educationally legitimated and transmitted competencies and skills has now become a dominate 'need' for young people. This is far removed from the practices of pre-modern or pre-information societies where learning, training for work, and other forms of normative integration were part of the context of those societies; where young people learned within the setting of the work place, the home and interpersonal social relationships.

Furthermore, 'youth' is central to the 'consumption' culture. This is particularly so in relation to the extended provision of new and more abstracted forms of social integration and socialisation. This involves practices that are not focused on the

more traditional forms of face to face normative integration such as the pre-modern family settings which were said to have brought the generations together. The dominance of the media and the role of other more abstracted relations in the formation of the self has major implications for 'youth', their integration in our communities, their consumptions of 'youth culture' and its commodities.

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Notes

1 The post 1975 period saw a more compassionate and sympathetic approach towards the young as unfortunate victims, sacrificed to the needs of the economy, subject to the turmoil of structural changes to the labour market and in apparent need of professional help. By 1975 the young in trouble were widely portrayed as vulnerable 'victims of the system', who had been sacrificed to the deity of the national and international economy.

2 The other critique to be made suggests that the emergence of the neo-Marxist and feminist revisions about the roles and histories of the 'welfare state' and of the 'professional altruists' had a significant effect on the Birmingham research that was being developed around the lives of the young working class groups in the early 1970s. It is not surprising that when the more culturally inclined Marxists turned their attention to the life- worlds of young people and in particular working-class people they automatically projected on to the data the principle that those they saw as working class as well as youth culture were confronting social control and bourgeois hegemony. According to the neo-Marxists the only responses that those they saw as working class could have were those of either resistance or capitulation. The dominance of the structuralist readings of the state and the rise of the professional middle class as social control agents meant that working-class culture had to conform to this a priori structure of class alignments. 'Working-class culture' and/or 'youth culture' therefore could only be understood as conforming to one or two structurally given options (see Hall and Jefferson, 1976).

3 This role is at the centre of H. Perkins magisterial history of the impact of the intellectually trained in Great Britain during the twentieth century in his, The Rise of Professional Society, Routledge, London 1990. This is also addressed in the sociology of intellectuals found in the work of Schumpeter, Gouldner, Berger, Bledstein, Rieff, and Konrad and Szelenyi.

4 The idea of 'society' was integral to the problematising of adolescence. It assumed that children and young people were innately wild and untamed creatures that required unremitting surveillance, and socialisation to shape them to compliant and well adjusted members of that; 'society'. (This idea of 'society' as an object that was central to the 'science of society' called 'sociology' came about in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries). It was given expression by Schelling, Comte and Durkheim. See, Nisbet (1967) which still offers a reliable yet critical guide to this tradition, whilst Giddens' (1979) and Touraine (1987) offer compelling critiques of the tradition.

WORKING SPACE

Sky High Bananas

STEVE BARRIGAN

Abstract

Below is an account of the Walker Detached Youth Project (based in the east end of Newcastle) and their work with a group of fourteen young people on the subject of health and drug use. Although the majority of this group had begun experimenting in drug use on a casual basis, their dependency levels had increased substantially over the years. Many were using a combination of cigarettes and cannabis on a daily basis and the excess use of alcohol caused further concern. They were assisted by a grant from the Newcastle drug prevention unit.

The article describes the progression through contact making, building relationships, group formation and workshop inputs and finally to an end activity – a parachute jump. It illustrates how project work can run alongside and compliment other methods of youth work.

This project was however much more than 'just' a parachute jump. The groupwork, formal and informal education and fun (in a word the process) surrounding the whole event were just as important as the achievement of jumping out of an aeroplane at 2000 feet!

Introduction

The Detached Project operates over a weekly period with occasional weekends and up to three evenings per week designated as street work sessions. The detached approach allows greater freedom from the constraints of a building which in turn means workers can be more flexible and responsive to meet the needs of young people as they arise. It can reverse the trend of young people going to an adult and promotes a self-help philosophy.

Workers find themselves making contact with young people on street corners, around pubs, fish shops and amusement arcades. Relationships are established through the service offered and advice, support and direction can be enhanced. When trust and confidence has grown myths can be explored and attitudes challenged. Social and outdoor education can be programmed into the work for individuals and groups alike. The idea of this project came directly from using this approach.

Drug experimentation was identified by workers as being widespread amongst young people. For many the anxiety and boredom of unemployment had stripped away self esteem and confidence. This was coupled with increasing pressure for individuals to 'make something of themselves' and 'sort themselves out'. However, declining opportunities to secure a worthwhile future had endorsed a 'live for today' outlook while the melting pot of frustration bubbled away.

Ongoing discussions, workshops and challenges around the use of drugs to 'while away the days' had become exhausted and a new approach was needed. The concept of sport, outdoor pursuits, diet and exercise became a focal point and during a spontaneous discussion on 'natural highs' the benefits of healthy eating brought out a top contender, the banana! Natural highs led onto alternative highs and a project centred on education with aims on physical and mental stimulation materialised, the result was 'Sky High Bananas'.

A bid for financial assistance to the Newcastle Drug Prevention Initiative was successful and an eight week programme was drawn up. The group consisted of 14 young

people, male and female, aged from 17 to 21 years of age and the project would be supported by all our staff in various capacities. There was to be five workshops and a planning session over a two month period culminating in the ultimate exploration of an alternative high; a residential weekend combining a 2,000 feet parachute jump!

Workshops/Groupwork Sessions

The first session explored the aims and objectives of what we were doing and why we were doing it. A brainstorming session on everyday drug use helped to bring home the costs of everyday drug use, both in financial, physical and mental terms and was full of mayhem, madness and laughter. One outcome was a wall chart which emphasised the money spent on various drugs, from alcohol to ecstasy. Group members debated and argued how the money to purchase 'a bit of gear' was obtained. The acceptance of crime as a means to an end took the discussion even further with the day drawing to a close on the point of 'where does it all end'?

Although we re-capped on the costs of drug related lifestyles, the second session on 'Why people use stimulants and in what context' quickly hit a brick wall. It became a heavy day in that questions like 'what else have we got in our lives' led to negative comments and an air of depression. However, the group agreed on the need to continue with the programme and at least consider the alternatives. Little quips like 'I need a joint after all that' were expressed at the end of the session which left a lot of food for thought for everyone.

Session three was not as well attended, less than half the group showed up. The aim was to make individuals consider where they thought they might be in five years time. Relationships, work, unemployment and lifestyles brought out good results, although hard-hitting when discussing potential employment prospects. The main issue explored however, was the idea of them having children of their own. The concept of them in the role of parents and tackling their own children's drug misuse prompted some group members to think very deeply. Opinions were strong and varied.

An encouraging sign emerged during a streetwork session following the third workshop. The street corner discussions were pursued in a larger group and workers took part in a topical debate on drugs in future society. The vast majority agreed that a multitude of drugs would always be available and that the use and abuse of them remained the choice of the individual. The issues of harm reduction, alternative highs and realistic futures for young people were discussed late into the night.

We combined sessions four and five in the same week and devised them for smaller groupwork. The idea of being able to feel good from doing fitness was well received, although the use of steroids in sport raised an interesting dilemma to the discussion. If fitness and health were the key alternative lifestyles, why were some athletes guilty of drug abuse?

With the date set for the residential and parachute jump the last session was used to look at ground rules for the weekend. The agreed format of a 'drug free' weekend was fine on paper, but would it work? There was a bar at the centre and the point of alcohol and its association as a legal drug and its effects and addictions was raised and turned into an incredible discussion. The entire group agreed that if alcohol, with all its known effects and consequences, had been introduced in the last decade, it would be a controlled drug. Although we agreed that cannabis may be less harmful than alcohol it is still illegal to use. Eventually we agreed to moderate drinking by those who chose it.

We agreed on moderate drinking by those who chose it. Other major points were working as a group, not ridiculing anyone who decided not to make the actual jump, accepting instruction and following safety rules.

Residential and Parachute Jump
With the build up at its peak it was time for the main event. Leaving Walker we had a final group of fifteen, thirteen young people and two staff, Sarah and myself. Our destination - The Border Parachute Centre, Northumberland. From the beginning Sarah had stated that she would not actually make the jump and would video aspects of the programme and parachuting. It was about this time that I had wished I had offered to do something similar. Alternative highs? Two thousand feet - what on earth had I been thinking about? Do they really need me with them.... Too late, the training and learning began from the time we arrived on Friday and before we knew what was happening we were jumping and rolling on the floor, shouting '1,000 - 2,000 - 3,000' and filling ourselves with bravado.

The weather on the Saturday was in our favour, training aspects were very detailed, well presented and thorough. Orders for lunch suddenly diminished as we heard we may jump later that afternoon. We got a go-ahead on conditions via R.A.F. Boulmer and before you could say 'lets go canoeing instead' we were lumping huge parachute sacks and walking towards a very small plane with no doors and unfortunately no toilets! It was up in groups of four, above 2,000 feet, engines cut - take position - look up not down!? - push away from the aircraft, shout as loud as you can and pray that line will help make that mushroom shape above your head you longingly need to see. Most people say it is indescribable. Within seconds you hurtle downwards and are suddenly jolted beyond words, you then attempt to gain your breath as you glide, drop, sail and manoeuvre towards the airfield. The descent is incredible and the landings varied from excellent by most of the group, to dreadful and in the farmers field then dragged along covered in clay by yours truly - me! Some hit the tarmac with such a bump, others took a tumble, the only slight accidents were one person having to release the emergency chute and landing off course and another literally falling through the trees and receiving a sprained ankle. But, thirteen went up and thirteen came down and it was just a little unlucky for one or two of us nursing bumps and bruises. The comments shortly after landing ranged from 'what a buzz - brilliant; better than a night out in Maddisons' to 'never-again, I thought I was gonna die' and 'I want to do it again!......'

Conclusion
Without doubt the Sky High Bananas Project was an experimental challenge with young people in and around aspects of their lives. It was a further attempt to help them explore their self-esteem and confidence levels in a style that provided them with decision making and education. There were no incidents of drugs being used and the group stated later that nothing illegal was taken to the centre by anyone, this was a real boost to all concerned. Drug experimentation has not come to a halt, but signs of further thought and self-examination of lifestyles has been evident and we believe the programme has been successful.

A second follow-up parachute jump had to be aborted because of weather, but the idea of attempting parascending is underway. We have also started up volleyball sessions with the group and other young people and this is proving rewarding for those participating. These ideas, in my opinion, can be added to the continuing list of projects and areas of work exploring health, lifestyles and where necessary help to introduce alternatives and some degree of choice to constrained lives.

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CLASSIC TEXT REVISTED

George W. Goetschius and M. Joan Tash

Working With Unattached Youth: Problem, Approach, Method

Routledge and Kegan Paul 1967

pp 402

MARION LEIGH

In 1994, it is hard to believe that detached youth work once did not exist. Yet thirty years ago that was the case. Its origins lay in a few experimental projects begun in the early sixties. Working With Unattached Youth by Goetschius and Tash is about one of those pioneering initiatives, the YWCA three-year experimental project in an inner London area. Both this project and the book were to make a major contribution to the field of detached youth work.

Detached youth work introduced in the early sixties has continued in one form or another up to the present day. There are even a few instances of permanent LEA posts and in one LEA sufficient staffing and resources to encourage an HMI inspection and report in 1985.

Detached youth work has had a profound influence on youth work despite the more general decline which began shortly after its emergence. I wish to explore some of the factors involved in its development. Also raised is the secondary question of why texts such as this are rare and perhaps under-valued in the youth service. First, however the historical context, the book itself and the key themes which it established.

The Context

Prior to Albermarle youth work was in a bad state. Full-time posts were down from 1800 in 1951 to 700 in 1958, a loss which the increase in part-time posts could not fully compensate for. A rising population of 14 to 20 year-olds accompanied a serious failure to attract young people to what provision there was. Underlying social attitudes are conveyed in the widespread use of the term 'unclubbables' to describe those young people who were non-users.

A sharp rise in crime rates increased pressure on a passive government to act. Bill Hayley's Comets rocked around the clock to widespread coverage of the breaking up of cinemas by 'youth' incited to a frenzy by the eponymous film. The Albermarle Report initiated a system of Ministry of Education (now DES) grants to the voluntary sector for experimental work which enabled the YWCA to set up a project working with unattached young people in an inner city area of London. Over three years for experimental work plus time for writing up marked this out as a substantial and well-funded initiative.

Universal testing (the eleven-plus) for a tripartite system of secondary education produced amongst many a sense of inadequacy. Their views of themselves as academic failures reinforced by attendance at overcrowded secondary schools which were forced to resort to such strategies as seven day timetables where 'Monday is Wednesday this week'. Early school leavers many smarting from this experience, despite a consumer boom, were then to bear the brunt of fluctuating employment.

The 'pill', sideburned Teds, winkle pickers and 'mods and rockers' furnished both the new pop culture industry and convenient folk devils (Cohen 1972). Sunday morning prayers meanwhile figured on most LEA youth work training programmes.

The Book

Working With The Unattached introduced a new methodology, detached youth work, and established major themes. The book opens with the young people themselves; contains an account and analysis of the work; descriptions of the training process; plus lively case-studies on 'Problems of Field Work' and 'Approach and Method'. Equal space is given to the analysis, implications and conclusions as to description. Clear summaries and recommendations are supported by substantive factual data in the Appendices.

We get a clear sense of what the project was up against in 1960. A sign of the times, the authors point out, were the social changes which challenged the traditional approaches of both statutory and voluntary youth work agencies. The moral overtones of these approaches were derived according to Goetschius and Tash, from Victorian origins and 'tend to demand a particular cultural conformity, usually middle-class, in exchange for the services offered'. '... Service is no longer offered to the needy only but to all groups in the community, *by the community*. Sometimes statutory and voluntary bodies pay only lip services to this changing conception, and even if they accept it, find it difficult to use in offering service' (p. 127, My emphasis).

Enabling relationships with their empowering rationale is what characterised detached youth work for Goetschius and Tash. The shift from those enabling relationships to current youth work 'competencies' is significant. Davies and Durkin (1991) aptly remind us that the connotations of 'competencies' are completely different from those of 'competence'. Current training language suggests a return to the de-humanising and dis-empowering 'hands' of Victorian work forces, it is one firmly repudiated by Goetschius and Tash.

Re-reading *Working With Unattached Youth* confirms my original impression of it as the most challenging and possibly the most important book about practice this side of 1945. Its tone is sober and it does not have the lively impact and felicitous writing of Morse or Brew. However, it assumes that its subject merits attention and does not patronise nor exclude its readers.

The project introduces the reader to what in 1994 is now fairly standard detached youth work practice. What is significant is that so much of this was established in one of the earliest detached work projects.

The three year project engaged five field workers, three men and two women, who first contacted the young people at the (street corner) coffee stall, got to know them and, when accepted by them, moved into the community (a densely-populated, mainly working class neighbourhood), to the street corners, coffee bars, dance halls, public houses, youth clubs and in two instances into premises ... 'We worked with ourselves' with a view to establishing methods of contacting and working with the unattached ...(and)... 'On average half the time was given to field work, one/fifth related to it, and three/tenths to training and recording' (pp. 2-3).

The authors were respectively the half-time Research and Training Consultant and a half-time Administrator/Supervisor with overall responsibility for the development of the project. Both had experience in youth and community work both abroad and in the UK.

The project concluded that 'not only a wider variety of *service* might be necessary, but also that a wider variety of needs exists, ranging from those of the twelve-year olds to those of married couples under twenty'.

The community-based approach and work with and in the community is a crucial constituent of detached youth work as characterised by Goetschius and Tash. The need for concurrent and continuous work on all the constituent strands of detached work is a major theme, 'work with individuals and groups, with ourselves, and with the community' is a key conclusion of the book. This may be one reason why detached youth work has not been so widely adopted, with its political profile and focus on the mismatch between need and delivery, although its influence has permeated all areas of youth work.

Youth work is portrayed as an education service. Detached youth work is unequivocally defined as an educational process, person- centred and informal, the youth workers are therefore teachers (pace Mead or Freire). It prefigures by some ten years the work by Bernstein et al (working just down the road form the project) on de-coding educational processes. And it upset professional teacherdom.

Since the work was not club-based some definitions were necessary. The concept of social education was new to youth work:-

> ***Social education*** *(pp. 282-284) with its emphasis on a content immediate and directly taken from the life experience of the 'students' and its 'attempts to recognise and use what the recipient brings to the situation' looks very different from the programme-based concerns of the day. It also echoes similar concerns in primary education and in teacher training (and for similar reasons).*
>
> ***Unattachment*** *was initially defined as 'a conflict in expectations between those who offer the service (clubs, centres, and others in the Youth Service) and those - the young people - who want and need it but are unable or unwilling to accept it on the conditions on which it is offered'.*

Over the years the generic qualities of detached youth work have become evident. It has addressed location, popular moral panics and the aims of the sponsoring agency, as diverse as health, juvenile crime, social work and recruitment to building-based provision. These all spring from that original focus on unattachment although they may reflect those moral overtones, or categorisation deplored in the books. Goetschius and Tash point constantly to the failure to obtain service as the prime determinant. They are also careful to categorise only qualities, 'can cope' or 'disorganised', and not young people, in their definitions of unattachment.

'So they found that too .. 'or' If only I'd known that before ..' I found myself muttering again and again as I first read the book. Page after page brings that flash of instant recognition which shows how firmly rooted the book is in practice. Descriptions of how the project worked through that particular problem or tackled this particular aspect make fascinating reading.

But this is no simple description of events. Goetschius and Tash make clear that the work cannot just be seen in terms of addressing individual failure or lack of social skill on the part of young people. Their definition of social education is a radical one, which calls for change all round.

My recollection, as someone involved at the time, was that calls for change fuelled the resentment felt by centre and activity- based youth work for its new baby sister.

There was the debate about embourgeoisement, social control and social engineering and criticism of group and personal relationships work which often missed the implications of Goetschius and Tash.

Subsequently many statutory and voluntary bodies found accountability an unnerving obstacle to such methods. A well- tuned sense of what was likely to prove politically problematic became of increasing concern in the corporate management structures introduced from 1974. Set besides the decreasing youth population and reduced funding of the 80s, this contrived to keep detached youth work mostly at a distance, in convenient short-term projects which were easily dismantled in a hardening political climate.

The past decade has also seen a clear demotion of person-centred education. Despite some interventions along the way; the 'empowerment' of working with the unattached, through partnership and Youth Councils, group work and personal autonomy, on to the NAYC Political Education Project, the materials of the NCVYS Decisions Project and the brief materials-driven Enfranchisement Project of the early eighties all provide a neat map of both youth service responses and of their diminishing impact.

It is questionable if person-centred education was ever much in favour with government departments. It was heavily-outflanked by the compulsory education sector, standardisation, tests and examinations, and the formal delivery of subjects in neatly timetabled bites, the DES was much happier with its training remit.

Definitions re-defined. The education debates and battles were about subjects in a curriculum system rather than about the systems themselves (Leigh 1983). Social education has been absorbed by the formal sector to re-emerge almost unrecognisable in timetabled snippets on health, citizenship or personal education. This has effectively reduced it to a subject within the formal system, rather than as the different system envisaged by Goetschius and Tash.

Vital constituents rejected. Community-based approaches received an early body blow following the Milson-Fairbairn Report (1969). There was a well-publicised split around a view of community education as class-taught delivery versus the strongly-argued case for separate provision for young people. Whilst some LEAs adopted the Youth and Community label, as did YSA which became CYSA and later CYWU, the DES certainly did not.

In the light of this, what is remarkable is that detached youth work has survived and has achieved so much, of which the attached bibliography gives some indication.

Supervision was a significant contribution made to training by this project. Along with demands from the qualified staff emerging from the new Leicester courses, it paved the way to the two-year Supervision project directed by Joan Tash and the publication *Supervision in Youth Work* (1967) which has recently received a most welcome re-issue. The part played by Joan Tash was decisive here, as in securing the tutorial (person-centred) basis of courses for generations to come in the new YMCA College and in her consistent support for the field through the supervision she provided.

Work with young women has also benefitted from the YWCA Project. It has been argued that detached work was not appropriate in meeting the needs of young women because of their invisibility on the streets and the difficulty of contacting them.

Such objections are countered by *Working with Unattached Youth*; in Morse's *The Unattached*, (the sister project by NAYC) whose Northtown chapter is a vivid testament of what is possible (1965); and in Ann Masterson's work on *Leaving Home* (1982).

The detached work route was picked up again with young 14 - 16 year old young women in the mid-seventies NAYC project Some Girls. In the eighties the Equality and Gender Project (BCC) focusing on the 16-19s, echoed the community-based imperatives of the earlier YWCA Project.

A brief word here about *The Unattached* (Morse 1965) based on the parallel but smaller NAYC project and intended as the popular accompaniment to the book about the YWCA Project. The NAYC Project dealt with rural, industrial and seaside locations, the three field staff worked alone; so there were important differences regarding practice.

Working with Unattached Youth deserves to be widely read in its entirety. It contains substantial analysis and conclusions. So why has it been re-printed only once? Certainly the low status of methodology (and process) does not help (although it is a key interest for practitioners).

Cuts in provision and training, the bureaucratisation of field workers and the need to fight around the issues has further had the effect of pushing practice and methodology to one side.

The decline of the written word. Am I alone in thinking that there is a dearth of substantial, well researched practice-based texts. It may be that we are due for a return to the written word. We seem less endangered in 1994 by the disenfranchisement and acculturisation of literacy, of which Hoggart warned in 1957, and in greater danger from the acculturisation of multinational consumerism which reduces human beings to the sum of their consumer parts, and which has colonised the non-verbal imagery of multi-media so decisively.

One effect has been pressure to produce materials rather than more substantial publications in an attempt to compete. 'Nobody reads books' became both claim and cause.

Materials have a serious drawback. They need contextualising in groups with a facilitator and their impact may be highly conformist. A book needs neither equipment nor a group. Books or journals can provide reasoned arguments and evidence. The written word is complex, diverse and subtle. Control is in the hands of the reader. It remains a most convenient source of knowledge and understanding for practitioners in the field.

And so to today. There are moral panics, political and social upheaval and a threatened return to a tripartite system of education which further blurs distinctions between education and training. Full-time staff are widely relegated to the management of provision and pressures on tutorial methods in training (SSRS) are mounting. Youth work is nationally identified by an agency NYA whose executive is an unelected quango reminiscent of the YSDC.

Social poverty and isolation accompany economic poverty. Outside the city centres, in the small towns, conurbations, small villages and rural areas, the venues of social life for the young have been privatised. Unattachment has not gone away.

Certainly the same questions and similar attitudes emerge at local level about young people as emerged thirty years ago. And at local community level the methods of detached youth work seem as appropriate now as in the early sixties. It may even be that a dispersal into different situations will secure the radical educative thrust often denied to social education in the formal education sector?. What was that about community approaches?

So do read *Working with Unattached Youth* - if you can find a copy.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

A Bit Of Hows Your Father?:
A Review Article

DICK HOBBS

Norman Dennis
Rising Crime and the Dismembered Family:
How Conformist Intellectuals Have Campaigned Against Common Sense
London, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1993

This book, which due to its brevity and meandering tone is actually more of a pamphlet, is a follow up to the book that Dennis co-authored with George Erdos in 1992, which was particularly well received by the Sunday Times and the Daily Telegraph. Dennis and Erdos argued that the family is the most effective institution for the regulation of society and the socialisation of its members. It should be noted that for these 'ethical socialists', only the traditional family, consisting of mother, father and offspring is equipped with the kind of cultural armament to be positively effective as the bedrock of decency and societal stability. Indeed, any variations of this theme are regarded as inferior substitutes that can only function as agents of the violence and chaos that inflict the modern world. The author's efforts to provide empirical evidence to back up their assertions were somewhat hampered by their overwhelming belief in commonsense (see Williams 1993).

The only exception to the everyman performances that lurk at the heart of both of these books is that of Kolvin et al (1990). This study acquires throughout both books the status of 'the evidence', and it suggest that children of single parent families do suffer comparative levels of material deprivation. However, readers searching for empirical evidence of causal links between fatherless families and criminality will search in vain, as ethical socialism is apparently built on noble foundations rather than evidential content. What the study indicates is that there is a link between levels of poverty and various indicators of social disintegration and subsequent deprivations. Dennis and Erdos make connections that Kolvin et al do not attempt. Certainly the subjective experiences of men and women and children who are experiencing changes at every level of their social, economic and cultural existence are ignored. How family members negotiate relationships within whatever constitutes a familial unit at any given time is not something that Kolvin et al's study purports to deal with (see Wallerstein and Blakeslee, 1989), and for Dennis and Erdos their sole concern is the establishment of a link between any form of non-traditional family life and the rise in crime.

Ethical socialism emerges as a moral agenda constructed around a very particularistic analysis of statistics derived from one study, in one region, of a group of individuals some of whom will by now be experiencing life as grandparents, a status that for these ethical socialists constitutes something approaching a state of grace (Dennis 1993 ch9). What we need to explore are the lives of the sons, daughters and grand-

children of Kolvin's study, for their world is so drastically different from those brought up during the immediate post-war period with its euphoric communality, rising living standards and optimistic futures. The ethical socialists decline any actual engagement with the subjects of their writing, and as a consequence the failures of the welfare state, the effects of de-industrialisation and all the multiple indicators of our modern world are ignored in favour of an image of the world that is more 'Last of the Summer Wine' than 'Blade Runner'.

We are instead presented with an outburst of moral outrage that dismisses academic debate as irrelevant, or even worse subversive to the traditional ordering of relations that are so passionately revered. In the preface to 'Rising Crime and the Dismembered Family', David Green refers rather archly to the fact that academics had preferred to ignore the work of Dennis and Erdos. Green, the Director of the Institute of Economic Affairs Health and Welfare Unit, should rest assured that the reason for this omission rests with the absence of academic content, rather than, as Dennis constantly asserts throughout this text, with some fearful conspiracy of the chattering classes.

The author's attempts at establishing his academic credibility are limited to just over ten pages of sociological theory that offers a break down of the founding fathers that are likely to send a shudder through the heart of any tutor of undergraduate sociology students. His introduction to Weber is prefaced by 'The German sociologist', in case we were thinking of the other one, and he then proceeds to present a bastardised (fatherless) version of interpretive sociology that serves as a licence for Dennis to interpret statistical data, local media reports and his own folk memory in whatever manner he wishes.

In this bizarre chapter Dennis also informs us as part of a homage to Talcot Parsons, and with no attempt at either debate or substantiation, that American sociology was taken over by Marxism in the early 1960s, and goes on to maintain that the Church of England is now the last bastion of marxist ideology. This entire chapter builds to a conclusion that it is modern intellectuals who in their pursuit of rationality have stripped the halo from every activity hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe, and drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour and chivalrous enthusiasm (p.18). Dennis includes the family in this debris of halcyon human attainment, but then again he also cites Nietzche as a social affairs intellectual.

The failure of the top down patriarchal fabianism that rests at the core of 'ethical socialism', has festered into a bitterness that sours every page of their cumulative writings. Dennis in particular resents the fact that young people no longer sit rapt at the feet of the community's elders. The labourist dogma that served to discipline the work force has been turned to inconsequential echoes by de-industrialisation, and left the ciphers of that creed resembling Jehovas Witnesses as they knock on doors seeking converts to a creed that in exchange for forsaking pleasures of the flesh offers a reward in the after life.

Norman Dennis does not like modern life, it is essentially a corruption of decency, and it is all the fault of a book published over 20 years ago. It will no doubt come as no surprise to readers that crime has got worse, and Dennis spends three pages citing official crime figures to convince us of this. The British Crime Survey, and numerous studies of local crime and victimisation conducted during the last decade, lend a depth and complexity to the crime problem that Dennis finds convenient to ignore (Jones et al 1986. Kinsey, 1984, 1985). This is particularly true of the related data that has emerged regarding the plight of women and ethnic minorities, in respect of both perceptions of public safety and to the hidden figure of crime (Young, 1985). Race receives no consideration in this book, and as a consequence cultural diversity is not so much bypassed as buried without trace. A senior academic sociologist writing a book about the condition of contemporary British society and avoiding race, is akin to conducting an examination of the current political regime and omitting the fact that for the last 15 years it has remained Conservative.

The fact that crime is accelerating is no longer contested, although the extent of this acceleration, and its varying effect upon different populations is now a major focus of research. Further, the fact of rising crime has not been seriously contested for many years. Thatcher's inclusion of Law and Order into the 1979 Tory Party manifesto left Labour scurrying to make up ground that in the final analysis they can probably only decisively hold by mimicking the snarling authoritarianism of their opponents. Academics gave up denying the problem of rising crime around the same time that they stopped wearing flared trousers.

Yet Dennis claims that throughout the 1970s and 1980s the 'social affairs intelligentsia' had consistently maintained that rising crime was a myth. Dennis cites at length an article published in an architectural journal as an example of the dominance of marxist moral panic theory, induced by the students uprisings of 1968, and the publication in 1973 of Taylor, Walton and Young's influential 'New Criminology'. Now the notion of a moral panic may be big amongst the hard hats, but the work of Peter Waddington (1986), finished off the cruder utility of the term, and Ian Taylor and Jock Young have long since moved away from the deification of criminality. (Taylor 1981 Lea and Young 1984 see also Cohen 1981). Left Realism, for all its tedious pragmatism has ensured over a decade of post noble savage debate concerning crime, its consequences and the politicisation of crime control. However, Dennis is trenchantly committed to the notion that the 'New Criminology' was the dominant intellectual voice throughout two decades, informing us cultural dupes that 'The deviant is no longer the proper object of societies control. She or he is societies saviour' (Dennis 1993 p.31). Who said this, when and in what context? More to the point what influence did it really have?

Dennis goes on to cite Stan Cohen's work on mods and rockers as being influential upon intellectual debate upon crime (1980). It is difficult to fault Dennis here, for 30 years ago their was a propensity for a minority of heavily stylised working class youths to behave badly at seaside towns every bank holiday. The response to this phenomena Cohen called a

'moral panic', and it remains a useful tool with which to examine societal reaction to specific examples of deviant action, for instance organised soccer hooliganism (1980s), and ecstasy use (1990s). Yet Dennis misses the point with his 'common sense' utility of moral panic, for he ignores the all important notion of deviancy amplification which ensures that more crime is committed as a response to the intensity of control strategies generated by the panic. But this is the academic version of the term as opposed to the version one might encounter down the pub.

Dennis is unable to cite any modern writer who has used the term moral panic in relation to crime figures. Crime in many of our communities is now a dominant aspect of the social life of citizens, and the plight of victims and the intra-class nature of most crime has been long established (Mawby 1979). Certainly the generation of academics and practitioners who were not exposed to university life until the 1980s, would have no more engaged in what Pearson (1975) has called the 'great refusal', than they would wear beads, bells and flared velvet loon pants in a seminar. The kind of marxoid posturing that ignores the criminality of contemporary society dismissing notions of rising crime merely as 'moral panics', is as long passed its sell by date as the Hovis advertisement that apparently haunts Dennis' imagination. Yet according to Dennis, in one of his most ludicrous flights of fancy, 'The fate of two year old James Bulger, abducted by two ten year old boys from the New Strand shopping centre at Bootle on 12 February 1993 and allegedly murdered, caused a world wide sensation and probably dealt the death blow to the moral panic school' (p.31). If Dennis is willing to exploit the murder of a child to further his cause, he should also be prepared to be more explicit in naming the members of this 'school' and rigorous in defining its qualities.

This constant ranting against the left is one of the few consistent features of the book and is seldom backed up by anything resembling critical scholarship. Yet the real victims of Norman Dennis' bitter and resentful book will inevitably be young working class single mothers. The lack of a man around the house is apparently so disastrous that the kids turn to crime, and even if there is a man around the house he is unlikely to be a real father. It really is as simple as that, for we as a society no longer train young men to be fathers, and divorce is not only easy, but positively encouraged. Yet in days of yore, the 1940s and 1950s, the working class family thrived, and would you believe it crime was low. Not quite Norman, sorry to be well, academic about this but reported crime had risen steadily since the 1920s, and during the second world war increased by 69% (Home Office 1952 Mannheim, 1955. Smithies, 1982, Morris, 1989 Ch 2). It is a lack of rigour, or a deliberate attempt to mislead that has resulted in Dennis romanticising an era that saw larceny rising by 62%, breaking and entering by 120%, receiving by 195%, sexual offences by 70% and violence by 74%! Yet Dennis ignores this evidence in favour of two brief passages from a book written by a Professor Smellie, who taught at the LSE in the early 1950s when Dennis was a student (Smellie 1955, in Dennis 1993 p.22).

Similarly, the contemporary context, its stresses, conflicts and the violence that it generates towards women is given short shrift by Dennis, even though an examination of the relevant research findings may have cast some light upon the contemporaneous horrors of domestic bliss (Stanko 1988, Walby 1986). As Heidensohn indicates 'Research on gender based violence has affected concepts of the family. Families can hardly be characterised as havens in a heartless world (Lasch, 1977) if the safe home is a myth for many women and children. Nor can the notion of the symmetrical family (Young and Wilmott, 1973) be easily sustained in the face of such evidence of gender inequalities (Morgan 1985 p.90)'. (Heidensohn, 1989 p.108)

Yet as with his approach to crime during the second world war, Dennis shows a total contempt for his readers by ignoring the evidence, and remaining blissfully ignorant of the very existence of a pertinent body of literature, preferring to cite 'conformist' performances from journalists that confirm his prejudice against intellectuals. For instance domestic violence is rapidly dealt with by referring to its rarity in days of yore. At this point Dennis gets completely carried away with his sentimental noble savagery, and claims that the plight of miners wives in the 1930s was nothing compared to that of their husbands. Dennis misses the point, for in a culture where survival was the game, individuals clung to whatever lifeline was on offer. Women are no longer content to scrub the greasy backs of horny handed sons of toil. Besides, the horny handed sons of toil have been slung out along with the bath water and the tin bath, and it was not intellectuals, conformists or otherwise, who were responsible for pulling the plug. Both in this and his previous work with Erdos, Dennis shows open contempt for feminism and is dismissive of any element of social change that does not feature women servicing men.

Cynically playing one working class end against the other, Dennis maintains that it is not just fatherless families, but men who no longer know how to father that are to blame for rising crime. He offers no evidence for any of these assertions, but feels sufficiently confident to make wide raging assumptions concerning the relationships that develop within complex social constructs such as the family. It is difficult to fault the idea of a loving father being a good thing for any family unit, but as we stand on the brink of an era that is about to witness via state regulated impoverishment, young mothers driven back to their parents or into unsuitable partnerships with young men, the role of the family as a unit of exemplary social control must surely be questioned by those of us who regard our duty as that of informed commentators rather than party hacks or agents of the good old days.

Dennis is ludicrously selective in his choice of sources. Feminism, all contemporary criminology and the bulk of working class histories are ignored. Dennis is particularly discriminating in his utility of historical sources preferring for instance those passages of Roberts 'Classic Slum' (1973) that confirm his own sepia tinged version of working class community, rather than Roberts own more measured account. As Roberts

acknowledges: 'As a child before the first world war I hardly knew a weekend free from the sight of brawling adults and inter family dispute' (1973 p.24). He goes on to point out that, 'In general slum life was far from the jolly hive of communal activity that some romantics have claimed. They forget, perhaps, or never knew of the dirt that hung over all, of the rubbish that lay for months in the back of alleys, of the "entries" or ginnels with open middens where starving cats and dogs roamed or died and lay for weeks unmoved. They did not know those houses that stank so badly through an open doorway that one stepped off the pavement to pass them by' (p.49).

These are the physical contexts to which the ideal family as promoted by Dennis was an integral part of a cultural response. In order to recreate this culture we would first have to reassemble the awesome geography of industrially bound deprivation to which the family was a rational survival tactic, rather than as Dennis would have us believe a spiritual manifestation of universal need, as expressed within a natural order. If we bring back the British working class family of the 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s, they will be accompanied by rickets, back street abortions and outside toilets. Dennis' continual resort to local media sources, and the 'Geordie' song book constitute poor substitutes for scholarship, and confirm that nostalgia is not what it was.

In conclusion, this is a lightweight book that makes no real contribution to debates concerning either the family or criminality. In normal circumstances it would certainly not merit a review. However, Dennis has produced rather more than a piece of crude nostalgia, for his work is now being used by government ministers as an integral component of the tory party's social policy manifesto as a means of bombing the working class 'back to basics'. Unfortunately the Home Office confirmed that there was no evidence to support the link between rising crime and single parent families, which provoked Dennis and Erdos to castigate the denizens of Queen Anne Gate as if they were women or New Criminologists (Observer 14.11.93). Dennis has published both or his books with a right wing think tank as opposed to a legitimate academic publisher, and so can hardly complain when the zealots of the new right utilise his writings to justify their vicious retrograde policies, which are little more than excuses to further impoverish the most vulnerable in our society.

Ironically, after years of sneering at sociology the tories have afforded this work with the status of sociological research as a means of cloaking their policies with a veneer of respectability. As I hope I have made clear this book is not a study, but an incoherent ramble through a tangle of prejudice that displays all the intellectual rigour of a Sun editorial. However, its ideological importance is enormous, for as Dennis dances in the dark with fading phantoms of proletarianism, the victims of his rightist creed are left to negotiate a world that becomes more hostile with every successive denial of the complexities of their everyday existence.

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Bob Franklin

'Improving Children's Lives' is an ambitious brief and title to bestow on a book. The subtitle of this volume of essays - 'Global Perspectives on Prevention' - offers few concessions to humility. But while the ambition is undoubtedly laudable, this book must be judged to fall far short of achieving its objectives. Only a handful of the 29 chapters combine clarity of exposition with insightful and rigorous analysis. In many of the remaining chapters, both form and content are highly variable, patchy and in some cases flawed. The book's written style is too frequently inaccessible and unclear, many of the chapters are too brief to be detailed or helpful in their analyses and the book offers no articulated rationale to explain why some topics have been considered sufficiently significant to warrant inclusion while others have not. It seems odd, for example, that a collection of essays concerned with improving children's health does not have a chapter focused exclusively on the impact of famine and malnutrition.

Given these criticisms, it is perhaps unsuprising to discover that the book emerged from an International Conference. The fifteenth Vermont Conference on the Primary Prevention of Psychopathology in June 1990:

> *focused on the efforts to improve children's lives around the world. Scholars, practitioners, educators and policy makers from multiple and diverse nations came together to consider both common and unique problems facing youth around the world. They analysed successes, failures, obstacles and possibilities for promoting healthier development and well being among our children (p viii).*

The contributions to the 1990 conference have been supplemented by papers presented at 'a series of annual meetings at the University of Vermont since 1975' to provide a book length manuscript. Readers may be forgiven for expressing an understandable scepticism about the relevance of these latter contributions, although their inclusion may help to explain anachronistic references to the 'Soviet Union'. Using 'filler' material of this kind serves only to undermine the overall coherence of the book's structure. The essays, moreover, have been written predominantly by psychologists and psychiatrists despite references to 'scholars, practitioners, educators and policy makers'; only 8 of the 48 contributors are not listed as members of these two professional groups.

The book's content is divided into seven parts of variable length which deal in turn with: The Epidemiology of Distress and Risk; Sources of Stress - Parenting, Poverty, Sexism and War; Multilevel Systems Approaches to Prevention; Educational Systems Interventions;

Prevention and Reduction of Aggression and Conduct Disorders; Reflections On Youth and Looking Ahead.

The book gets off to a flying start. Kramer's chapter (p.3-37) offers a wealth of contextualising demographic data about the world's children and assesses the impact of factors such as poverty, urbanisation, homelessness, population growth and household and family structures on incidences of mental disorders in children. It is a fascinating and, at times, alarming account. A figure of 12% (237.7 million) of the world's children suffering some form of mental disorder is a stark statistic. The data are analysed clearly and with great skill with projections indicating considerable growth in the numbers of children suffering psychological ill health. The chapter offers an extremely valuable data base with information culled from government statistics and reports by international health organisations.

Alan Durning's analysis (p.37-49) of the growing division on a global scale between those who are wealthy and those who are poor is splendid. Its strength lies in Durning's erudition and his ability to present the inequitable division of the world's resources in a way which underscores their absurdity and immorality. The chapter is replete with examples of finely crafted writing. 'The concerns of the rich' he claims, 'contrast violently with those of the poor. Americans spend $5 billion each year on special diets to lower their calorie consumption, while the world's poorest 400 million people are so under- nourished they are likely to suffer stunted growth, mental retardation or death. As water from a single spring in France is bottled and shipped to the prosperous around the world, 1.9 billion people drink and bathe in water contaminated with deadly parasites and pathogens... in 1988 the world's nations devoted $1 trillion - $200 for each person on the planet - to the means of warfare, but failed to scrape together the $5 per child it would cost to eradicate the diseases that killed 14 million children that year' (p.37).

The other chapter which escapes the mediocrity which characterises many of the others, is Albee's discussion, 'Saving Children Means Social Revolution' (p.311-329). He illustrates neatly the hypocrisy in many adult expressed attitudes towards children. The hypocrisy which 'talks about how much we love children' and 'hate child abuse and neglect' while failing, 'to fund schools adequately' and defending 'the rights of parents to strike children'. The same hypocrisy prompts adults to 'shed a tear at a picture of starving children in Central America, in Ethiopia or Bangladesh' but also to 'vote down or fail to support humanitarian aid for countries whose governments we disapprove' (p.311-312). He also delivers a sharp and insightful critique of many of his co-professionals in psychology and psychiatry for studying individuals in isolation of the socio economic and cultural environments which help to shape them and their health. Psychologists have focused their therapeutic efforts 'on restructuring or changing the internal dynamics of the behavioural responses in their clients', but they must begin to consider 'the social system that breeds injustice and exploitation' (p.317). Albee believes he understands the reasons for such professional lack of vision; 'our salaries are paid by institu-

tions that will not tolerate serious criticism of the social order ... community psychology has never really flourished because the economic establishment is not inclined to provide training funds and economic support for programs that seek to correct injustices and to identify the exploitative causes of distress and disturbance' (p.318). Albee's radical, contentious, articulate, but always thoughtful and thought provoking, essay deserves to be a classic.

But the majority of chapters are patchy and variable both in terms of their form and content. So far as the former is concerned, too many of the essays are written in a style which is inaccessible and riddled with jargon. Contributions to the book have been written overwhelmingly by Psychologists who have framed the issues for analysis in the language of a professional discourse which excludes 'outsiders' who may be less familiar with the esoteric terminology of psychology and psychiatry. Even a cursory glance at the contents page brings to mind Bernard Shaw's allegation that all professions are a conspiracy against the laity. But a sustained rummaging through this overlong book will be rewarded by the discovery of some excellent writing. I have mentioned Durning's chapter 'Life On The Brink', which is outstanding for the clarity of its analysis and exposition of the world economic order, but deserves praise for its unequivocal moral condemnation, expressed with appropriate outrage, of the gulf which separates the wealthy from the poor in a global economy.

The content of the book is similarly patchy and imbalanced in at least three ways. First, in common with many edited books, the quality of individual chapters varies across a considerable range. Editor George Albee's chapter, 'Saving Children Means Social Revolution' is a superb read; By contrast, the chapter dealing with 'Mexico's Challenge; Facing a Growing Youth Population' is virtually worthless. The chapter's three authors certainly have a gift for brevity - the chapter is a mere five pages - although it is tempered by a tendency to resort to fatuous platitudes and unsubstantiated generalisations in their analysis. A sub heading, 'Program For the Comprehensive Development of Adolescents' explores and exhausts its theme in six lines of text, while the 'Program for Youngsters In Special Situations' evidently warrants a more extensive and detailed analysis which cannot be contained in less than twelve lines. The chapter's conclusions, moreover, can hardly be judged revelatory. Consider the following: 'Street life represents a high social risk for all the children who spend parts of their day living and working there' or 'It is assumed that adolescence is a stage of transition, in which the individual undergoes profound transformation in biological, psychological and social spheres'; (p.351). No pathbreaking insights here!

Second, the book places too great an emphasis on European concerns and may be judged overly 'eurocentric'. Kramer (chapter 2) shows quite clearly that the overwhelming majority of children (83.8%) live in the 'less developed regions of the world' leaving only a small minority (16.2%) in the 'developed regions' (p.10). These demographic data suggest that any book

dealing with a 'global perspective' on children's health and those factors which might improve their physical and psychological well being, might focus on those regions where children live and work. There is, however, only a single chapter devoted to the problems confronting children in Africa (Ghana) with only two further chapters analysing the concerns of children in India. By contrast, half a dozen chapters focus on European concerns, excluding the chapters on Poland and the old Soviet Union which, despite resent economic problems, must still be considered 'developed regions'.

Third, the book is obsessed with diagnosis to the neglect of prescription. There is a discernible irony when a book entitled *Improving Children's Lives,* devotes only one of the seven sections to 'Looking Ahead'. There are, moreover, only two chapters in this final section with one being a reprint of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The second chapter in this final section, by Wilcox and Naimark is only two pages long (p.357-358, did they write one page each?) and is reprinted from *American Psychologist* 1990.

Improving Children's Lives is a well produced volume with a glossy cover which the content cannot match. The chapters by Kramer, Durning and Albee are outstanding but untypical. Most chapters are a dull read and invoke memories of Truman Capote's crushing review of Kerouac; 'That aint writing, it's just typing'. Given that hardback books retail at around £50, my advice to potential purchasers would be, if it were not for laws of copyright, to borrow the book from the library and xerox chapters 1, 2 and 23.

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Peter M. Nardi (Ed)
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Pam Carter

These two books do much to enrich the developing field of the sociology of friendship, until recent years a taken for granted, often romanticized, aspect of our lives. Both demonstrate the variety of ways in which friendship can be examined, the intriguing insights already available from this

body of research, and the amount of empirical and theoretical work which remains to be done. There are few readers who will not be stimulated by these texts to reflect again on their own experiences of friendship and to recognize new ways of seeing their practice, whatever that might be. Many will be prompted to think of small scale pieces of research which are within their grasp.

My initial feminist reluctance to delve too deeply into men's studies, a discipline I had always secretly believed (on the basis of very little evidence) to be a land of posers, was quickly overcome by Nardi's book. I was surprised to find myself enjoying many of the chapters, not least because of the tightly edited style and the sheer variety of research questions addressed. What is striking is the massive influence exercised by economic and cultural changes on the nature and experience of friendship, a relationship which we are used to thinking of as timeless, the simple flowering of unchanging human needs. Both of these books unpack what has become a new taken for granted in relation to gender: that women have closer more intimate and expressive friendships based on talk, whereas men are more instrumental and rely on doing things together rather than sharing intimacies. This observation is shown to be deeply culture bound, both in its accuracy and in its underpinning values. The usefulness of this perspective is reexamined in Nardi's text in a number of ways: through looking at historical variations in male friendship; via an examination of the relationship between friendship and social structures in particular kinds of public/private divisions for example; by focusing on cultural diversity in men's friendships on the basis of race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

Rather strangely in the context of the rest of the book Seidler's chapter seems to ignore many of these sociological points about friendship. He opts for a style based on a 'we' which is never sufficiently unpacked or acknowledged. The absence of this critical dimension is matched by a tendency, by default, to stereotype and idealize friendships between women. For example, he bemoans competitive relationships between men where lack of trust and envy are rampant. In attaching these unfortunate features to men and masculinity he does not ask the crucial questions about whether these sins raise their ugly heads in women's relationships too. In his discussions about women's friendship he once again fails to tell us which women he is talking about. For example in asserting that, 'With the impact of feminism, women have learned to take their friendships with each other much more seriously' (p.30). One wishes to ask does this apply to my mum? the old women in his local nursing home? women in the Tory party?. Seidler's very evident self awareness does not appear to stretch to understanding the impact of his particular cultural and social context.

Some of the reasons for my discomfort with Seidler's writing were clarified for me by Wellman's chapter on his research about friendship amongst Toronto men and women. He starts from the premise that men's friendships have moved from the public world to a pattern which starts from the household. Through his findings from this qualitative study of working

class and lower middle class men he questions the current view, expressed by Seidler, that men's friendships are inferior to women's. Wellman certainly finds differences between men's and women's friendships. Women still retain the major responsibility for keeping households going, even when they are engaged in paid work outside the home. To do this they often depend on community networks-friends who will routinely, or in emergencies, 'help with daily hassles and crises' (p.89). Men do not have to put the 'work' into maintaining these friendships in the way that women do. Freed from such day to day worries, men are able to pursue their friendships purely for companionship, the fun of doing things together. This matches well with Seidler's thesis as does the finding that men do not get emotional support from each other instead relying, for example, on mother and sisters to discuss marital problems. The difference between the approaches of these two authors is in their explanations and in the values they bring to bear in their analysis. Whilst citing capitalism as the problem in male friendship, Seidler nevertheless draws on a strongly psychological discourse in his exploration, invoking socialization and the resulting difficulties which men have with intimacy. Instead Wellman suggests that our current evaluations of these different patterns are a product of the domestication of friendship as we move from a manufacturing society to one based on service and information. We now judge men's friendships in terms of their level of private intimacy, friends as ends in themselves. While this too might be seen as a culture bound perspective Wellman's intention is to remind us of the need to understand the links between the ways in which our public and private worlds are structured and the types of friendships we expect to have. He ends by pointing to all the different kinds of male friendships there are around the world and warns of the danger that to see friendship 'solely as emotionally supportive companionship is to limit one's world view to a California hot tub'. One is left to speculate about whether Seidler's thinking is based on an equivalent location. What Seidler's work reminds me of, and I have to apologise here for drifting into using him as a straw man, is the 1970s feminist movement. That was a point at which theory making developed from the same narrow geographical and cultural groupings. The hard fought recognition of the wealth of differences between women which has occurred since then has produced a more critical theoretical edge. In a more low key way than these issues were raised within feminism other chapters in Nardi's book raise similar doubts about the generalizability of white middle class male experience. I particularly enjoyed Franklin's chapter on friendship amongst Black American men, the 'least studied of all sexrace groups' (p.201). Class emerges as an important factor in particular constructions of black masculinity and in patterns of friendship. The friendships of working class black men, according to his analysis, arise from a shared oppression, an understanding of which is expressed in the way they interact with one another. For example, their greetings are often short hand political statements, the discourse of 'brother' being fundamental to these. These friendships then are warmer and more intimate than the upwardly mobile black men he interviewed for his study. Like their white counterparts, they adopt the competitive, instrumental mode of relationships which fit with the

business world. They are keen to 'network', by which they mean, according to Franklin, maximum exposure and minimum involvement.

Williams chapter on Native American, Andalusian and Javanese male friendships also offers an insight into a very different form of social relations than those which have become dominant in the mainstream of Western capitalist societies. Like C18th New England, a period and location examined in Hansen's chapter, the category of homosexuality and consequent homophobia had either not yet been invented or was not significant. Highly distinct gender roles, and to some extent worlds, resulted in men and women seeking their closest and most intimate relationships with each other. Other chapters have much to offer. Spain, like Williams, uses anthropological material to look at the relationships between male power and their control over physical space. Male only space in all kinds of different societies and settings emerges as a means of enhancing not only male friendships but their power over women. Male only space and power is also an interesting dimension of Mesner's chapter on American athletic friendships. The dangers of these prestigious but oddly bleak lifestyles have become clear to those researching on sexual violence. Date rape on American campuses is a particularly crude example of male solidarity being used to gross female disadvantage. Overall this collection cannot fail to interest anyone who wants to think further about the varied experiences of living a gendered life. There are a number of other equally interesting pieces which I do not have the space to explore here. Like other chapters in the book Cohen's study of friendships amongst a sample of men in Boston looks at structural explanations of friendship patterns. Reid and Fine compare male and female patterns of self disclosure. Swain looks at men's friendships with women and gay male friendships are examined by Nardi. There is also a useful introductory chapter by Nardi, providing a brief summary of the state of play in the field as a whole.

O'Connor's book will undoubtedly become a standard text on friendships given that it is such an excellent review of the current state of research and theoretical development. Her introductory chapter charts the way in which friendship between women, both as an experience and more recently as a suitable subject for study, has been reinvigorated by the feminist movement. Many of us are now familiar with the rediscovery of romantic attachments between women in the 18th and 19th centuries. Documentary evidence which exists of these friendships depicts relationships which we would now describe as lesbian. Like many of the chapters in Nardi's book this provides a reminder of the cultural specificity of the nature and experience of friendship. It also draws attention to the way in which homophobia and the construction of the homosexual category controls our friendships. For women this has had a less dramatic effect than the parallel process within male friendships. Many of the writers in Nardi's book document the huge significance of homophobia in the friendships of white and middle class men in Western capitalist societies. In contrast to this, a range of studies shows that many women have major emotional attachments to their women friends even though familial ideology leads us to believe that this kind of closeness should be preserved for relationships with husbands.

O'Connor's second chapter reviews theoretical developments in relation to the study of friendship. Although we have now moved from seeing friendship as simply a natural way of meeting human need the study of women's friendships specifically has been hampered to an extent by focusing mainly on the way in which they differ from male friendships. Clearly we need to go beyond this and O'Connor identifies some of the central theoretical issues which need to be addressed. These include: the process of creating, keeping and ending friendships; how the social positions of women affect their friendships; and the place of 'talk' between friends in wider social structures and relationships. Having identified these central issues she examines different types of friendship in three chapters on: married women and their friendships, friendships and single women; elderly women and their friends. In terms of women's lives these are often false separations as women pass in and out of categories but nevertheless this structure works relatively well in providing a detailed picture of the state of scholarship in each of these areas. O'Connor has done a thorough job in bringing together detailed research findings and in making use of her own work. My own view is that this division works best in relation to older women. The chapter on single women was particularly complex in its attempt to pull together a category which covers such a wide age range and is in itself a problematic category, as O'Connor herself explains. Although it raises interesting questions singleness seems to me to be too positivist a category to fit well with the variety of relationships which women pursue and therefore has somewhat limited usefulness in illuminating friendships.

O'Connor notes that older women's friendships have been studied more than any other age group. Given the enormous importance of older women in our society, in numerical terms although sadly not in terms of status, this seems appropriate. The wide variety of practitioners now involved in working with older people, particularly through community care policies, need to pay close attention to this research and to develop an understanding of the potential, and actual significance of friendships. It is in this area particularly that we need to move beyond thinking of friendship as a purely private matter. The impact of a whole range of structural issues including resources and mobility on our friendships is especially evident in old age.

The final two chapters of the book focus on what is special about friendship and on what the future may hold for women's friendships. In the first of these various 'special cases' of friendship are explored: mother and sisters as friends; work based friends; and lesbians and friendships. These raise the difficulty of differentiating friendship from other kinds of relationship. O'Connor concludes this chapter by questioning the specialness of friendship, seeing it instead as a form of social integration which is both idealized but also tightly controlled in Western societies. O'Connor describes her final chapter as speculative but this is to understate it as a well informed discussion. What is important is that we do not continue to either romanticise or trivialize friendships. Whatever their nature and form they are highly significant to all of us.

Social scientists and practitioners need to both recognize this fact and use it to inform their work in a variety of ways. Asking questions such as: what place does friendship have in this setting? what is its nature and meaning? what rules govern it? who has friends and who doesn't and why? will undoubtedly enrich our work. I have only minor quibbles with the book. One about whether the structure of the chapters was the best way of organizing the book I have already raised. Another is that the significance of the points made was sometimes lost in the wealth of research examples quoted. Perhaps this is inevitable in a book which covers so much and packs such a lot in. But it made it slightly hard work to read and leaned just a little too far towards being a literature review and away from engaging the readers interest in friendship.

Pam Carter, University of Northumbria

Ted Palmer
The Re-emergence of Correctional Intervention
Sage Publications 1992
ISBN 0-8039-4538-8
pp 228

Steve Rogowski

The years of Thatcherism have seen a decline in the rehabilitation ideal as a way of dealing with young and adult offenders. The 1980s saw the rise of the justice model with its notion of just desserts, i.e. just punishment, as being the way forward. However, this book, admittedly drawing heavily on the U.S. experience (witness the continued use of 'corrections' and 'correctional' for example) argues that all is not lost as far as rehabilitation is concerned and that it still has much to offer. The arguments are well put and they are, as far as they go, surely correct. As such this book is to be welcomed.

The 1960s was an optimistic era, not just in the economic and political spheres but also in terms of social policy. This was the period when rehabilitation was at its height, the idea being that offenders could, by help, support and if necessary psychological/psychiatric treatment, be reformed and turned away from a life of crime. This situation changed in the face of what appeared to be increasing growth in the rate of crime during the 1970s. Rehabilitation began to be seriously questioned, not least with the publication of Martinsons work in 1974 which purported to show that rehabilitation programmes, whatever their content, did not work - people were not rehabilitated! 'Nothing works' quickly became the accepted wisdom and there was a move back to incarceration, deterrence and the justice model in general - in short an emphasis on punishment. Palmer, as he states, has been a defender of rehabilitation and this book is used to attack the 'nothing works' thesis before spelling out directions for rehabilitation programming and research for the 1990s. Not least, rehabilitation does give practical help, whether educational, vocational or psychological and some research does show that it does work in that recidivism is reduced by 20%.

The book is divided into nine chapters covering the following areas: the common targets of intervention such as personal or inter-personal change and life-skills development, relating these to measures of effectiveness; a review of the status of intervention in the early-mid 1980s, pointing out that individual programmes do reduce recidivism; a discussion of the consensus that emerged in the late 1980s - rehabilitation can work; summaries of the research of correctional effectiveness in the 1980s; ways of advancing rehabilitation in terms of research and techniques; the role of theory in developing programmes; broader theoretical perspectives; and, finally, a review of issues of present and future significance.

As indicated, Palmer is confident that rehabilitation - and for him this means growth-centred intervention utilising skill- development methods, control/surveillance techniques and psychologically oriented programmes - will be of increasing relevance during the 1990s. His reference to 'control/surveillance techniques' means that, despite recent government statements about prison working (untrue!) and more austere prisons being needed, he may be correct even as far as the U.K. is concerned. The obvious question arises, though, does this simply mean a widening in the net of social control - more people in prison and more people in rehabilitation programmes? Even so, I have a more fundamental criticism of Palmer's thesis.

Palmer relates his growth-centred interventions to sociologically orientated theories of crime such as differential association, cultural deviancy, strain and blocked opportunity. This neglects the importance of radical/critical criminology which sees the causation of crime inextricably linked to the inequalities of wealth and power in present society. Admittedly such criminology is perhaps less influential than it was but it cannot be dismissed. Furthermore, from this radical/critical criminolical perspective, rehabilitation demands much more than 'growth-centred intervention'. A more radical approach involving consciousness raising about the inequalities of society and ways of addressing this is needed as I have tried to outline previously in this journal (see, for example, Rogowski S. 'Intermediate Treatment - a radical practice' in 'Youth and Policy' No. 31 1990).

But perhaps I digress. Palmer's book is interesting and worthwhile. It can be a rather dry, academic read at times and some of the American jargon occasionally grates. Nevertheless, it deserves to be read by those concerned about young people in trouble, though probably those designing and researching rehabilitation programmes, rather than practitioners, will find it of most relevance.

Garth Allen and Ian Martin (Eds)
Education and Community: The Politics Of Practice
Cassell 1992
ISBN 0-304-32629-1
£15.99 (pbk)
pp 151

Ted Harvey

This deceptively slim volume contains a wide scope of material. Its three sections - Rethinking Ideas, Reworking Practice, and Education, Community and Citizenship, encompass topics such as equal opportunities, care in the community, histories of the community education movement, education and unwaged adults, parental involvement, the role of the LEA, and many others. Its stated purpose is to 'bring together accounts by a variety of contributors who have a particular interest in the interface between education, social welfare and the community ... and ... prospects at a time when the values of self-interest threaten to overwhelm those of social solidarity.'

However, whereas in some respects this variety and scope is an attractive feature of the book, it is also, for me, a significant weakness.

The overriding theme here is resistance to Mrs Thatcher's famous 'There is no such thing as society' quote, identified in an article by Ian Martin as the ideology of 'possessive individualism', the contributors bravely and consistently re- assert the notion of community and its importance in the context, content and process of education. Education here, of course, is a very different animal to that embodied in the dry bureaucracy of the national curriculum. In his piece on a Christian perspective, David Clark argues that there can be no community without education and no education without community, this is a vision I doubt Mr. Patten shares.

Another area of focus is the gap between policy and implementation, so that whereas it is seen as important to articulate a different philosophy, it is also possible to interpret present policy initiatives in ways which allow the expression of alternative values.

There is nothing new, of course, in the notion of education revitalising the community. In chapter two 'The State, Ideology and the Community School Movement' Tony Jeffs analyses the history and failures of Henry Morris's village colleges in Cambridgeshire in one of which I work and can testify to the lack of any real interface between school and community beyond what any ordinary comprehensive might achieve. The causes of this failure are various but as Jeffs says 'Schools remain profoundly anti-democratic in form and content' and thus are hardly the ideal institution to effect such changes.

The search for a new paradigm which can satisfy and motivate those of us who feel such unease with the current situation is a vital one, and while this book certainly contains many stimulating and perceptive articles which oppose the present hegemony, I personally find it lacks a positive and clear thrust in any new direction. It seems that perhaps the diversity of avenues explored is a reflection of an absence of coherence of approach. Is it to be

Gramsci or Jesus? Liberalism or militancy? - I formed the strong impression that assumptions were being made that all of us opposed to Thatcherism share the same values and principles, which left me feeling very uncomfortable. The absence of a 'big idea' for the left is a recurring theme. After reading this book I felt the deficiency even more keenly.

I should perhaps lay my cards on the table here. I have found the principles of humanistic psychology and their implications for social and political life provide clear enough guidelines to our problems. My two favourite books on education 'A Guide to Student Centred Learning' and 'The Student-Centred School' both by Donna Brandes and Paul Ginnis are a refreshing, but no less radical, contrast to some of the, at times rather tortuous, writing in 'Education and Community'.

In conclusion then, this book contains much that is worthwhile and may give workers in a wide range of fields the inspiration to find ways to adapt their work which might allow more hope and satisfaction than the present climate would seem to allow. For me however, if a real revitalisation of philosophy and practice is to occur, something more than this is needed.

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Barry Troyna (with critical introduction by Fazal Rizwi)
Racism And Education
Open University Press
ISBN 0-335-15778-5
£37.50 (hbk)
£12.99 (pbk)
pp 158

Caroline Adams

Despite its academic style, Barry Troyna's latest contribution to the literature on racism and education is a useful resource in several respects. It offers a well signposted tour through definitions of racism, and the strengths and weaknesses of multiculturalist and antiracist approaches. In part, the book is an extended literature review, which, combined with an excellent bibliography, opens an illuminating range of perspectives and enticements to further reading. Troyna offers an overview of debates and key events which is both thoughtful and challenging.

The book is based on the school experience, rather than a broader interpretation of education. Hence his analysis of the 'benevolent neo-colonialism' of the ILEA and Manchester LEA, characterised by 'the 3 Ss' ('saris, steelbands and samosa') does not reflect the ILEA's youth service.

The approach developed by youth workers went beyond the cosy celebratory multiculturalism which Troyna mocks and was overtly anti-oppressive, with an emphasis on separatist work with oppressed groups around issues of gender, race, sexuality and disability. Nevertheless, the book has relevance for those involved in youth work.

His critiques of the Swann Report and the Education Reform Act are more convincing. He demonstrates how Swann, by embracing multiculturalism and rejection of Black community demands for separate provision, and by refusing to acknowledge the role of racism, ultimately failed to address the key issues leading to underachievement. Nevertheless, Swann opened the door to the 'liberal moment' which ended with the Education Reform Act. Troyna characterises the ERA as 'the ideological framework which sanctions the maintenance, reproduction and extension of inequality' and shows how, for example, LMS is leading to the decline of LEA multicultural and antiracist support services, a strange result of legislation claimed to be a 'window of opportunity'.

Troyna charts the decline of antiracism as a respectable doctrine, showing how the final blow was dealt by the leaking in 1989 of the Burnage Report into the killing of a Bangladeshi boy in a Manchester playground. (MacDonald et al. 1989) The report, which Manchester Council refused to publish, was critical of the school's interpretation of antiracism: a simplistic approach all too familiar in youth work, in which white youths are demonized and black culture privileged and romanticised. Despite these criticisms the report was essentially concerned with *racism*, not *antiracism*, as the origin of the murder. For the press, however, this was an opportunity to consolidate the populist interpretation of 'loony' antiracism and to strengthen the mythology of antiracist thought-policing and enforced learning of community languages. There are non-Bengali parents in East London who are convinced that their children are forced to study in Bengali, not because their children have told them so, but because they read it in (where else?) The Sun.

There followed an onslaught of 'equiphobia'. This delightful word, new to me, is quoted by Troyna from Kate Myers who coined it to describe 'an irrational hatred and fear of anything to do with equal opportunities' (Myers 1990). Thus, John Major at the 1992 Tory Conference demands that teachers should 'not waste their time on the politics of gender, race and class'. And now we have the shadowy 'Back to Basics' campaign which seems to require not only more Hovis and village cricket but also less attention to addressing inequality. This reflects the 'new racism' now current in Europe which defines the 'Other' not through race but through a vague threat to identity and nationhood.

In youth services around the country there may still be a consensus that the 'Basics' include challenging oppression and inequality, but cuts and restructuring are seeing 'specialist work' unsupported and underfunded. In London at least there is an uncomfortable feeling that the clock is being turned backwards, with more emphasis on value for money than on addressing oppressions.

Perhaps the most useful elements of the book for youth and community workers and trainers are those which focus on defining and appraising antiracism.

If there is still anyone out there who thinks it's enough to stick 'Racism = Prejudice + Power' on the flipcharts, this book should leave them feeling mush less sure. The strength of Troyna's work, as Fazal Rizwi points out in his helpful introduction, is that he rejects the oversimplification and sloganizing of concepts such as institutionalised racism and the 'simplistic dichotomy' of individual and institutional racism. Troyna illustrates the dangerous oversimplification of the 'Prejudice + Power' formulation, and the RAT (Racism Awareness Training) focus on the individual, based on the 'essentialist view that all whites are racist'. The dangers of the two approaches - individual and institutional - have been shown recently in press responses to the election of a BNP councillor in the Isle of Dogs. In the same week, some journalists were pathologising the Island's voters as 'a peculiar breed', especially prone to racism, while others were denying the role of racism in the result and putting it down to protest against the LDDC (Runnymede 1993).

Troyna's strength is in not denying the complexities and contradiction in the social construction of racism. Rather, he welcomes 'the "noise" of multidimensionality'. He draws on the recognition by the US researcher McCarthy of the 'intersecting and relational impact of class, gender and "race"' (McCarthy 1990) and identification by British researcher Mac an Ghaill of race, gender and class as an 'interlocking series of constraints on the life chances of black youth' (Mac an Ghaill 1989). Here is another crucial point for youth workers and trainers, who cannot afford to indulge in the diversion of addressing racism separately from other oppressions. Troyna's survey of antiracism and its failures identifies a positive new focus in the 1990s, as antiracists move from the 'microscopic' focus on racism alone to the 'periscopic' approach which 'lays bare the various forms of oppression' (John 1987). Finally he offers an excellent framework for addressing racism and other oppression with young people through: Learning about Rights; Learning New Perspectives; Learning about Collaboration.

As Rizwi writes, the discourse of racism is constantly changing and being reconstructed. Likewise the discourse of antiracism. For those who wish to sharpen their understanding and find their practice challenged, this book will be a rewarding starting point.

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Steve Redhead (Ed)
Rave Off! Politics And Deviance In Contemporary Youth Culture
Avebury, 1993
ISBN 1-85628-465-4 (pbk)
£12.95
pp 192

Robert MacDonald

This book is first in a series to be written by authors from Manchester Metropolitan University's Institute for Popular Culture (another examines cultural aspects of football and fandom). For those (of us) who teach and research about youth and youth culture, and who are forced to refer students to ethnographies and texts sometimes twenty years out of date, a book like *Rave Off!* has been long-awaited.

For the past fifteen years academic attention has been far too narrowly focused. We now know all about youth unemployment, government schemes and the impact of these on young people's transitions to adulthood and work but we know very little about *contemporary* youth culture. For instance, one of the most expensively researched recent volumes (*Careers and Identities*, by Mike Banks et al., 1992) - which sprung from the Economic and Social Research Council's '16 to 19 Initiative' - makes no mention of the massive Rave/Dance Culture of the late 1980s nor of the drug taking which accompanied it.

This book is the first, then, to explore Acid House and Rave Culture - the most vibrant, visible and popular outpouring of youth culture since Punk in the late 1970s. The potential for such a volume was considerable and the authors realise that there is a great deal to be done - empirically and theoretically - to re-establish a sociology of youth culture.

The aim of *Rave Off!* is to critique and move beyond the sub- cultural approach of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (based at Birmingham University in the 1970s) through 'sampling' elements of Baudrillard's post-modernism in order to explore (drawing upon participant ethnography) Rave Culture in its various guises.

Overall, however, the book is patchy and much of what is promised is never really delivered. This reader found it difficult to recognise much in the way of 'lively ethnography' (p.5); the 'contemporary cultural theory' is applied sketchily and in a way which will leave many readers none the wiser; and, finally, 'the lasting analytical benefit' (again p.5) is hard to distil from these pages.

The writers take on the CCCS, arguing that there is no (longer) any real depth to youth (sub)cultures which can be interpreted in terms of their 'real' nature/purpose/meaning, instead we live in a post-modern world of fleeting, shifting surface images which are unamenable to sub-cultural analysis. Some valuable and engaging points are made along the way. The book questions the appropriateness of the resistance/conformity and manufactured/authentic categories which underpinned much sub- cultural analysis. And the volume does contain a wealth of empirical detail con-

veyed in sometimes breathless and repetitive journalistic narratives (I lost count, for instance, of the times that various writers rehearsed the story about how young British clubbers imported Acid House from Ibiza....).

But overall the theoretical position of the volume is underdeveloped. What forms of analysis should we now be developing to understand Rave and youth cultural styles? In attacking the CCCS (which, despite many valid criticisms, did at least make a sophisticated and cogent theoretical contribution alongside reasonable ethnographies) the authors of *Rave Off!* need to provide readers with a suitable alternative approach. The reader waits for a clearer and fuller exposition of the authors' theoretical position, which never really materialises.

There are other problems too. Let's take the point about ethnography: admittedly there is much here which is of great interest and the writers obviously have a sound grasp of their subject and a committed interest in it. They have been part of the Rave Culture and write as insiders, not dispassionate academics. But the voices of other informants/respondents/subjects/young people themselves (call them what you will) are strangely absent from a volume which proclaims the virtues of ethnography. Those there are (for instance, a series of short statements about the drug Ecstasy, on page 15) are unattributed, uncontextualised and rendered largely meaningless because of this.

The book is also stylistically problematic. The chapters are (dis)organised in such a way that reading them can be frustrating and confusing. The chapters are long and sometimes subdivided into separate chapters each with a set of footnotes. The volume tends to lack cohesion, discipline and precision and cries out for tighter editorial control. Interesting points and arguments tend to get lost in the wordy, descriptive undergrowth. The essays are often engaging and full of (to me) fascinating descriptions of a variety of topics related to Rave Culture (for instance, the origins of Acid House, the history of drugs and music, 1980s stylistic tribes) but these disparate themes need to be pulled together and organised much more carefully.

Language was at times impenetrable and obscure, making this a difficult book to read and sections of it candidates for 'Pseud Corner'. Take the following: '... the trance dance moves the body beyond the spectacle of the "pose" and the sexuality (romance) of the look, into a "cyber space" of musical sound, where one attempts to implode (get into) and disappear' (p.33). Quite.

All in all, then, this is a disappointing volume. There *are* informative and useful sections in *Rave Off!* (e.g. an early chapter on the history, politics and culture of Ecstasy provides a short, accessible and easy introduction) and some valuable theoretical points are raised. For these reasons, despite my criticism, and for the lack of any real alternatives, the volume will be recommended as student reading.

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Peter Beresford and Suzy Croft
Citizen Involvement - A Practical Guide For Change
Practical Social Work BASW
The Macmillan Press Ltd 1993
ISBN 0-333-48300-6 (hbk)
ISBN 0-333-48301-4 (pbk)
£9.50 (pbk)

Sue Charteris

It is fashionable across the political spectrum to preach 'Citizen Involvement', encouraging people to take more control over their own lives through participating more actively in the agencies and services which they use. Beresford and Croft have produced a 'How - to' manual on involving citizens. They were concerned to find, at the beginning of a three year research project into good practice; how few people involved in working in innovative ways had recorded their experiences; even though there is a great deal of knowledge to draw on. This book attempts to fill the gap by documenting both the experiences of those involved in providing, innovative practice, and those at the receiving end of it.

This book suggests ways forward to those responsible for delivering services, who say they want to involve their constituent citizens or 'clients', but have not yet done so effectively; either because they are unsure of how to start, afraid of getting it wrong or concerned about opening the proverbial floodgates of 'unrealistic expectations'. Indeed, some practitioners and politicians, have developed such sophisticated critiques of all the pitfalls to achieving increased involvement, that they prevent a start being made.

Readers who are already convinced and/or involved in this work will raise wry smiles at the various familiar scenarios in which arguments for involvement are countered. The authors get under the skin of these arguments and look at the underlying reasons and issues. What I like most about this book is that it kindly dismisses such arguments in turn and encourages practitioners to make a start in engaging citizens in their practice, urging them to begin with small, but achievable, areas of change, as opposed to not starting at all.

There is strong emphasis within the book on the benefits of personal change to the individual of empowerment through involvement. Unsurprising, perhaps, since the book is engaged primarily on investigating the applicability of citizen involvement in social work and social services, although it is certainly applicable to, and deserves, a much broader audience. Beresford and Croft have produced a comprehensive tour of the subject, with checklists for action. They touch all the base points which need to be taken into account in ensuring that involvement exercises are accessible to all, although too sketchily to be very useful, partly because of its comprehensiveness. I was frustrated by the coverage

of how to involve black and ethnic minority people effectively, because the issues are too complex to be covered so briefly.

This limitation comes up again when the authors suggest guidelines for empowering practice. Whilst not invalidating the principles, we should remind ourselves that, given the choice many citizens/users/clients would quite possibly prefer not to be involved with the agency at all, however democratic the provider.

The authors have placed great emphasis within the book on their consultees speaking for themselves, which avoids one of the most frequent pitfalls of involvement; mediation. This keeps the book very fresh and effectively tells home truths. For example, the views from a group of homeless people ... 'Social Security, they tell you it is in the post and when you see the postmark its the night before ... treat people with respect'. The principle of self-advocacy is a well-articulated theme throughout the book. We should not, but probably do, need reminding that there are virtually no occasions when people cannot best speak for themselves.

The authors are addressing two potential audiences; those involved in community organisations trying to exercise more influence over structured provisions; and providers in agencies trying to assist people to gain more involvement. It is structured as a dialogue between the two, quite deliberately, so that one perspective can gain an insight into the other. This requires patience from the reader, perhaps too much patience from those likely to gain most, which is a shame. There is a section on involvement in public meetings which I would like to make compulsory reading for those who Chair such meetings and wonder why they don't get much out the them. 'We have seen people reduced to tears and silence, their hands shaking, made to feel foolish or cowed into agreement. It has happened to us. For many, once is enough, sometimes its unintentional. Politicians and professionals don't realise the effect they are having. On other occasions its because of their determination to stay in control'.

My feeling is that the book's potential usefulness is primarily to those who need a guide on how to take their agencies forward into this territory if it still feels unfamiliar.

The final chapter offers a framework for evaluating citizen involvement in agencies and services. In presenting this practical guide the authors acknowledge that there is not a shared political/social understanding of what this involvement actually means to citizens; whether clients really are citizens in this context is not developed; that would be a different book!

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Nancy J. Bell and Robert W. Bell (Eds)
Adolescent Risk Taking
Sage Publications 1993
ISBN 0-8039-5065-9
£15.50 (pbk)
pp 186

Annette Thomson

This is a book which certainly keeps its promise. The 'opportunity for speculation about risk-taking' offered to its contributors promises a variety of approaches and conclusions, and certainly generates many new questions, as expected by its editors.

The themes explored include aspects like risk perception, motivation, gender and evolutionary angles in criminal behaviour, and mathematical models, with the last chapters focusing on policy. With this variety, the book will not fail to provide relevant information and insights to, and generate new thoughts and ideas in, readers from a wide variety of backgrounds. At the same time, the range of approaches included in the nine chapters will, perhaps inevitably, lead the reader through irrelevant, irritating and boring patches.

Irwin's exploration of the relationship between adolescence and risk-taking and his emphasis on a dual focus on biopsychosocial and environmental factors provide an interesting introduction to the topic. Of particular importance is his exploration of risk perception by young people, an under researched topic which could offer important insights to the practitioners. Other angles adopted here may be of more relevance to the statistician.

Similarly, Lopes' exploration of mathematical models of risk taking may appeal more to those interested in a formal mathematical laboratory approach. The word 'adolescent' is mentioned for the first time on the second last page of the article. While the paper is interesting and well written, its review of mathematical models may not offer much instant insight to the time-pressed practitioner but may well generate useful research.

In contrast, Millstein's approach is very much practice oriented and provides a readable and clear account of risk perception models in adults, which generally highlight an optimistic and self-serving bias in risk-perception. Adolescents, it is widely assumed, may have even stronger optimistic biases due to their lack of exposure to negative events or their general cognitive egocentrism. Surprisingly, few studies seem to have tackled the comparison or developmental aspect of risk perception, and the author points to a lack of much needed comparison or developmental data.

The developmental perspective is explored directly in Gardner's discussion of a life-span rational choice theory of risk taking. He argues that such a life-span theory must take into account the age span factor in trying to explain choice. Uncertainty about the future, a major feature in many adolescents' lives, may heighten a 'positive time preference' i.e. 'a preference for immediate as opposed to delayed rewards', so that risky choices may well be 'rational' in youth while not appearing to be rational in later life. Gardner's emphasis on future uncertainty is interesting

and at least at first glance offers an important explanatory line to be pursued in future discussions.

While a sociobiological slant is at times implicit in Gardner's contribution, Wilson and Daly focus directly on the adaptive function of a particular risk taking behaviour - lethal confrontational violence - in evolutionary history. They try to explain the cross-cultural phenomenon of similar age/sex distribution of homicides in terms of male/female and age difference in genetic fitness in polygamous societies. Such a focus - however well argued - is likely to incite controversy. However, the authors note that explanations must be complementary and conceptually integrated, which makes their construction undogmatic and readable even for opponents of hard-line sociobiology.

Lyng's exploration of criminal behaviour introduces the phenomenological concept of 'edgework' to explanations of risk taking. 'Edgework' is defined as usually involving the 'process of negotiating the boundary between life and death, consciousness and unconsciousness, sanity or insanity ...' or other forms of experimenting with the line between order and disorder. Lyng identifies common factors between 'edgeworkers', such as the need to feel in control and use specialist and 'survival' skills to reaffirm one's belief in special coping mechanisms. In this exploration commonalities between all types of 'edgework' (from hang gliding to robberies) are highlighted, but Lyng also specifies how criminals often differ from other 'edgeworkers' in seeking disorder in the interpersonal sphere. This is an interesting if at times long-winded contribution, offering a novel way of conceptualising risk taking per se, and criminal behaviour in particular.

At this point in the book, we leave the focus on the individual for a more policy/intervention orientated approach. While the contributions by Dryfoos and Wilcox could have extremely important policy implications, it is here that the American perspective of the book raises question about the applicability of its conclusions to UK society. Many themes, however, are likely to be of similar importance to any Western society.

Dryfoos' attempt to identify components of successful interventions with high-risk youth taps into the often neglected area of evaluation (especially on a larger scale). It provides an extremely interesting account of common components of intervention programmes defined as successful on specified measures. Dryfoos also specifies unresolved issues at the level of the individual (e.g. the danger of stigmatising 'high-risk children'), the need to be sensitive to cultural differences, and the difficulties in evaluating programmes. In her discussion of implications she focuses on community schools with a concentrated coordinated effort by a number of agencies, tailored to a specific community's needs. Similar research efforts in the UK would seem to be important and useful.

This must also be the conclusion to apply to Wilcox's examination of the effectiveness of public policy decision in altering behaviour. Wilcox reviews evidence of behaviour changes prompted by three classes of policy action: legal proscription and threats, economic regulation and

information dissemination and control, which he mainly examines in relation to alcohol and tobacco use. Again, the need for careful evaluation is highlighted, as is the need to examine the effects of policies on social and cultural norms.

Anderson, Bell, Fischer, Munsch, Peek and Sorell's review article sums up many of the conclusions drawn in the book and highlights areas for further research.

All in all, a wide-ranging and interesting book, which provides some novel ways of conceptualising risk-taking behaviour and highlights gaps in research and policy review.

Annette Thomson, Open University tutor.

C Harber
Democratic Learning And Learning Democracy: Education For Active Citizenship
Education Now Books, Ticknall, Derbyshire, 1992
ISBN 1-871526-09-4
pp 45

B Trafford
Sharing Power In Schools: Raising Standards
Education Now Books, Ticknall, Derbyshire, 1993
ISBN 1-871526-12-4
pp 46

Ian S. Martin

Education Now is an independent publishing co-operative with a subversive mission: to provide 'a platform for material and ideas that the British educational press often tries to avoid, minimise or suppress in its apparent anxiety to be seen following the current government-led agenda in all its circularity and banality'. How do these two book live up to this promise?

First, it is necessary to say that they are both small books, the main text of each amounting to less than 50 pages. They are written in an accessible and user friendly style which should make them attractive to the general reader. They are linked in the sense that they both deal with education for democracy through political education and the democratisation of schooling. Indeed, Harber (1992) awaits with interest the 'results of research on the democratisation process' to be published in Trafford (1993) which, he hopes, 'will provide important ideas and evidence for others who wish to venture along this road in the future'.

I am afraid Trafford hardly fulfils Harber's expectations. The virtue of Trafford's book *Sharing Power in Schools: Raising Standards* lies in its honesty, its vice in its lack of both substance and coherent and systemati-

cally evidenced argument. The book is an account of a selective, fee paying grammar school struggling to introduce some form of 'democratic' procedure in institutional life. One basic problem is that the claim to be 'sharing power' is supported by little more evidence than anecdotal accounts of the workings of a School Council. This appears, from the quoted views of its student members, to be regarded with widespread scepticism and to spend most of its time discussing what are in education terms somewhat marginal issues, such as the provision of a school 'tuck-shop' and the availability and distribution of student lockers. My impression is of a rather tradition, socially and academically selective school moving hesitantly towards a degree of highly regulated participation under the charismatic leadership of a well intentioned head, who is apparently blissfully unaware of the fact that many sensible public sector comprehensive schools now take this degree of student 'voice' and 'choice' for granted. To complicate matters further, language is used very loosely. It is difficult to be clear about the argument when the ground is constantly shifting between 'democracy', 'openness', 'flexibility', 'dialogue', 'empathy' and 'ownership'.

There is also a basic difficultly in reconciling the claim that 'sharing power', whatever this actually amounts to, is somehow causally related to the empirical evidence of raised standards. The latter is provided in the form of marginally improved crude percentage passes and top grades in A level and GCSE examination results over the 1988-92 period. The claims-performance relationship demands a much more systematic and rigorous treatment than it receives here if it is to be taken at all seriously. As it is, no evidence is presented which indicates any direct causal link between the title and the subtitle of the book, ie 'sharing power' and 'raising standards'. In addition, however, I was intrigued and irritated by the silences and elisions in the persistent and somewhat self-congratulatory discourse of 'success'. For instance, in the Introduction the author acknowledges his indebtedness to various individuals, among whose names are several that are apparently of Asian origin - and only one which is obviously female. And yet the book makes no reference to 'race', ethnicity or gender - or, for that matter, to parents (except as indirect consumers of their children's education). Given the relatively recent decision to admit girls to the school, I found it particularly surprising that an entirely gender-blind account is given.

More fundamentally, however, this little book is flawed in two crucial respects. First, the focus is procedural rather than substantive. The sharing of power is restricted to a School Council which apparently has no say in the central educational and political arenas of curriculum and governance. No wonder most of the students whose views are quoted (with little attempt by the author at analysis or critical commentary) remain sceptical and unconvinced. Second, despite the extensive quotation of students and, to a lesser extent, staff, this remains an unmistakedly 'headmasterly' account. The problem with democratic headmasters [sic] is not only their apparent entrapment within a gendered charisma and discourse but also their unshakeable confidence in their self-appointed role as what Freire would call 'leaders of the people'. It is difficult to

sound convincing about 'sharing power in schools' when throughout the book the persistent and intrusive first person singular 'I' remains at best proprietorial and at worst a magisterial. If this is the best they can do, *I personally* would be happy be to see a moratorium declared for the time being on headmasterly effusions on the virtues of democratic schooling.

Clive Harber's book *Democratic Learning and Learning Democracy: Education for active citizenship* is much better, even though as a determined structuralist (as distinct from a structural determinist) I still find it difficult to reconcile the reality of schooling with the idea of democracy. It is shorter than Trafford's - a mere 36 pages of proper text - but there is much more to it. Essentially, it offers an argument, a context and an intelligently selected review of literature and research.

The argument is that 'democratic learning' is a prerequisite for 'learning democracy'. If we are serious about our claims to live in a democratic society and to espouse a democratic political system, we must become a lot more serious about cultivating democratic values and principles in the compulsory phase of education, ie in both primary and secondary schooling. The alternative is the civic culture we now inhabit, which is fundamentally undemocratic and, indeed, as research has consistently demonstrated, repressive, chauvinistic, intolerant and racist. The argument hinges around the claim that democracy cannot be safeguarded, or even made meaningful, until young people have experienced it and learnt to value it. This casts a heavy burden of responsibility and expectation on our schools. In general, the latter have hardly begun to understand this challenge, let alone do anything really serious about it. On the other hand, there are notable exceptions, both in this country and abroad, and Harber begins to show what can be achieved within the albeit constrained context of schooling. Nevertheless, his account remains critical and controlled. For instance, he shows how the pervasive and supposedly meritocratic ideology of individualism in British schooling has a way of reducing democratic principles to the debased currency of *laissez faire* competition, reflecting the facile yet ubiquitous equation of democracy with the market.

In contrast to Trafford's case study, Harber also offers a careful and informed exposition of contextual factors. In general, he examines the contradiction between the fundamentally anti-democratic character of British social and political life on the one hand and the familiar rhetoric of progressive pedagogy on the other. In addition, he develops a trenchant and sustained critique of current state education policy as key instruments in the hegemonic project of a New Right government which has now been in a position of unassailable political power on little more than 40 per cent of the vote for over 14 years. The dilemma for the essentially counter-hegemonic project of 'democratic learning and learning democracy' is therefore properly and consistently located and problematised. In the process, the government's version of 'education for active citizenship' is exposed as a fundamentally undemocratic ruse designed to legitimate, as well as take up some of the slack left by, the related restructuring processes of institutional privatisation and ideological remoralisation. In this sense, Harber fulfils the subversive mission statement of his publishers, and in the process gives his readers something to get their teeth into.

This is also a very useful guide to the wider literature of democratic schooling, participative practice and the debate about education for citizenship. In particular, I found the references to research interesting and informative - as well as the contradictions which the results of this pose in terms of current policy initiatives such as the National Curriculum and recent redefinitions of curricular 'relevance'. For instance, there is a perceptive discussion of the transformation of critical 'social science' into adaptive 'personal and social education' - largely as a carefully controlled move towards the educational management of youth unemployment. On the other hand, I am less optimistic than Harber appears to be about the opportunities presented by devolved school management and opting out - precisely because the broader political issues about education as a public service get lost as it becomes progressively fragmented and atomised.

This brings me to my final point. Perhaps Bernard Davies said a lot of this more cogently and eloquently in his seminal 'youth work' texts of the late 70s and early-mid 80s. Despite the real value and substance of Harber's account, both books simply ignore the potential contribution of allied agencies in youth work and community education to the task of educating young people through critical thinking and power sharing for democracy and citizenship. In this sense, ultimately both illustrate the dangers of leaving education to teachers!

Ian S. Martin, Department of Education, Edinburgh University

James A. Inciardi (ed)
Drug Treatment And Criminal Justice
Sage Publications 1993
ISBN 0-8039-4910-3 (pbk)
£17.50
pp 271

Shane Butler

The contrast between the traditional American policies on drug problems, which have crystallised for more than twenty years now into the 'War on Drugs', and the elusive 'British System', whose pragmatism has long been adopted and sometimes outstripped by other countries, is no longer the source of fascination for policy analysts which it once was. Indeed, there are times when it seems that in the era of HIV and AIDS international differences in drug policies have all but been obliterated. This edited book (containing twelve chapters and involving eighteen authors) on the treatment and rehabilitation of drug users within the American criminal justice system is a potent reminder that international differences do exist and that, to an extent that is comparatively rare in Europe, Americans still cling to the belief that criminal justice sanctions can rid society of drug problems.

The contents of this book, however, are not concerned with the punitive aspects of incarceration of convicted drug users but with some of the more innovative treatment programmes that have been established in American prisons since the mid 1980s. The necessity for this new and vigorous approach to treatment and rehabilitation within the criminal justice system arises from the escalation of the War on Drugs which took place towards the end of the Reagan era and throughout the Bush administration; this was a time, as Inciardi points out in his introduction, when acceptance of the concept of 'zero tolerance' resulted in the full rigours of the law being visited upon ordinary -even casual - drug users as opposed to the previous policy of concentrating on big-time drug traffickers. Wexler and Lipton, the authors of Chapter 10, point out that there has been a 55% increase in the American prison population over the past eight years, an increase which they claim is almost entirely attributable to drug-related crime. They also note that, despite popular rhetoric about treatment, rehabilitation and recovery in the context of drug use, very few drug-using prisoners have ever been exposed to a therapeutic regime in the American prison system.

In Chapter 9 Weinman and Lockwood trace the historical evolution of federal activity and interest in drug treatment within the prison system. The earliest attempts, which resulted in the establishment of two 'narcotics farms' in the 1930s, were disappointing in terms of their outcomes, but it was the widespread acceptance of a 'nothing works' philosophy in the 1970s which appears to have been particularly offensive to the American spirit of 'know-how' and technical progress and to have acted as a spur to the programmes described in this book. One is reminded in this context of the 'moonshot paradigm' which used to be spoken of in the Nixon years: this was the assertion that a nation which could send a man to the moon, sustain him there and bring him back alive could surely beat the heroin problem. At this macro-sociological or social policy level, the authors have nothing to say; they offer no critique of American drug policy, nor do they draw upon wider sociological theory - such as deviance theory - to analyse this mass exercise in social control which is now conducted under the banner of medicine/health care. Instead, this book is an apolitical and technical account of how, given the necessary input of energy, expertise and resources, the treatment system can be made to work so as to lead to a reduction in recidivism.

If one accepts this rather narrow framework the book is impressive. The overall tone of the programmes described is very American in its assumption that total abstinence is the only acceptable treatment goal; only one chapter is concerned specifically with the complications introduced by HIV, and there is relatively little content devoted to methadone maintenance or other forms of harm reduction. On the other hand, the analysis of the *therapeutic community* (TC) by Pan and his colleagues in Chapter 3 is a model of caution and evenhandedness and displays none of the zealotry which is the hallmark of some American advocates of this particular treatment modality.

Chapter 6, which is written by Dembo, Williams and Schmeidler, focuses on drug problems among juvenile offenders. This chapter does not demonise drugs by suggesting that young people who are caught up in drug problems would be personally happy and socially well-adjusted *if only* they said no to drugs. On the contrary, the authors make it clear that drug prob-

lems are closely interlinked with a range of other psychosocial difficulties, such as family dysfunction, socio-economic deprivation and educational disadvantage. The recommendations for intervention into this complex of problems are correspondingly broad, rather than narrowly clinical, and it is emphasised that juvenile justice programmes, if they are to be successful must be ongoing or protracted rather than episodic and reactive.

In general, the programmes described in this book involve counselling and psychotherapeutic modalities - such as cognitive, behavioural and social skills training - which are well supported by outcome studies, and vocational or educational activities which extend beyond the penal system into the client's 're-entry' to society. Wexler and Lipton's (Chapter 10) account of how two specific projects - *Reform* and *Recovery* drew up general principles for creating therapeutic systems within penal institutions is impressively clear and businesslike. Although they favour the separation of prisoners in treatment programmes from the general prison population, it is interesting to speculate on the impact which their therapeutic regime might have on prison systems as a whole.

In conclusion, this book is very American both in its strengths and its weaknesses. Its major weakness, as already suggested, is its narrow apolitical and uncritical acceptance of the overall policy context within which the activities described occur. There is an abundance of 'control talk', the use of medical and therapeutic vocabulary which might evoke critical comment from academic sociologists, and, as one has come to expect, acronyms pop up constantly. On a positive note, the programmes described are well-planned, competently implemented and thoroughly evaluated. This reviewer lives in Ireland where despite a long- standing statutory commitment to drug treatment programmes within the criminal justice system, little or nothing has been done in this sphere. People who live in glass houses!

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Paul V. Taylor
The Texts Of Paulo Freire
Open University Press 1993
ISBN 0-335-19019-7
£12.99 (pbk)
pp 166

Mary Wolfe

This book presents an enthusiastic and thought-provoking analysis of Freire's methodology and philosophy. Paul Taylor analyses and challenges the assumptions underlying Freire's approaches to literacy work,

in a study which is rigorously based on an examination of his writing. The book reflects both the writer's stated belief in Freire's method: 'I know that it works' (p.9) and his frustration at the apparent contradictions, acts of faith and political naivety which he uncovers in his readings of Freire.

Like other commentators (hooks; Freire and Macedo; 1993), Taylor has had to address the question of sexism in the language of Freire's early works in English. He includes quite a lengthy note in which he outlines his decision to avoid sexist language as far as possible by retranslating with permission. As with any such decision, there are difficulties and some of these are acknowledged. Since sexism has meaning, this revision of the original inevitably alters the essential meaning of the texts (despite the author's claim to the contrary). This is most evident when Taylor temporarily suspends this rewriting in examining the codified situations and tellingly reveals the extent of gender stereotyping in the original language.

The author opens with a necessarily brief biography of Freire. There is little new information here for the reader familiar with the subject; Freire's willingness to explore his work and thinking in print - his grapho-text - is contrasted with his renowned reticence to broadcast his personal bio-text. It is in the following chapter, as Taylor offers a scholarly and often enlightening con-text for our reading of Freire, that he engages the reader in his challenging and demanding argument.

In a careful detailing of the varying influences of Freire's writing, Taylor includes Aristotle, Descartes, Hegel, Dewey, Cabral and Kosik. He brings to life the creative intermingling of the various thinkers which Freire acknowledges, implicitly or explicitly, as instrumental in the development of his thought and his work. The reader is presumed to have an existing knowledge of Freire's writings: Taylor's achievements, perhaps most evidently demonstrated in this analysis of the eclecticism of Freire's thinking, lies in persuading the reader to reread and review these.

Notwithstanding the author's acknowledged admiration for, and belief in, Freire's work, this study adds a sometimes refreshingly iconoclastic approach to existing criticisms of the 'metodo Paulo Freire'. Indeed, Taylor enters into an exploration which brings into question the all too often unchallenged fundamentals of Freirean practice. In his investigation of the work of the Culture Circles, he suggest that the teacher/learner may be unable to escape from the model of banking education which is so antithetical to dialogic education. The facilitator is, at best, a cultural invader: a benign banker.

Taylor charges Freire with inconsistency and contradictions and, in support of this charge, quotes extensively from Freire's writing. Freire is berated for refusing to address the difficulties and mystification caused by his failure to offer definitions of such basic concepts as class, the oppressed and, of course, the much-quoted Easter experience. In an often affectionate introduction, we are encouraged to accept some degree of 'downright contradiction' in the context of Freire's principles of dialogue. In the same spirit of tolerance, we also have to suffer an element of confusion in Taylor's own sometimes laboured writing, most particularly as he struggles to reflect Freire's reasoning around the relationships between dialogue and conscientization.

In the fullest section of the book, Taylor examines the work of Culture Circles through an examination of the pictures used to illustrate codified situations. Once again, from a starting point of almost disingenuous simplicity 'why does it work?' (p.82), he raises the spectre of an educational method still flawed by a presumption of teacher knowledge and learner ignorance. Taylor questions the necessary belief that either the learners or the facilitators in Culture Circles should automatically be able to read, or interpret, the images presented. By directing us to ask whether it is necessarily easier accurately to read pictures than texts, he also invites us to question the presumed correctness of the facilitator's interpretation. As the author proposes his own alternative interpretations and ambiguities, so the 'metodo Paulo Freire' becomes potentially little more than guess what the teacher is thinking. Interestingly, the major section of this work which is ostensibly devoted to textual analysis is in fact concerned with pictorial analysis. Taylor himself risks blurring the distinction between reading the verbal and the visual in order to draw attention to the underlying tensions in Freire's approach.

Taylor finally offers a discussion of the power and meaning of literacy in a disappointingly brief final chapter. We are eventually offered a clear and fresh focus of Freire's work as being essentially concerned with pre-literacy rather than literacy but, unfortunately, there is little exploration of this interesting reappraisal. With an untypical lack of substance, he claims a 'largely unquestioned acceptance' (p.142) of the term functional literacy. Rather more significant is his continued and simplistic contrast between reading as a passive activity compared with writing as active. Such a common generalisation, which seems out of place in a book which so clearly demonstrates the power of a critical reading of textual evidence, can only serve to reinforce traditionally functional understandings of literacy. This presumption on Taylor's part also highlights his apparent ignoring of a key paradox in his position. Throughout the book, I regretted his failure to address his own position as being at once Reader and Writer. In the context of Freire's thinking, he has dared to occupy a fascinatingly ambiguous position as both investigator and interpreter and yet he offers no exploration of this. Inevitably, perhaps, given the volume of Freire's own writing as well as the body of critical analysis associated with it, Taylor can do little more than scratch the surface of the available literature. Nonetheless, he has done so in a manner which demands of us to follow up his clues and references as he picks at the web of Freirean thought. But the real merit of this work lies almost as much in what he has not done as in what he has. He has not offered a simplistically eulogistic appraisal of the teacher whose work he ultimately respects. In this, he has paid both Freire and us the compliment of engaging in dialogue.

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Mary Wolfe teaches at the Centre for Professional Studies in Informal Education at the YMCA National College London.

Obituary Frank Booton

Hilary Armstrong MP

Frank Booton died suddenly this August at the age of 52, almost a year after taking early retirement from his post as tutor on the community and youth work course at the University of Sunderland. He had recently become a father again and was so excited at the prospect of a close involvement in the day to day care of his son in the beautiful but often challenging environment of the North Pennines in Weardale.

Frank began his working life in the RAF. It was there that, like so many working class lads of his generation, he found opportunities to extend his education and made the most of them. This experience was so important when he came to work with adults who themselves were coming back to education, seeking reassurance, confidence and challenge.

I first met Frank when he joined the staff at Sunderland in the early years of the two year Community and Youth work course. He came with experience of the youth service as a local authority officer. At that stage he warned us that he 'moved on' in job terms regularly and we should not expect him to be around for too long. Clearly the number of changes and the stimulation of never ending challenges at Sunderland were such that the not too long turned into 13 years!

Frank was probably the most frustrating colleague I have ever worked with - so often his enthusiasm meant that he took on far too much. Sometimes his wonderful ideas were just too 'over the top' for the rest of us! But he was also among the most kind- hearted and generous of people, who was constantly striving to seek out new challenges and areas of work. His interest in the opportunities available to young people and how to encourage them to take up different activities was unbounded.

Frank was interested in good practice all over the world. He established contacts and made friends with others involved with youth work across Europe, Scandinavia and America. At the time of his death he was working with Professor Tanaka Haruhiko on a book '*Youth and Social Education in Japan*'.

Frank always brought intellectual rigour to his work. The course at Sunderland developed unique methods of assessment and I remember many animated discussions about the inter-relationship of theory and practice and how we as teachers could best enable students to develop that inter-relationship in their work. His involvement at the beginning of *Youth and Policy* was another example of this commitment - the need for a journal which gave the opportunity for new ideas to be aired and which stimulated a more rigorous understanding of the changes affecting young people was something that Frank had talked of on many occasions. His work has contributed enormously to exposing the myth that youth work was really just about keeping youngsters busy.

Frank always recognised the effect of social and economic circumstances on communities and young people growing up in them. It was this that reinforced his commitment to opening up new channels of educational opportunity for mature students and lead him to be involved more recently in Groundwork Trust, a project which tackles the enormous problems faced by the communities of East Durham. I would also like to think that it was this that kept him in touch with me as a Labour Party Branch Secretary in my constituency!

Frank had lots of ideas for new areas of work. The staff at the University of Sunderland want to make sure that some of that enthusiasm and commitment is remembered, particularly to motivate and encourage those who have been at a disadvantage in their educational life to find and exploit opportunities to learn. They are setting up a prize in his memory. There are so many who will have vivid memories of Frank Booton; his positive and energetic approach to life left many marks. He is sorely missed.

Hilary Armstrong is the MP for North West Durham. She was a tutor in community and youth work at Sunderland Polytechnic until December 1985.

Frank Booton Memorial Fund

Readers of *Youth and Policy* who knew Frank may wish to contribute to a memorial fund being set up by the University of Sunderland. Frank's ideal was always to encourage and motivate students who had been disadvantaged within the educational system and the memorial fund will perpetuate his educational principles.

Further details can be obtained from:

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Thus, for a book:
Hutson, S., and Jenkins, R. (1989) *Taking the Strain: Families, Unemployment and the Transition to Adulthood,* Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

For an article:
Willis, P. (1984) 'Youth Unemployment: Thinking the Unthinkable', in *Youth and Policy,* vol.2, no.4, pp. 17-24.

And for a report:
The Thompson Report (1982) Experience and Participation, cmnd 8686, London, HMSO.

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