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Youth & Policy, 10 Lady Beatrice Terrace,
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YOUTH WORK, RISK AND CRIME PREVENTION

KEVIN STENSON & FIONA FACTOR

Introduction

A variety of initiatives have in recent years been introduced in the UK, which have attempted to draw professionally trained and publicly funded youth workers into strategies for the prevention and control of crime and criminality, the complex of attitudes held to predispose young people towards crime and other forms of anti-social behaviour. These predominantly inter-agency initiatives have been encouraged by a range of government circulars and Home Office reports (eg. Home Office 8/1984; Cooper, 1989; HMSO, 1990; HMSO, 1991; Bright, 1991).

These innovations have included, for example, inter-agency juvenile liaison panels, which attempt to filter and perhaps divert young people going through the criminal justice system. Furthermore, in 1993-4 the £3.2 million budget for the Department for Education's 'Grants for Education Support and Training' (GEST), provided funding for the Youth Action Schemes, with specific crime prevention briefs and also for related, focused training programmes for Youth and Community workers. In addition to the new Local Authority based multi-agency crime prevention initiatives (HMSO, 1991), other examples include short term schemes initiated under the auspices of the 'Urban Fund' and 'Safer Cities'. These usually short term community based projects with a youth work dimension are often a response to specific disturbances, as in Tyneside's Meadowell Estate in 1991. Furthermore, they often embody a seedcorn dimension, in that publicly financed official interventions are designed to promote community self organisation and the enlistment of voluntary organisations. This is clearly in line with the Conservative administration's emphasis on what Douglas Hurd called 'active citizenship'. A move towards enlisting commercial and voluntary agencies and community groups is seen as providing an antidote to dependency on top-down public services in the areas of youth work and crime prevention, as in other fields (Johnston, 1992).

The crime prevention oriented approaches to youth work involve an explicit focus on 'troublesome' youth, those young people seen, in a period of dramatic economic restructuring, as economically and socially marginalised from education, training, employment, housing and usually living in sink estates and/or in run down inner city neighbourhoods (Williamson, 1993). They are thus perceived as 'at risk' in relation to a variety of dangers. These include the development of criminal careers, drug abuse, sexual health and other problems. However, within this list of inter-related risks, those associated with offending are highlighted and professional intervention focused accordingly. With minimal public debate, the new drift towards a crime prevention brief for youth workers would - in effect - redefine an increasing proportion of youth workers as adjuncts of the criminal justice system.

Role Conflict

Clearly, as we shall see, there is considerable potential for tension between, on the one hand, official and professional discourses of youth work, reinforced in the values underpinning the academic professional training programmes and, on the other hand, the new crime prevention discourses. After all, the new turn could be seen as

an undue narrowing and impoverishment of the educational goals of youth work and also the provision of opportunities for young people to divert their energies in constructive directions. Moreover, conflicts at the level of professional discourses are reinforced by the day to day practical exigencies of the job. Even if youth workers were wholeheartedly to embrace a crime prevention brief, a central role contradiction would remain. The ability of the workers, especially those operating in out-reach and detached contexts, to gain access to young people defined as 'hard to reach' or 'troublesome' and maintain their credibility with them, is endangered to the extent that the workers are publicly identified with the police and criminal justice system (Graham and Smith, 1993). They are thus in a classic situation of role conflict.

In this paper, we will explore some of the dimensions of this conflict through the analysis of the role of detached, out-reach and club based workers, working with different groups of young people involved in a large street scene in London and whose 'risks' are defined and highlighted in different ways. The main differentiation is between those seen as as 'troublesome' youth, at risk from sliding into routine criminal offending and more affluent young people, seen principally as vulnerable to victimisation. This discussion draws from an ethnographic study of that scene and attempts to regulate it by a range of agencies, undertaken between 1983 and 1992. The inter-relationship between the agencies involved could, in an informal way, be seen to constitute a multi-agency regulatory strategy.

The Government of Youth in Advanced Liberalism

However, before developing the case study, it is important to locate the debates about the role of youth workers within a broader understanding of recent shifts in patterns of government[1]. The perceived tension between a crime prevention orientation and broader pedagogical approaches to youth work brings to the surface a traditional tension manifest in professional youth work discourses (Marken and Smith, 1988:187-199). The tension is between, on the one hand, conceptions of publicly funded youth work as social control, precisely targeted towards marginal populations, and on the other hand, as a universal service for all young people, legitimated within the classic Fabian terms of the Welfare State. Yet the universalistic Welfare State framework of the youth service is now undergoing transformation under the impact of the introduction by the Conservative administration of neo-liberal, market disciplines into the whole range of public services. With no clear mandatory funding base, the youth services, usually organised through Local Authority Education Departments, are particularly vulnerable to the fiscal cleaver seeking to pare yet more meat from the bone of public services. While the voluntary sector assumes greater responsibility for serving the needs of more affluent youth, for the less affluent, the new, mainly short run, crime prevention and control initiatives step into the breaches left by the gaps in long term Local Authority funding. However, we are not simply witnessing a tension between crime control and a needs oriented youth work strategy; the latter has its own internal complexities.

For much of the post-war era liberal/Fabian, professional and governmental discourses of youth work have emphasised its pedagogical role. It is by now possible to distinguish two broad variants within the liberal/Fabian framework: a consensualist/individualist model and, with a more recent provenance, an emergent radical model [2]. In the consensualist/individualist model, the emphasis lies on the broad education of young people for an active, compassionate citizenship, balancing the need to meet civilized social

standards of behaviour with the development of personal autonomy (Bunt, 1975: 231-234; Jeffs and Smith, 1987; 1988;). In the radical model, this brief has been extended to include a recognition of the collective (for example, ethnic) identities of young people, the persistence of class, gender and ethnically based social inequalities and divisions, the need to confront issues of ethnic and gender inequality and oppression and also to facilitate the building of bridges among young people across these social divisions. A central policy thread is the notion of empowerment, in which young people are encouraged to develop the knowledge and skills for a constructive citizenship in an increasingly difficult and conflictual environment (National Youth Agency, 1992).

These themes have been reinforced in a series of ministerial statements about the nature, mission and core curriculum of the service[3] which, curiously, have **not** emphasised the crime control and prevention role of youth workers. Rather, at this programmatic policy level, the concern of The National Youth Service, whatever its uncertain future, continues to be with identifying and serving the needs of young people and fostering their powers of self organisation.

However, these divergences in policy aims should not simply be viewed as confused responses to the social problems associated with youth. More fundamentally, they manifest a necessary tension in liberal modes of government. Here liberalism is understood not in its narrow party political or ideological senses. Rather, more generally, it refers to the political rationalities and governmental practices operating in mature, market based, demographically and institutionally pluralistic societies. While authoritarian controls may be used in relation to particular stigmatised minorities and, in the short term, policies may take on a harsh and punitive bent (as at the time of writing), in the long term there are clear limits on the ability of decision makers to sustain authoritarian, centralised modes of regulation. A liberal order relies increasingly on the production of individuals and relatively autonomous social sectors who/which can regulate themselves in ways which are acceptable to a range of authorities. The style of government has moved increasingly from direct control to a circuitous control at a distance (Foucault, 1989; Rose, 1993; Stenson, 1993a).

With the recent ascendancy of neo-liberal policy discourses and the decline in the notion that the social collectivity at large should share in the tasks of social protection, this has led to a privatisation of risk management (O'Malley, 1992). This fosters self reliance within the individual and also, in conjunction with official agencies and at a collective level, through encouraging active citizenship by ethnic, religious and other community formations. In the context of the government of young people, parents are encouraged to take a more active, and perhaps collective role in the task of monitoring and protection (Stenson, 1993b).

In this regard, resort to direct, authoritarian methods of disciplinary control over young people offers limited returns. Yet, those deemed to be recalcitrant to authorities and to norms of constructive, self regulating citizenship, are seen as largely beyond the immediate control of parents and community associations. They are, hence, legitimate targets for additional tutelary intervention, under the principle of in *loco parentis*. This is considered necessary in order to assist young people to navigate a course through the rapids of risks and dangers in their transition to adulthood. However, as we shall see, different regulatory strategies tend to highlight and simplify different conceptions of risk facing different groups.

There are undoubtedly broad, aggregate differences in norms, values, lifestyles and patterns of behaviour between young people divided by gender, class, religion and ethnicity. Nevertheless these differences should not be overstated, particularly where young people routinely cross the social border lines. Furthermore, there is increasing evidence that, despite these social divisions, young people across the board face an increasingly complex and interdependent range of risks relating to criminal victimisation and offending, experimenting with illegal drugs and so on. Hence, a simple distinction, for example, between groups of young people characterised as 'victims' and as 'offenders' is difficult to draw (Anderson et al, 1990; Parker, 1993)[4]. And this also became apparent in researching the street scene, the subject of our illustrative case study.

Methods

Over a period of nine years, there were four periods of intensive data collection: during 1983-84; 1985-86; 1989 and 1992. One of the authors (FF), in the first two years of the project, combined detached youth work and participant observation. In the later periods of fieldwork, research with the youth workers involved observation of their practice with young people in a club, on the streets, in public meetings and also the use of in depth interviews. This was paralleled with the use of the same methods with community groups, the police and with young people. In addition, focus group interviews were conducted with the young people and with beat police officers. In the summer and autumn of 1992, assisted by an African-Caribbean researcher, we also studied a youth club, 'Contact', catering mainly to African-Caribbean young people and located in 'Hightown', one of the regular assembly locations for those involved in the street scene. Moreover, in the less intense periods of data collection, an analysis of relevant media reporting was conducted and a low level of continuous monitoring was maintained.

Characteristics of the Scene and its Promblematisation

At the core of this scene were young and predominantly affluent, Jewish people, between about 13 and 21, who gathered in large numbers (up to 200) in a variety of public locations within areas of Jewish settlement. The Jewish young people did not conform with the usual stereotypes of poor troublesome youth and were, in general, viewed by the police as relatively non-criminal. Nevertheless, there were persistent concerns within community organisations and in the Jewish media about these young people, with respect to drug dealing and abuse (Jimack, 1987), under-age drinking, traffic offences, late night noise and the attendant shame all this might bring on the community.

The Jewish young people were joined by smaller groups of non-Jewish young people, who were to varying degrees integrated into the scene. The involvement of these groups, who have included working class white and African-Caribbean young people, from less affluent neighbourhoods, has been defined within the Jewish media, by Jewish community groups and by the police as problematic. Since the mid-1980s, the perennial concerns about white anti-Semites were joined by a concern (contested within the Jewish community) about African-Caribbean young men, many of whom were perceived to be engaged in drug dealing and in routine thefts from the Jewish young people. The latter practice is known in street argot as the 'taxing' of the better off by young people from less affluent backgrounds (cf. Painter, 1993). This must be seen against the backcloth of fears that, as in the USA, there may be a drift towards a general deterioration in relations between peoples from the Jewish and African diasporas (Alderman, 1989: 111-146).

The concerns over the behaviour of the white and black non-Jewish young people, drawn from mainly poorer neighbourhoods, were not wholly unfounded. Nevertheless, they could be seen to draw upon and to reinforce at local level, a repertoire of negative, criminalised cultural stereotypes about lower working class youth in general and about African-Caribbean youth in particular (Solomos, 1989; Jefferson 1992). In so far as the street scene was viewed by the police and community organisations and media as (middle class) Jewish, then other groups attracted to the scene tended to be seen as constituting a population of threatening and possibly predatory 'others', whose reasons for being around were viewed as inherently suspect.

During the early 1980s there was debate about the extent to which the street scene could be seen, on the one hand, as constituting a problem for community defence of young people seen as at risk from anti-Semitic attack and criminal victimisation (mainly assaults and theft from the person) by other groups of young people, or on the other hand, as constituting a moral or welfare issue, requiring youth work intervention on the streets. Between 1983 and 1985, the Board of Deputies of British Jews and other community organisations developed an uneasy compromise in their conceptualisation of the problems. At one level, the issue was seen as community defence. This led to the inception of a series of defence initiatives involving adult volunteers, working in coordination with the police. These people were engaged in monitoring the situation, providing a low key defence of young people on the street and on occasions mediating with the police in order to divert those Jewish young people, arrested for petty offences, from the criminal justice system. Since 1988, this initiative was transformed into `The Organisation of Jewish Youth' (OJY), which included self defence and education classes for young people. These were designed to improve their survival skills on the street and to promote an ethic of responsibility among older teenagers to monitor and protect (in a non-violent way) the less streetwise younger Jewish people on the street (Factor and Stenson, 1987, Stenson and Factor, 1992; Johnston, 1992: 164).

At another level, it was gradually and reluctantly accepted by some of the Jewish agencies that the young people, despite exhortation, would not 'return' to the safe confines of the well resourced Jewish youth clubs, or closed and regulated centres of commercial entertainment. The result was, since 1984, the setting up of a series of detached and out-reach youth work schemes, mainly funded from within the Jewish community, but more recently with some support from a local authority. However, the funding base of these schemes was always very limited and uncertain and the staffing - at most two workers - minimal in relation to the numbers of young people on the streets. A consistent complaint by the youth workers was that the aims of detached and out-reach work on the streets were not clearly understood by either the police or most of the adult Jewish organisations and media. They were seen as at best a necessary evil, which may have inadvertently reinforced the street scene. Moreover, their relations with the community defence volunteers, were uneasy and conflictual. Although it should be recognised that a degree of conflict between agencies involved in multi-agency strategies is probably endemic (cf. Blagg et al, 1988).

This example of a multi-agency strategy for crime prevention and control may seem unusual in that it was not developed within the auspices of official schemes fostered by the Home Office. Moreover, lines of communication and accountability between the police and community representatives, including the youth workers, did not oper-

ate through the official Police/community liaison committees, constituted under the auspices of section 106 of The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984. Rather, relations operated through informal and un-minuted Police-Jewish liaison committees, meeting at six week intervals. It should be noted that this informal method of accountability was quite compatible with section 106 of PACE (Morgan, 1989).

The scheme resulted largely from community, rather than statutory agency initiatives. Nevertheless, as recent debates have demonstrated, where there is declining faith in the police and criminal justice systems to provide protection and justice, we can expect to see a burgeoning of such initiatives (Johnston, 1992). Furthermore, even in more 'official' schemes, there are limits to the extent that official policies can define, monitor and control the relations between representatives of organisations involved in multi-agency schemes. Informal, less visible and less accountable relationships can be important sites of power relations, while front line agents retain considerable scope for discretionary action (Crawford and Jones, 1993).

The latter point is likely to be particularly salient in considering the role of youth workers, whether or not they are employed in more or less formally instituted multi-agency programmes. For it is in the nature of their work that they must try to enlarge their scope for independent practice, going beyond the formal guidelines of policy and organisational structure. They must, to a large extent, be seen to work independently of other regulatory agencies and to highlight the interests of young people, in order to retain their confidence. In turn, in this instance, this created some scope for the Jewish youth workers to develop - on a small scale - alliances with local authority youth workers who were working with African-Caribbean young people. These workers were operating within similar professional knowledge and value bases, were confronting similar day to day practical constraints in retaining credibility with young people, and, similarly, faced conflicting expectations from the police.

Risk - As Victims and as Offenders

However, despite overlaps in values and practice between the Jewish youth workers and those working with the African-Caribbean young people, their work was conditioned by a wider backcloth of policy goals, cultural assumptions and working practices of other agencies and involved parties. Though these images were resisted by the arguments of the youth workers, they did so with very limited resources in comparison to those at the disposal of other agencies and groups. This backcloth crystallised a differentiated view of the status of the Jewish and non-Jewish - particularly African-Caribbean - youth involved in the scene. Broadly, the African-Caribbean young people were viewed as 'at risk' as actual or potential 'offenders'. On the other hand the Jewish young people were viewed as 'at risk' as actual or potential 'victims'. The risks ranged from the physical risks of criminal victimisation to a series of moral risks. However, the youth workers also highlighted the risk faced by all the young people from unfair or premature stigmatisation by the police and the operations of the criminal justice system. In order to illustrate the perceptions of the youth workers, let us, in turn, briefly consider the working contexts of the Jewish youth workers and those working with the African-Caribbean young people.

Working Contexts of Youth Work Intervention

The Jewish Context

The most recent initiative with the Jewish young people, began in 1990, though its funding, like previous projects, remained continually uncertain. It was organised jointly by the Maccabi Union, the largest Jewish youth organisation and the

Maccabi Association of London, which organised the largest Jewish youth centre in North London. This project was part-funded by the local authority; it employed two workers and the Maccabi club remained a base for operations. The street workers echoed closely the views of workers on earlier detached and out-reach projects dealing with this scene, in terms of the differences between their aims and those of other agencies, particularly the defence volunteers and the police.

The main aims of the project were to make links with young Jewish people on the street, identify needs and enable them to access a range of advisory facilities provided by both voluntary and statutory agencies. These related to problems with jobs, illegal drugs, homelessness, sexual health, personal difficulties at home and so on. In addition, the workers evolved their own practical definitions of their role. These included troubleshooting: mediating between groups of young people, particularly if violence or other forms of conflict seemed to be a possible outcome, and between the Jewish young people and the police. They also included providing transport for young people between locations and at the end of the evening, transport home for those who would otherwise have to walk or be exposed to danger. One of the workers instanced occasions when these services were provided to African-Caribbean young men, indicating the extent that he felt it necessary to go beyond his narrow organisational brief.

According to the director of the project, in addition to responding to the stated needs of the young people, the workers' agenda and practice on the streets were broader than those made explicit to the young people or to the funders of the project, both within the community and at local authority level. Through the contacts established with young people, attempts were made to raise issues relating to equal opportunities, challenge racism and sexism and other forms of inequality in the wider society. Hence, this strategy could be seen to have operated within the auspices of the radical pedagogical model of youth work.

This agenda was broader than that of the traditional Jewish youth agencies and movements, which, while trying to equip young people with the knowledge and skills needed to adapt to British society, were largely inward looking and concerned with issues of Jewish socialization, identity and community solidarity, as defined by adults (Bunt, 1975). By contrast, the agenda of the street youth workers accepted the right of young Jewish people to develop their own conceptions of Jewishness, but also emphasised the need to respect those from other communities and develop the ability to relate to people across social boundaries. In short, the values and practices of these Jewish youth workers transcended narrow community concerns to embrace the concern of the youth work profession with a social education for citizenship. This necessarily extended the scope of practice beyond the Jewish community; moreover, it also illustrated the limitations of viewing agency workers as members of bounded organisations, accountable principally to the organisational hierarchy (Crawford and Jones, op cit).

Hence, while there was some concern with helping to steer young people away from anti-social conduct, the dominant concerns were with assisting young people to conceptualise and deal with a complex range of risks and dangers. The youth workers included in this range the risks to both Jewish and African-Caribbean young people which stemmed from the behaviour of the Police and the defence volunteers. Furthermore, as we have argued elsewhere, it is crucial to note that governmental con-

ceptions and measures of risks, whether framed in morally radical or conservative terms, do not necessarily coincide with those employed by young people on the streets.

Despite a prevailing concern for personal safety, as with those from poorer backgrounds, these young people from predominantly affluent and protective backgrounds, found risks and dangers on the street to be positive attractions. They provided a stimulus and a context for excitement, the crossing of moral and social boundaries, the testing of one`s skills of survival, the exploration of identity and the challenge to authority[5]. *Hence the governmental practices of risk reduction, reduced the level of danger and provided a somewhat cushioned social space. In this protected space, young people in their passage to adulthood could experience risks and the testing of authority as existential challenges; hence the street scene constituted an urban equivalent to the outward bound course* (Matza, 1969; Plant and Plant, 1992; Factor and Stenson, op cit; Stenson and Factor op cit).

Relations with the Police

Despite the commitment of the police to a gentle community policing framework, the attitudes of individual officers varied. In the perception of the street director of the project,

> *I don't think the police ever really understood the role of us in terms of us being youth workers. I think they understood it in terms of us looking after the young people and to try and encourage them off the streets.*

In the judgment of one male worker, most officers 'don't know what they want from community liaison'. Furthermore, at meetings, 'little space is given for youth workers and others to voice their experiences and views'. On the streets and at the Police-Jewish liaison committees, to which they were invited, they experienced pressure to share the aims of the police in prioritising the maintenance of public order. Furthermore, according to this worker, in the face of these pressures, they would employ artful impression management,

> *Sometimes I was put on the spot by the police, they think we are there for a similar purpose. So you say the appropriate thing, whereas in reality, you usually take the kids side.*

There were, consequently, conflictual situations in which young people were asked to move on. In these circumstances, the youth workers made discreet interventions to discourage arrest. As the (female) director put it,

> *We would wander by, eavesdrop, make our presence known to the police that we were around. Usually then the police would turn to us as the adult on the street and see if we would take up dealing with the situation, particularly if they wanted the street dispersed...* ***There was a real fine line of trying to safeguard our young people from being threatened with arrest or physically moved and around not colluding with the police.***

The detached workers echoed their predecessors in arguing that despite good relations at times with particular officers, in general, the police did not understand the role of the youth workers and at best saw them simply as an adjunct to the police. However, they stressed that there were notable exceptions among officers and the

male worker instanced a (rare) example of a Chief Inspector who seemed more in touch with the youth workers and with what was happening on the streets. This officer would spend time hanging around in plain clothes, observing the street scene. Furthermore, this worker argued that, 'the police should take a more active role and take advantage of us being there...being there to introduce youth workers to beat officers - work more closely with youth workers'.

Relations with the Organisation of Jewish Youth

The Jewish street youth workers, as indeed many of the club based youth workers, at all stages of the study reported difficulties in their relations with the defence volunteers. As the female worker put it,

> *MAL (Macabbi Association London - the club base for the out-reach workers) clearly stated on a number of occasions that they were unhappy with OJ's presence on the street and what their policy was with regard to so called protecting young people. MAL made it clear on several occasions that they thought they leaned to being racist. The workers on the project were given a very clear line from management not to communicate with them at any level.*

This deep rooted distrust stemmed from a fundamental difference in the value orientation of the two groups. In essence, the concerns of the youth workers with an education for an outward looking citizenship and the importance of building bridges between the Jewish and other groups of young people, clashed with the emphasis placed by the volunteers on the defence of Jewish young people and a traditional religious family morality.

For example, youth workers often reported being pressured by defence volunteers to provide them with information about drug dealers, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and others engaged in criminal activities. Furthermore, the youth workers were particularly critical of the role of the young OJY members, graduates of the OJY training courses, who were seen as aggressive to non-Jewish groups of young people on the scene.

Youth workers, frequently at public meetings and elsewhere, claimed that the Jewish media and security volunteers exaggerated the experience of, or threat of, criminal victimisation by black youth and in effect fostered racist attitudes among young Jewish people and divisions between the black and Jewish young people (Jewish Chronicle, May 31, 1991; Gold, 1991:37). Furthermore, in a three month period working on the scene, during which he was engaged in a survey of attitudes and behaviour, one youth worker had not personally witnessed any acts of violence (Gold, 1991:37). The resulting report also pointed out that 18% of those interviewed equated the presence of African-Caribbean young people on the scene as some sort of threat.

Nevertheless, the negative stereotypes about African-Caribbean young people had been reinforced to a degree by the involvement of some of them in a spate of serious crimes in 1990. A major police operation, with the assistance of monitoring work by adult members of OJY, resulted in the conviction in May 1991 of a group of young African-Caribbean men for multiple serious offences; these included theft and demanding money with menaces. More than twenty young Jewish people had given evidence for the prosecution at the trial, breaking a convention on the streets that these issues should not be reported to the police. However, it should be emphasised that from observations on the streets and interviews with youth work-

ers and young people, we were unable to find evidence that the majority of young African-Caribbean men were involved in serious crimes of this nature. Predictably, the behaviour of a few provided a rationale for treating the majority of this group with routinised suspicion (cf Burney, 1990).

The African-Caribbean Context

While the major brief of the Jewish youth workers was to maintain contact with the Jewish young people, one of them also maintained regular contact with youth workers and young people at 'Contact', a youth club financed - though on a fragile basis and with limited resources - and staffed by the local authority. This club was located in 'Hightown' and catered mainly to African-Caribbean young people. The aim of this contact was to promote more positive relations between the Jewish and African-Caribbean young people. In the accounts of this worker, reinforced by our own interviews with African - Caribbean young people, between 1991-2, these young people experienced increasing attention from the police, with frequent stop and search procedures. The worker confirmed that he had witnessed a number of these stops on the street.

Moreover, attitudes expressed by the African-Caribbean young people about the Jewish defence volunteers and the police were generally negative, even though they admitted that the police harassed them less in the street scene locations than in the neighbourhoods where they lived. As one young woman put it,'the Jewish people have too much influence on the police in "Hightown"'. In addition, they denied that they were routinely involved in crimes against the Jewish young people, and denied that they were more involved in drug dealing than were the Jewish young people. Rather, they claimed that the police were biased against them and were more likely to be stopped and searched and to be charged with possession of illegal drugs with the purpose of dealing, even when in possession of small quantities for personal use.

Relations with the Police

Against the backcloth of difficult relations, nationally, between many police officers and the African-Caribbean young people and their wider cultural stigmatisation as folk devils, it is not surprising that relations between the club based youth workers at 'Contact' and the local police were even more problematic than was the case with the Jewish youth workers. Both the young people and the youth workers recounted several instances of young African-Caribbean people being abused or in their view harassed by individual officers in the 'Hightown' area. Police cars were regularly to be seen parked outside on the busy nights, their occupants engaged in surveillance of club attenders, who often used the club as a home base for their forays into the crowded street scene. Moreover, like the Jewish workers, the 'Contact' workers also claimed that most officers expected them to supplement the police role. For example, a local Home Beat officer visited, requesting that the youth workers provide information about the young people who attended the club: their names, where they lived and so on. This request was rejected. In fact the workers refused, on principle, to allow officers into the club unless specifically requested by the workers or the young people.

However, in acknowledgement that the police did not act like a group monolith, the workers, in their experience of this and a variety of other youth work settings involving African-Caribbean young people, recognised significant differences in general attitudes between police divisions, depending on their policies and the attitudes of Chief Inspectors and Superintendents. In addition, variations in individual attitudes were recognised as significant. For example as one worker put it, 'But

there's one bloke John who's OK'. This young officer had offered to come into the club on a regular basis, but was refused. However, given his sympathetic manner, the young people requested that he come in to sort out a dispute.

A young man from an Irish traveller family, attending the club, had been accused by other young people of stealing personal goods. On being confronted by an older and larger African-Caribbean young man, he responded with racial abuse, whereupon he was beaten up. The young beat officer successfully resolved the dispute by publicly warning the Irish young man about racist language and the African-Caribbean young man about hitting smaller kids. However, despite incidents like this illustrating the negotiation of working relationships at the individual level, given the lack of regular, accountable communication between the youth workers and the police, it was difficult for the youth workers to negotiate a working inter-agency relationship at a policy level.

Crime Prevention and Morality

Though the youth workers identified strongly and protectively with the African-Caribbean young people, this did not mean that they necessarily provided moral endorsement for everything they said and did. They shared with the Jewish workers a commitment to a radical version of the social education agenda for youth work. As the director of the Project put it, 'we operate an anti-sexist and anti-racist policy here and the kids know it'. Given inadequate resourcing, insecure funding and low morale among workers, this was not always apparent in the practice of workers or in the conduct of the young people. However, it did involve, on occasions, challenges to what the youth workers described as homophobic or sexist language used by the young men and aggressively abusive male behaviour towards young women. It also involved the discouragement of the playing of those rap and ragga records which were seen as using particularly offensive language. The workers cited the example of one young man who was, in their judgement, so aggressive and sexist in his behaviour to the young women that he was banned from the club. Furthermore, links were drawn by youth workers, in this and other cases, between sexist attitudes and behaviour and a more general commitment to anti-social attitudes and violent behaviour[6].

It was within this broader agenda of concerns that the workers dealt with issues of crime and crime prevention. As the director put it, 'its part of what we do'; the workers claim that the morality of criminal behaviour is frequently discussed with the young people. However, as one African-Caribbean worker put it, 'you tread a very thin line' in discouraging the more violent forms of crime and stealing from ordinary people and yet not preaching a general anti-crime and pro-police philosophy. According to this youth worker, the usual response by young people to the latter moral message was that, given limited employment prospects, 'what else is there but crime?'

However, the youth workers argued that contrary to the stereotypes, if these young people were involved in crime, at most it was of a petty nature, like shoplifting: 'they sometimes (unbidden) bring back milk for us but they wouldn't hide in alleys and mug people'. Their stated moral strategy was to begin with relations between the young people themselves, especially in the club context, discouraging theft from each other and of club property. From this moral base, the message went beyond to embrace broader spheres. In the director's terms

> *I tell them it is wrong to steal from your own. The ones who rip off the Jewish kids and (the club's record) decks are exactly the ones who steal from other kids, family, neighbours.*

In particular, stress is placed on injunctions not to steal from those who have little. As one worker put it, 'It's a matter of rich and poor, rather than race'.

As indicated, for reasons of resourcing and morale, it is unlikely that this moral strategy was systematically applied on a day to day basis. Moreover, a comprehensive evaluation of the translation of policy into practice was beyond the scope of this research project, but this account does indicate the range of practices which are possible, and that this kind of moral discourse can probably only effectively operate within fragile, bounded contexts. Preaching about the general evil of illegality is unlikely to engage the attention of these young people.

Conclusion

We have argued that in an informally constituted inter-agency programme for regulating diverse groups of young people considered to be 'at risk', conceptions of risk varied. While attempting to subvert these notions, youth workers, as less powerful players in the multi-agency framework, were not in a position to reject them entirely. On the one hand, in the case of the more affluent young people, guarded, in collaboration with the police, by the protective shield of community organisations, risk was broadly conceptualised in terms of vulnerability to criminal and other forms of actual or possible victimisation. On the other hand, the less affluent young people, perceived to constitute the 'other', a population of outsiders in relation to those within the protective shield, were considered to be at risk principally from embarking on criminal careers.

However, the Jewish youth workers and those working with the African-Caribbean young people also, in coping with differential conceptions of the risks facing their client groups, had to make their own creative interpretations and negotiations of the problems facing young people. They did so in the light of the practical exigencies of the work. These had to be considered in order to maintain credibility with their clients. Situated negotiations also operated in the light of wider professional knowledge and value bases. In this sense both groups of worker shared overlapping concerns and aims.

In such settings, youth workers need to create and maintain a working space, with sufficient autonomy to enable them to meet their professional goals and balance conflicting demands from funders, powerful external agencies and the young people. It is also suggested that when operating within a broad value framework, which promotes crime prevention and a socially responsible citizenship, it is necessary that the police recognise and understand their separate functions in the task of social regulation. *Some divergence of aims and loyalty therefore is to be expected and accepted.* While there will continue to be grey areas with respect to the condoning of illegality, the police must recognise that for youth workers to maintain credibility with 'hard to reach' young people, they must be able to convince them that they hold their interests at heart (Graham and Smith, op cit). Hence, the contribution of youth workers to crime prevention operates at a variety of levels and cannot be detached from a broader agenda.

However, given the recent drift towards short run youth work interventions with a narrow crime prevention brief, there is a danger that funders of such projects and other agencies with whom youth workers must interact, will fail to acknowledge this broader agenda. It is likely that the long term success of such projects will depend on the complementary provision of comprehensive services to young people (Pitts, 1988).

Recognising that the complex of attitudes and behaviours predisposing young people towards crime are interwoven in much richer psychological and social pat-

terns, such short term initiatives cannot be measured in any meaningful sense, by using simple indices like crime statistics or narrow conceptions of behavioural change. Furthermore, to avoid open conflict between youth workers and the police, it is essential that, with the assistance of researchers, structures be developed not only to formulate and coordinate goals and share some information, but also to facilitate the settling of disputes. These will inevitably occur between the agencies.

However, if this role is to be developed, then there would have to be a significant enhancement of the status of detached and out-reach youth workers and a reorientation of training to reflect their pivotal role. Not least, in order for them to maintain links with highly mobile young people, they would have to be allowed to slip the leash of local authority boundaries. They should, perhaps, be organised within larger regional frameworks and with a ring-fenced statutory funding base. In the conditions of advanced liberalism, where there is limited scope for authoritarian, disciplinary modes of youth regulation, detached and out-reach youth workers may well move from being lowly paid, marginal and misunderstood adjuncts to the major agencies, to a role at centre stage in the necessarily circuitous government of young people.

Fiona Factor *is a training Officer with the Youth and Community Service in Hertfordshire. She received a Bsc in sociology from Buckinghamshire College and her youth work training was undertaken at Manchester Metropolitan University. She worked for several years as a detached youth worker and has published several articles and papers on young people and policing. She is currently researching for a doctorate at the LSE, on the theme of youth justice.*

Kevin Stenson *is Head of Criminology at the Buckinghamshire College (of Brunel University). He studied sociology at Middlesex and Leeds Universities and received his Ph.D. in human sciences from Brunel University. His publications include (co-edited with the late David Cowell)* ***The Politics of Crime Control****. London: Sage, 1991.*

Notes

1. The notion of government used here is not narrowly understood as the exercise of power on behalf of the local or national state. Rather, the term refers more broadly to the conduct of conduct. This operates in a multiplicity of sites, without necessarily cohering into a centralised apparatus of power. It refers, therefore to the whole spectrum of regulatory practices, ranging from self government to the regulation of inter-state relations (Foucault, 1991; Gordon, 1991).

2. Having emerged from the womb of the former, the latter model should not be seen as a radical alternative, nor as a simple historical replacement. Rather, these models are best seen as extending the repertoires of forms of professional knowledge.

3. This was elaborated, for example, at the First Ministerial Conference on the Youth Service at Blackpool in 1990.

4. It should be recognised that in governmental professional knowledges, assessment of risks are often operationalised in terms of quantifiable codes and indicators. This is so particularly in the assessment of perceived points that young people have reached in the scale of tariffs within the criminal justice system (Williams and Creamer, 1993).

5. Street locations, though often innocuously dull during the daytime, can, at night, provide routine settings for these activities. They can function as risky, carnivalesque 'places on the margin' of respectable neighbourhoods (cf Shields, 1991).

6. This could be viewed as an instance of the theme which was emerging strongly at this time in both professional and academic criminological discourses. Under the impact of feminist theorising, links were drawn between anti-social behaviour and what were perceived to be hegemonic forms of misogynist, heterosexual masculinity (Heidensohn, 1987; Connell, 1987; Liddle, 1993).

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YOUTH & THE RAVE CULTURE, ECSTASY & HEALTH

JACQUELINE MERCHANT AND ROBERT MACDONALD.

Abstract

This paper charts the rise and development of the Rave Culture in the UK and the use of illicit drugs, like Ecstasy, that have accompanied it. Drawing upon a small qualitative study with young people in the North-East of England, and upon the emerging sociological and health literature on Rave and Ecstasy, the paper examines, firstly, the health consequences of Ecstasy use and health promotional strategies to deal with these. Well-informed, sensitive, localized harm reduction policies involving peer education are likely to be most effective in dealing with the dangers of, particularly, polydrug use.

The second main aim of the piece is to consider the implications of these youth cultural phenomena for our sociological understanding of youth. The sub-cultural perspective of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (at the University of Birmingham in the 1970s) is assessed and found wanting. Rave Culture is different to previous youth (sub)cultures in a number of significant ways and yet the empirical data with which to construct more persuasive theoretical accounts remains to be collected. The paper concludes with a call for a return to sociological explorations of youth culture and sets out a number of empirical and theoretical tasks which researchers might consider if we are to more fully understand youth cultures like this.

Introduction.

At the end of the 1980s, Rave Culture, underpinned by the use of the drug Ecstasy, became the most vibrant, popular and visible cultural expression of young people. Academic sociologists, once quick to chart and unravel the meanings of youth (sub)cultures, have had relatively little to say about Rave. More analysis and discussion has been undertaken by those working from a health perspective.

This article has two objectives. Firstly, it discusses how Rave Culture and Ecstasy use impact upon youth culture, and our sociological understanding of youth culture, and, secondly, it takes a more policy-oriented perspective and describes the health implications of Ecstasy use by young people[1].

1. The Rise of Rave.

After the late 1970s, after Punk, youth culture seemed to have gone to sleep. The 'Thatcher Generation' was investigated by documentary makers and found to be individualistic, apathetic and conservative. The parade of rebellious, post-war youth styles - from Teddy boys to Punks - seemed to have come to an abrupt halt by the mid-1980s (Redhead, 1991).

Partly as a consequence of this, and partly because of the rising levels of youth unemployment in the early 1980s, sub-cultural studies of youth (e.g. Hall and Jefferson, 1976) gave way to another tradition of research: investigation of young people in the labour market (Coles, 1986; Jeffs and Smith, 1992). The ways that school-leavers made transitions through education, government schemes and (un)employment towards adulthood became the foci of attention (e.g. Banks, et al.,

1992). Previous fascination with stylistic resistance was all but abandoned and, anyway, was it not the case that youth culture itself was no longer interesting?

The rise of Acid House, Rave and a widespread dance culture in the mid to late 1980s suggests not, but as yet has met with only a half-hearted response from youth experts. Whilst researchers have been busy plotting the 'career trajectories' carved out by young people through unequal structures of opportunities, they have largely missed some of the most significant developments in youth culture in the past twenty years [2].

In this section we draw upon the few studies that have been carried out at the margins of youth sociology to trace the contours of the Rave Culture.

The musical/ cultural origins of Rave are located in 'Acid House', which itself was a variant of Chicago 'House Music'. Acid House DJs and producers employed innovative recording techniques to produce dance music which was bass-driven, repetitive, hypnotic and psychedelic. Probably more important than the form of the music itself was the dance culture of Acid House. Evans (1990), Redhead (1993) and others have described how British DJs and dance music fans holidaying in Ibiza in the mid-80s were so enamoured with the so-called 'Balearic Beat' music, the relaxed, friendly attitude and the energetic dancing amongst club-goers (many of them British holiday makers) that they smuggled both music and dance culture back to, what at the time was, a stale UK club scene.

By 1988, Acid House had taken root in the club cultures of many UK cities. Although the 'Acid' tag referred to the music, use of drugs (most notably Ecstasy) quickly became associated with Acid House clubs and parties. With a tabloid press as keen as ever to report the moral and legal transgressions of troublesome youth, many thousands more 'adventure-seeking youngsters were alerted to the summer's fun' and came to the aid of the party (Farrell, 1989, p.943).

Early venues included, as well as nightclubs, any free (or cheap), large, unused spaces where hundreds or thousands of young people could congregate for night-long parties. Warehouses, aircraft hangers, open fields and motor-way underpasses were the arenas for the music, drug taking and the dance/ party culture which, by the end of the decade, had come to be called the Rave Culture.

Mainstream clubs, aware of the 'fast bucks' being made by entrepreneurs hosting unauthorized warehouse parties, were quick to run their own legal and better organised ventures. Most nightclubs in most UK cities now hold occasional (weekly or monthly) Rave-oriented nights.

Whilst the move into the mainstream was in part motivated by the profits to be made, the increasingly stringent policing of the 'underground' Rave Culture also played a part. The media promoted Ravers as the new 'folk devils' and, as with any new youth 'moral panic', the police were quick to clamp-down upon the supposed threat to social order that the culture posed (Redhead, 1991). The Entertainments (Increased Penalties) Act of 1990 heralded in quite Draconian measures to quash the Rave Culture (e.g ranging from fines and confiscation of record decks and PA systems to the long-term imprisonment of Rave organisers). In the Autumn of 1993, the Home Secretary announced further powers to crack down upon Ravers (and 'New Age Travellers' and squatters), as part of his general crusade against 'juvenile crime'.

By 1993, illegal warehouse Raves had become virtually extinct. However, as the popularity of the Rave/dance culture grew it also diversified. Some Rave events have become enormous affairs: legal, one-off special events (complete with several stages, competing DJs and bands, elaborate light and laser shows, 'chill out' rooms, 'bouncy castles' and games).

During the summers of the early 1990s two seemingly opposed youth cultures came into contact. Rural 'New Age Travellers' were joined temporarily by youths from urban areas for Rave events (Smith, 1992). Such a festival at Castlemorton in the summer of 1992 received widespread media coverage and condemnation from politicians and the press, adding extra momentum to the government's crack-down on Rave. It would seem that government legislation and hostile media reports have attempted to class together youth cultural groups which, certainly initially, had quite different origins, lifestyles and focal concerns (see footnotes 6 and 7).

The Rave Culture as a whole has become far more fragmented than it was in 1986 or even 1990 (and now involves players as diverse as 'New Age Travellers', working-class nightclubbers and university students attending college raves). The more organised club sector of the Rave Culture has also mutated, offering a profusion of dance-oriented musical styles (in February 1993 the youth style magazine *The Face* offered a 'bluffer's guide' to the new dance tribes of the 1990s). Clubs offer different types of Rave night to cater for the musical tastes of an age/ class differentiated client group: from 'mellow groove' through 'ambient' and 'trance' to 'hardcore', 'garage' and 'techno' (see Redhead, 1993, for a discussion).

Newcombe defines a Rave as:

> *a long period of constant energetic and stylistic dancing exhibited by a large group of people in a hot, crowded facility providing continuous loud House music and an accompanying strobe-lit psychedelic light show (1991, p.4)*

Raves can last for several hours, often into the following morning. They are relatively expensive affairs with entry to most commercial clubs and events costing between £12 and £30. Now fewer raves are covert and illegal (in that they break licensing and health and safety regulations). Rave has become big business and, despite its relative absence from the tabloid headlines in the last two years, Rave Culture, in its various mutations, continues to be extremely popular with enormous numbers of young men and women from diverse backgrounds.

If we take Newcombe's estimate - that, in 1991, 20 to 30 thousand people were attending Raves in the North-West of England - to be reasonably accurate, then hundreds of thousands of British youth have been to Raves. We would maintain that *quantitatively,* Rave is far more significant than the other post-war youth subcultures put together. Only a small minority ever came near to the Punks, Teds, Skinheads and so on (Clarke, 1982) and later we will argue that Rave Culture is also *qualitatively* different from such sub-cultures.

There is one area, however, in which Rave Culture shares much in common with its youth cultural predecessors; whilst style, music and drugs form the youthful trinity at the heart of post-war youth cultures, the use of drugs (particularly Ecstasy) has become *the* defining feature of Rave culture.

2. Brief Notes on Ecstasy.

In the Autumn of 1992, 'Ebeneezer Goode', a song by 'The Shamen', was the biggest-selling single in Britain for several weeks. It included the lines:

Ebeneezer Goode's the leading light of the scene, know what I mean,
he created the vibe.
He takes you for a ride, and as if by design,
the party ignites like he's coming alive.
He takes you to the top,
shakes you all around and back down,
you know, as he get mellow...
A gentleman of leisure,
he's there for you're pleasure,
But go easy on old Eezer,
he's the kind of geezer who should never be abused.
[chorus] Eezer Goode, Eezer Goode! He's Ebeneezer Goode.

Whilst it is always a risky business to say what songs are 'really about', it would be hard not to interpret this as a paean to the merits of the drug Ecstasy. The chorus - 'E's are good' - and the lyrics took us on a tour of the marvels of Ecstasy.

Chemically, Ecstasy is known as 3, 4, methylenedioxymetamphetamine (or MDMA). More popularly it is known as 'E' but also trades under a variety of street names such as 'White Doves', 'Love Doves' and 'New Yorkers'. The red and yellow capsules circulating in Newcastle at the time of our research were known as 'Rhubarb and Custard'. (The physical appearance of the drug differs according to the balance of chemical ingredients within it).

Ecstasy is categorized as an hallucinogenic amphetamine - a group of drugs that combines the effects of amphetamine (speed) and LSD (acid). The drug has a chequered history (usefully retold by Saunders, 1993): MDMA and its parent compound have been used to treat Parkinson's disease in the 1940s, in American chemical warfare experiments in the 1950s and in the treatment of marital problems by US psychiatrists in the 1960s. MDMA itself was banned in America in 1985, after 'recreational' use of the drug reached a significant scale (ISDD, 1992). 1985 saw one of the first reports that Ecstasy was being widely used by young people in Britain (Naysmith, 1985). The government categorized MDMA as a Class A drug: those regarded as the most harmful and where penalties for illegal use are the most severe (up to seven years in prison plus an unlimited fine for possession, and up to life in prison and an unlimited fine for dealing) (ISDD, 1992).

As the ISDD (1992) also report, that marketed as Ecstasy has ranged, however:

> *from relatively pure MDMA, amphetamine sulphate or LSD, to any of these in combination. Dealers have also sold dried mushrooms in tablet form, Ketamine (an anaesthetic with hallucinogenic properties) and even dog-worming tablets as Ecstasy.*

The price of the drug has varied over the past five years and varies by region, supply to the market and place of purchase (it costs more if bought inside a Rave rather than beforehand). In the North-East of England at the time of this research Ecstasy tablets cost between £12 and £15.

3. Raves, Ecstasy and Health: a Study in the North-East of England.

(i). Method.

The fieldwork for this study was carried out in 1992 and consisted of: qualitative interviews with twenty young men and women (aged 18 to 28 years old) who were involved with the Rave scene in the North-East of England (all but one of whom were, or had been, regular Ecstasy users); participant observation at Raves, drug advice and drop-in centres; interviews of, and participant observation with, drug and other health professionals. The primary aim was to investigate the health consequences of Ecstasy use within the Rave Culture.

Although first informants were met via drug agencies, the majority were contacted directly at Raves and through a 'snowballing' strategy whereby early interviewees suggested others for us to talk to. Their average age was 23 years old, all were white and most were working-class. All names have been changed. Interviews took place in informants' homes, business premises, in cafeterias, in Raves themselves (producing interesting methodological problems!).

(ii). Young People Using Ecstasy.

Given the qualitative nature of our study it is impossible to estimate accurately the prevalence of Ecstasy use in our area. Unfortunately, other sound, quantifications of the prevalence of Ecstasy are few. A poll of nearly seven hundred young people who went to Raves (Harris Research Centre, 1992) found that 33 per cent had taken drugs (31 per cent of whom reported having taken Ecstasy). Yet 67 per cent of the whole sample said that their friends had taken drugs, suggesting that either the sample was oddly skewed, or as Saunders (1993) also suggests, that respondents were being less than totally honest in declaring that *they* had not taken drugs. A survey carried out for *Time Out* magazine, of 25 year olds in London in 1993, found that almost all had taken cannabis and 38 per cent had tried Ecstasy (reported in *The Guardian,* 27th September, 1993).

Farrell (1989) reports that only 4 per cent of students surveyed had experimented with hallucinogens. He speculated, however, that future surveys would show a higher figure as the Rave Culture became more popular amongst students. Indeed, more recent research by Jason Ditton in Scotland has found that 14 per cent of first year higher education students had used Ecstasy (West, 1992, personal communication). In late 1993 impressionistic data was gathered by one of the authors (RM) from university students in the North-East of England; this suggested that between 20 and 30 per cent had tried Ecstasy.

It is likely that there are hundreds of thousands of young people taking the drug nationwide. Various studies have reported the massive rise in drug use as part of this dance culture (Ashton, 1993; Clements, 1993) and amongst increasingly younger people (Measham et al, 1993). Smith (1992) reports that as many as half a million people may be regularly taking Ecstasy in Britain, whilst others put the figures even higher, at between one and five million (Saunders, 1993). One commentator even suggests that a majority of young people take Ecstasy (Taylor, reported in Saunders, 1993, p.128). Police seizures of Ecstasy rose by 3,500 per cent in 1991 (reported in *The Guardian,* 10th January, 1992) and one authority estimates consumption of the drug at around one million tablets a week (see Saunders, 1993).

More impressionistic data from our own study confirms the view that Ecstasy is widely used. One youth worker we interviewed described the use of Ecstasy in the

North-East as 'endemic', whilst another estimated that 80 per cent of 15 to 18 year olds in one local town were taking the drug.

User informants also said that Ecstasy was widely used by young people. At a Rave in Newcastle, Johnnie, who owned a record shop, said:

> *99 per cent of people here are on it. You're probably the 1 per cent that isn't taking it. Most of my customers are on 'E'. I must see 200 or 300 people a week who are on it. The Rave scene is affecting my business...Now there is a Rave every week, the kids don't spend their money on records any more. They walk to school and don't eat, so they can save their money for drugs. They're quite open about it.*

Those we talked to were remarkably candid about their drug taking (non-users were very much in the minority). As James (aged 25) said: 'it used to be frowned upon but now everybody does it'. Another interviewee, Graham, said that the interviewer (JM) was the only person he knew who had not taken Ecstasy and that users were becoming younger. A Northern Regional Health Authority report (1992) also found that drug taking had become an ordinary, taken-for-granted part of the youth scene and that it was an unremarkable social pastime for thousands of young people. The people in our sample were, however, disapproving of 'harder drugs' (drugs like Heroin and Crack Cocaine, which tend to be administered intravenously) and dissociated themselves from 'junkies' (Measham et al., 1993).

(iii). The Ups...

Populist accounts of Ecstasy use (in the media) have tended to moralise about the dangers of the drug. The young people we talked to had a much more positive assessment of Ecstasy, and their discussion of it was interwoven with their discussion of Raves.

Those who used Ecstasy talked about the special feeling of warmth, closeness and friendliness associated with being at a Rave. The following interview extracts give a taste of the general sense of joyfulness and well-being that pervaded the Raves, that ran as a current through the interviews and that helps to explain the attraction of Ecstasy:

> *You can't explain the feeling that you get from it [Ecstasy]. It's so good. You have to try it yourself. You just feel at peace and love everyone. The 'love drug' they call it. It's brilliant stuff. You can just dance away, dead happy (Joe).*

> *I just take it to get a buzz - it's great. It makes you feel happy, warm and friendly. Everything makes sense to you, like all the daft music and the whistling [from the Rave] (Rob).*

> *It's brilliant. You feel a bit like when you are really in love. Like a warm feeling inside; excited but not nervous or horrible. Really nice feeling. It makes you feel lovely - you really love the people you are with and you tell them (Sally).*

It is not surprising that Ecstasy has also come to be known as the 'hug' or 'love' drug. Whilst informants noted that the experience of the drug tended to be dependent upon personal mood and aspects of the drug-taking environment, they reported that generally the effect of Ecstasy on their mental state (and to some extent social life)

had been positive, inducing feelings of empathy, alertness, energy and love. Saunders (1993) provides an accessible discussion of the pharmacological effect of the drug and he, like Newcombe (1992), also argues that the effect of the drug on mental, social and spiritual well-being is generally positive. Solowij et al., (1992) present data from a study in Sydney, Australia which tends to support Saunders' argument.

The culture of the Rave is one which builds on and extends these 'warm feelings' of mutual love and well-being. In participating in Raves, in observing the activities of young people taking Ecstasy and in talking to them, it became clear that traditional displays of sexual availability and intent, which are often the raison d'etre of conventional nightclubs, were not a central part of the Rave Culture. Unlike most clubs, these are not 'pick-up joints' where young people go to find sexual partners. Indeed, sexual liaisons seemed to give way to more friendly, egalitarian forms of interchange (McDermott et al, 1992).

Raves have tended to be typified by behaviour which is less aggressive, machoistic and violent than more conventional nightclubs (Evans, 1990). At those we visited men were hugging each other affectionately and strangers were smiling at each other and holding hands (in a platonic way). Raves certainly feel safer than mainstream nights out at city-centre pubs and clubs. Gender relations seem to be more egalitarian and less hostile:

> *Young women are much less likely to be tied to a boyfriend in the context of a Rave, accessing the experience instead...from the position of a mixed or single-sex crowd of friends. The drugs...or the atmosphere seem to inspire confidence and independence: it is not...unusual for young women to dip in and out of their group of friends and circulate independently around the...club chatting to strangers as they go. This is in sharp contrast to more traditional clubs in which the mythical 'dance around the hand bag' represents a rather different set of gender relations (Henderson, 1992, p.6).*

So far we have reported the positive experiences of Ecstasy use, as reported to us by young users. We were also concerned to explore their views on the health impact of the drug.

The numbers of deaths and illnesses amongst Ecstasy users is increasing. Twenty four cases of severe toxicity as a result of Ecstasy use - including seven deaths - were reported to the National Poisons Unit at Guy's Hospital London, between 1990 and 1991 (*The Independent,* 15th August, 1992). These patients suffered from liver damage, kidney failure, blood clotting and raised body temperature (Fahal, et al., 1992). At the time of writing, there appears to have been fourteen deaths associated with Ecstasy (Saunders, 1993) most of which have been caused by respiratory collapse (see ISDD, 1992, for a more detailed discussion).

The location of the drug taking - at a Rave - has been argued to exacerbate the dangerous physical effects of Ecstasy. The symptoms experienced by Ecstasy casualties are similar to those of heat stroke: the high temperatures and vigourous dancing of Raves may interact with MDMA to produce physical experiences quantitatively or even qualitatively different to when taking the drug in a relaxed state. In America, where the drug has been available for longer than in Britain but where there is no comparable dance culture, there have been only two deaths attributed to the effects of MDMA (ISDD, 1992).

Informants were asked whether they thought Ecstasy was dangerous. Almost unanimously they replied, in the first instance, in terms of the number of reported deaths. It was common knowledge that 'only' 10, 12 or 15 people had died from Ecstasy and given the many thousands of users nationwide, so their argument went, it was a relatively safe drug:

> *There have only been about ten deaths they reckon with people taking it, so it can't be that bad (James).*
>
> ***JM:*** *Have you ever had a bad time?*
>
> ***Sharon****: No, I've never had a bad trip and I don't know anybody who has. There have been 12 deaths and if you think of all the people who take it, it's nothing. That many people get knocked over in the rush hour.*

Saunders (1993) estimates that, judging by mortality statistics, as a drug Ecstasy is less dangerous than Paracetomol and as a recreational activity it is less risky than skiing holidays in Switzerland. These young people certainly thought Ecstasy was a risk worth taking. The negative health costs were seen as manageable, given their positive experience of Ecstasy use. However, many informants did report that exhaustion and dehydration were common consequences of Raves and had to be guarded against:

> *You've got to be careful: keep cool, keep well ventilated, take lots of fluid. Sometimes you get 'deep heat' where you just have to sit down in the corner for twenty minutes, then up and at it again (Adam).*

The majority were knowledgeable about the physical effects of Ecstasy (within Raves) and were aware of the measures to be taken to remain 'safe'. As Adam says, these revolve around keeping cool and well hydrated in order to combat overheating (which can result from the combined effect of prolonged dancing and the drug).

One episode from our observations supports our view that Ravers are cognizant of the importance of keeping cool and illustrates how Rave Culture/ Ecstasy use has reshaped gendered identities and behaviour. In the men's toilets at one Rave in Newcastle, a gang of young men had run all the sinks full of cold water and were offering to wash (ie. completely soak) anybody who entered. Many took up the offer and strangers happily washed, flung water over, and massaged each other. This mutual care and self-help stands in contrast to the air of latent violence often associated with men's toilets in conventional night clubs.

The idea of a 'chill out' room (in which people can relax away from the heat and noise of the main Rave and rest for a while) has been instituted by many clubs to combat directly the hazardous effects of Ecstasy use and overheating. Similarly, thirst-quenching and energy-giving refreshments (soft drinks, bottled mineral water, ice lollies, Lucozade, etc.) are normally on sale. Alcohol is rarely drunk. Consequently, clubs tend to raise prices on non-alcoholic drinks to compensate for their loss on normal bar trade. We were told about clubs in the North-East that have even turned off the water supply to the lavatory sinks in order to force people to buy water at bumped up prices over the bar (an extremely dangerous step, given the importance of keeping cool). Other local clubs have taken a more progressive approach and now regularly liaise with drug services and paramedics before Rave nights.

(iv). ...And the Downs of Ecstasy.
Whilst informants initially denied that Ecstasy had caused them or their friends health problems - and they considered themselves able to deal with some of its immediate effects - further questioning revealed a more complex picture:

> ***Pete:*** *No, I've never had any problems with it, all my mates take it and none of them have ever had problems.*
>
> ***JM:*** *So are you really never ill with it?*
>
> ***Pete:*** *Well, I collapse about three or four times a night, every time I sniff poppers [amyl nitrate], but then I just get up and carry on.*
>
> ***JM:*** *Have you noticed any ill-effects on your health?*
>
> ***Johnnie:*** *No, no bad health effects...although it's sometimes difficult to sleep.*

A fuller discussion of the health impact of Ecstasy use on people in this study can be found in Merchant (1992), and Saunders (1993) provides a critical assessment of the published medical literature.

The following is a summary of the health ill-effects of the drug as reported to us by young people and by professionals in close contact with the Rave Culture in the North-East. Many negative consequences were mentioned to us: some informants reported one or two immediate and relatively minor symptoms, a minority reported more serious, longer-term effects, but it should be stressed that none reported all of the following. The design of our study makes it impossible to estimate with accuracy the medical problems associated with Ecstasy. We can, however, give some indication of the range of the sorts of problems experienced by a small group of users and explore the way that they responded to such problems.

Overall the health consequences reported were varied and included: *immediately* (i.e. within hours of taking Ecstasy) - feeling very hot, dehydration, heat exhaustion, collapse/ fainting fits, tightness in the jaw, profuse sweating and occasional hyper ventilation; in the *short-term* - exhaustion, insomnia, weight loss, cavities in teeth (due to teeth grinding), aches and pains and susceptibility to colds. For instance:

> ***JM:*** *How do you feel when you're coming down?*
>
> ***Danny:*** *Shit, basically. You can't eat and you really want to sleep, but you can't. You have to drink lots of water when you're coming down.*
>
> ***JM:*** *Have you ever had hallucinations?*
>
> ***Karen:*** *No, although it does affect your eyes though, and once I lost my hearing and had a swishing sound in my ears. Once I had Whities!*
>
> ***JM:*** *What are Whities?*
>
> ***Karen:*** *(laughs) That's what we call them. It's like white flashes in front of your eyes - like a flashing bright light and you feel like you'll faint.*
>
> ***JM:*** *Have you noticed any weight loss?*
>
> ***Johnnie:*** *Yes, the Speed and dancing and constant movement does that to*

you. I lost six or seven pounds in a night...A lad who worked here [in his record shop] lost a stone and a half in three months. He ended up looking gaunt and thin. You can tell the next day when someone's had it. They look gaunt and don't want to eat.

JM: *Have you lost weight?*

David: *Yes, I lost about three and a half stone in about eleven months. I went on steroids to put the weight back on.*

JM: *So don't you want to eat after taking 'E', then?*

David: *I try to but I can't, maybe half a 'Twix' or something.*

The possible *long-term effects* of Ecstasy were largely mentioned by health/ youth work professionals (ie. they had heard these conditions reported by their clients), rather than by young people themselves. These included kidney disorders, stomach complaints (for example, ulcers), and cardiac and respiratory problems. One informant, James, had become quite seriously ill due to a hepatic disorder, which resulted in biopsy. He now expressed some concern about the long-term effects of Ecstasy use:

I've knocked it on the head now after the liver trouble. I said to my doctor what I'd been taking - Cannabis, Speed and Ecstasy, and he said 'you can take Cannabis 'till it comes out of your ears. It'll do you no harm. But stay off the Speed and if you fancy taking Ecstasy, just take it in moderation. We don't really know what it does'. The medical people don't know. They should do tests so you know what the long-term effects are. I wouldn't touch it now. I'm finished with it.

The main *psychological effects* of Ecstasy use experienced by this group included depression, anxiety, panic attacks and paranoia, and some expressed concern over psychological dependency. The evidence about the *sexual health effects* of Ecstasy use is contradictory. Some argue that it acts as an aphrodisiac (Buffum and Moser, 1986) and the professional informants to this study felt that Ecstasy use was a potential threat to safe sex practices. However, the general point of view amongst young people was that Ecstasy use did not represent a threat to safe sex practices:

You're much more in control when you're taking it. You're much more likely to put on a blob [condom] after taking 'E' than being pissed on ten pints (Karl).

This feeling of being in control (also found by Beck et al., 1989; Buffum and Moser, 1986) was one of the most appealing aspects of Ecstasy to informants and was part of the reason they preferred it to more 'mind bending' drugs.

Despite the experience that young people had of the more negative consequences of Ecstasy use, they still continued to take it. At least three factors serve to reduce young people's fears about the ill-effects of the drug on their health in the longer term.

Firstly, and this is perhaps the most important point, the positive feelings and most immediate effects of Ecstasy use - in Raves - far outweighed the negative after effects. And the pleasurable consequences of taking the drug can create a psychological addiction which works to inhibit caution:

JM: *Are you worried about the long term effects?*

Peter: *Yes, sometimes I think about that. It's like Russian Roulette you know? Sometimes you think about it, but it's so good, you know?*

Secondly, young people can respond, in the short-term, relatively well to the consequences of drug use. Serious effects (such as sensory changes) were short-lived and often laughed off. Appetite and weight loss were not seen as serious problems and were positively welcomed by some (particularly women). This confirms the conclusions of the Northern Regional Health Authority study that young people 'tend to dismiss any possible health risks because they bounce back so quickly and without any apparent ill-effects' (1992, p.2).

Thirdly, the longer term problems associated with Ecstasy use are vague and distant in the eyes of young Ravers. As Gilman argues, young people find it almost impossible '...to worry about the health of a 50 year old stranger (ie. themselves) 35 years in the future' (1991, p.17).

(v). A Voyage into the Unknown: New Patterns of Drug Use.

One important finding of the study concerns the problems of polydrug use, adulterated drugs and mixing substances. A study of 89 MDMA users in London (Winstock, 1991) found that most were polydrug users: over three-quarters had tried amphetamine, cocaine and LSD. A study in Brighton found that young people who were using drug advice agencies were displaying a similar pattern of polydrug use (Fraser, et al, 1991). Similarly, many of the user informants in our, admittedly small and non-random, sample were mixing Ecstasy with other drugs (LSD, cocaine, cannabis and, particularly, amphetamines) in order to maintain the 'buzz' they had experienced initially. As drugs are 'stacked' together in a 'cocktail' the risks of physical and psychological harm are dramatically increased. Karen, who was introduced to us as 'the Queen of the Ravers', said:

> *Sometimes you can feel rushes fading so you might keep it up by taking some Speed [amphetamine]. You want to keep on a high as long as possible. On one Saturday night I lost half a stone. I was drinking, went to an all night party and took some speed, was smoking [cannabis] and took an E, then someone spiked my drink with Trip [LSD]...The trouble comes when you get too greedy. Like me, I can never say no. I'm not happy until I'm sat there cabbaged...I've also had blackouts. Last time I was out for five minutes. I was crying my eyes out because I didn't know what was going on. That's happened about three times. It's just because I take a mixture of things, not just E.*

Karen was probably the most determined drug user in the sample and her 'bingeing' approach to drugs was uncommon; she was not, however, unusual in her polydrug use. These new patterns of drug use associated with the Rave Culture make it increasingly difficult to unravel the direct effects of a single drug such as Ecstasy. Not only is Ecstasy combined with strenuous physical activity (dancing in Raves), it is also combined with the taking of a heady mixture of other drugs. These informants, like those in a study by Gilman (1991), knew a fair amount about the pharmacology of the drugs they chose to take and how to maximize the potential for a positive experience. Little is known by researchers or users, however, about the dangers of mixing drugs: 'the effects of any two drugs may be

purely additive [but] unpredictable pharmacological interactions are always possible' (Abbott and Concar, 1992, p.30).

A further complicating problem in unpacking the direct effects of Ecstasy use, and which contributes to patterns of polydrug use, is that of drug adulteration and increasing drug tolerance. Over the past five years, as Ecstasy has become more popular, manufacturers have begun to adulterate the drug ('cut it') with other substances. Newcombe argues that Ecstasy has become the most adulterated drug ever used in Britain:

> *When demand outstrips supply, gangsters move in to fill the gap...less than half of the drugs bought at clubs as Ecstasy contain pure MDMA. Police have found capsules containing anything from MDA [one of the parent compounds], LSD and amphetamine to fish tank oxygenating tablets and cold cure powders (1992, p.14).*

Whilst manufacturers are decreasing the dosage in each tablet of Ecstasy (in order to eke out limited supplies and/ or to maximise profits), it is also the case that longer term users need higher dosages of the drug to maintain the same effect. We found that a few informants were taking up to six tablets a night in order to achieve the effects gained the first time they took a single tablet. Johnnie said:

> *When I first started taking them, E was completely different. The manufacturers are getting greedy and not putting as much in them. It used to be that you could have one E and one wrap of speed and still be rushing at one o'clock the following afternoon. Nowadays you are lucky if it lasts for more than three or four hours.*

The increasing diversity of dance music styles within the Rave Culture has been mirrored by a diffusion of demand for drugs. This, coupled with the entrepreneurship of the manufacturers, has meant that more dangerous substances are now on the market. Ketamine (known as 'Special K' or 'Flatliners') has already infiltrated the Rave scene. Ketamine is a dissociative anaesthetic (sometimes used in emergency surgery and by vets) which causes users to feel detached from their immediate environment (see Shapiro, 1992, for a discussion). The anaesthetic and hallucinogenic properties of the drug present serious risks to those who use it recreationally. They are less likely to feel pain but at the same time are less likely to realise they may be in a situation which causes pain; giving the possibility of serious injury. Higher dosages can cause respiratory collapse and heart failure. One or two of our informants had experience of 'Special K':

> ***JM:*** *Have you ever had Ketamine?*
>
> ***David:*** *Yeah, it's just too much. It cabbages you. You're just fucked.*
>
> *Flatliners - basically Ketamine - make you forget everything. Ketamine taken with speed means you're totally blanked out. One night recently I had four Flatliners, three Speed and some Trips. Sunday didn't happen. It disappeared. Twelve hours felt like ten minutes (Johnnie).*

Ecstasy is no longer the drug of the Rave Culture. Owing to increasing individual drug tolerance over time and the adulteration of the drug by manufacturers, new, potentially more dangerous patterns of drug use have emerged. Recent observa-

tions in the North-East suggest that 'speed'/'whizz' (amphetamine sulphate) is becoming increasingly popular. In the North-West it is reported that cocaine is superseding Ecstasy as the main dance drug. In both areas, alcohol is also making a return to the Rave/dance club scene and is being consumed along with other illicit drugs (Gilman, reported in Saunders, 1993, p.38).

(vi). Summary of Research Findings.

This small study of Ecstasy use in the North-East of England found that the drug seems to be enjoyed by a large number of increasingly younger people. Nationwide it is estimated that hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of young people use the drug. Ecstasy induces a positive mood, energy, feelings of euphoria, intimacy and well-being as well as a sense of alertness and self-control. The drug is central to the Rave Culture and the experience of one cannot be understood in isolation from the experience of the other. During the late 1980s and into the early part of this decade Rave Culture (despite diversifying into new musical/ cultural forms) remained popular amongst young people and much of its appeal is dependent upon the positive effects of Ecstasy.

On the negative side, Ecstasy use has been linked, both in this study and other larger ones, to psychological and physical ill health. The main concerns reported to us ranged from immediate problems of heat stroke and dehydration; short term problems of exhaustion, insomnia, weight loss; and renal and hepatic problems in the longer term. Paranoia was the most frequently mentioned negative psychological effect. There is little solid evidence to support the view that, at present, Ecstasy use and the Rave Culture present a particular threat to safe sex practices. Perhaps the most dangerous element of the Rave Culture that we encountered was the 'stacking' of various, often adulterated drugs in a risky pattern of polydrug use.

Young people in the study argued that they were not ignorant in respect of the drug. They seemed reasonably well informed about its physical and psychological impact and took measures to combat some of the more frequent adverse affects (e.g. overheating). They could talk about various health consequences of Ecstasy and other, newer drugs on the market. They knew the law surrounding Ecstasy and other drugs and the policing of Raves did little to deter them from drug use. For young people like these, use of Ecstasy and other drugs has become a normal part of cultural life and they were happy and willing to discuss this with us. This presents particular challenges to those who make and deliver policy in this area.

4. Health Policy and Practice: Discussion and Conclusions.

Campaigns to legalize or decriminalize Ecstasy are unlikely to succeed if the long history of similar campaigns to legalize 'soft' drugs like Cannabis are anything to go by. And current government policies suggest a tightening of the laws which circumscribe the 'deviant' behaviour of young people. So far the state's response to Ecstasy use, as exemplified by the heavy policing of Acid House and Rave parties, has been about social control: the mortality and morbidity rates associated with the drug are far less than those associated with 'softer' and/or legal drugs (suggesting that physical health is not the government's prime concern). However, the recent history of (failed) attempts to control the use of illicit drugs in closed institutions like prisons suggests that efforts to control or eradicate drug use in the youthful population at large will also be unsuccessful.

Conversely, health education policies built upon the simplistic guidance to 'Just Say No' are unlikely to prove effective, given the decision of so many people to say 'yes' to Ecstasy. As one commentator has put it, we are witnessing in Britain a massive, uncontrolled field trial of a largely untested and potentially highly dangerous drug. Between the two extremes of these strategies to cope with this unprecedented level of drug use amongst young people lies a third: a health promotion strategy directed towards harm reduction (see Merchant, 1992, and Saunders, 1993, for a fuller discussion).

Gilman (1991) argues that a growing number of recreational drug users - like those in our study - are being ignored as drug agencies consolidate their work within an HIV prevention framework and concentrate on injecting opiate dependents [3]. In addition, informants in this study, as in that carried out for the Northern Regional Health Authority (1992), recognised the double standard that exists in many health education materials about the ill effects of drugs. In 1990, the Home Office Statistical Unit recorded five deaths from Ecstasy use in Britain. The death tolls from alcohol and tobacco in the same year stood at 30,000 and 110,000 respectively (Abbott and Concar, 1992): on the face of it, tobacco and alcohol constitute far greater risks to young people's health than Ecstasy use [4]. McDermott et al., (1992) - and the professionals we interviewed - report a hunger for honest, clear information from young people on the effects and hazards of drugs (Clements, 1993).

The challenge for health educationists is to develop harm reduction strategies which: are cognizant of the moralistic and contradictory perspectives of much which has gone before; are based upon an empathetic understanding of the appeal of Ecstasy; can work to modify the riskiest aspects of Ecstasy use (within the Rave Culture) by providing practical information and by promoting cultural changes acceptable to users. Thus, a harm reduction policy would build upon young people's experiences, perceptions and knowledge of Ecstasy and develop interventions which support and improve people's own ability to regulate the ill effects of Ecstasy by providing information and strategies for reducing risk (Newcombe, 1991, 1992; Pearson et al, 1991; Fromberg, 1991; McDermott et al., 1992; Henderson, 1992).

Young people - both users and those who might consider using Ecstasy - could be provided, for instance, with information and guidance about: decision making skills (e.g. strategies for declining drug offers); the hazards of the Rave setting (e.g. how to keep cool); how to identify and deal with their own physical reaction to drugs; the perils of 'stacking', 'bingeing' and adulterated drugs; the legal consequences of illicit drug use; and drug pharmacology (e.g. information about drugs in current, local circulation) (Craig, et al., 1993). One lesson in more liberal and informed approaches to reducing the harm from illicit drugs can be learnt from Holland, where the government sponsors the purchasing, by street workers, of drugs in current supply. These are then tested at government laboratories and their chemical make-up, appearance and street names are publicized to those who might buy drugs, thus reducing the risk to young people of purchasing dangerous, adulterated substances (Saunders, 1993).

Information like this could be channelled through high publicity media campaigns but these have had less than complete success with their target audiences (cf: the 'Heroin Screws You Up' Campaign). Young people often reject the scaremonger-

ing of such campaigns, especially when the message they give runs counter to their own, enjoyable experiences. Smaller-scale interventions which are based on an up-to-date analysis of the **local** Rave Culture and which recognizes the 'ups' as well as the 'downs' of Ecstasy are more likely to reduce harm.

We stress the importance of a local focus to such initiatives chiefly because there is some evidence - from our own study and from others (Saunders, 1993) - that patterns of drug use are spatially specific. In the North-East, for instance different clubs and towns are known to be associated with quite different forms of drug use. Just as the Rave Culture is becoming increasingly heterogeneous so must harm reduction strategies become. Their clientele (e.g. Ecstasy users) will be diverse and the content and form of interventions needs to be tailored accordingly.

Peer education - a relatively new form of health promotion strategy - works with the assumption that peers are the most important source of information on a range of subjects for an individual (Nixon, 1991). Contrary to traditional didactic, moralistic approaches it aims to direct 'peer pressure' towards positive health goals. The Northern Regional Health Authority (1992) found that teachers and parents were seen as being 'out of touch' by young people and that discussion groups facilitated by trusted and knowledgeable people (e.g. drug users or ex-users; young researchers; a member of the peer group) were seen by young people as the strategy most likely to have some positive effect (Berry and McKenna, 1993) [5].

Drugs agencies in the North-West of England have had the most publicized successes in developing harm reduction strategies. In 1991, *Lifeline* in Manchester launched 'Peanut Pete', a cartoon story aimed directly at Ravers and which contained information about safer drug use (Gilman, 1991). Education coupled with entertainment has also proved effective in Liverpool, where the *Mersey Drug Training and Information Centre* has copied the images, styles and distribution methods of the Rave Culture to promote safer drug use. They have published well designed cards and flyers (publicity handbills for Raves which are often collected as souvenirs), distributed through record shops which contain 'information bites' about particular drugs (McDermott et al., 1992). Both agencies have seen considerable upturns in the numbers of young people using their services after these campaigns.

Perhaps the most significant obstacle in the way of the development of successful harm reduction strategies is, simply, our ignorance about the effect of drugs like Ecstasy. Despite the flurry of public and professional interest in Ecstasy that has greeted the rise of the Rave Culture, the exact physical and psychological consequences of taking the drug are still uncertain.

Experimental research is largely circumscribed by law - a permit is required from the Home Office to undertake research on Schedule One drugs like Ecstasy (ISDD, 1992). Even if we were to successfully isolate the effects of Ecstasy upon human populations in controlled, laboratory conditions this would tell us relatively little about the consequences of Ecstasy use in its cultural setting - the Rave (Pearson, et al, 1992).

More social research (on Ecstasy use within Raves) faces the problem that some users will, in fact, be taking it together with several other drugs (polydrug use) or may not even be taking MDMA at all, but some cocktail, hybrid or (possibly adulterated) substance which only pertains to be Ecstasy.

What we do know about Ecstasy is often ambiguous (it is hard to disentangle the independent effects of the drug), contradictory (for instance, there is debate over the impact of Ecstasy on sexual activity) and sometimes based on animal research which makes any easy application to human populations difficult. As such, the 'jury is still out' on the long-term effects (if any) of Ecstasy. Henry (1992) and Abbott and Concar (1992) sound grave warnings about its possible neuro-toxicity and the potential long-term damage that Ecstasy use might cause to the brain. Writers like Saunders (1993) strike a more positive note and make appeals for more balanced treatment of the drug: 'to use a drug for pleasure is taboo, yet to use a drug to relieve pain is acceptable' (p.17). In considering the massive popularity of Ecstasy against the slightness of the medical knowledge we have of the drug, calls for further research are clearly more than simple platitudes.

5. Rave and Youth Culture: Discussion and Conclusions.

This article is a small addition to what, at the time of writing, continues to be a surprisingly small area of study: sociologically-informed youth research on Rave Culture and Ecstasy use.

The theoretical discussions that have taken place have tended to centre on an assessment of the usefulness of sub-culture theory - as devised by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham (see Hall and Jefferson, 1976) - in understanding Rave (Redhead, 1993).

As Redhead (1991, p.94) puts it, some have suggested that Rave, and its predecessor Acid House, is '...nothing new; it was merely another...link in the subcultural chain, replaying and reworking the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s'. Smith (1992), for instance, argues that Rave Culture is simply a 'third generation' of 'youthful refusals' following in the rebellious traditions of the Hippies and the Punks. Certainly there are some strong correspondences between this and earlier sub-cultures. As with the Mods and Rockers of the 1960s, the tabloid media, police and moral establishment rapidly sought ways to condemn and control these latter-day folk-devils.

Furthermore, the 'do-it-yourself ethos' inherent in the production of Rave music recalls the attitude of Punks to the music industry in the late 1970s. Rave music is based upon the 'sampling' of previously recorded tracks and tunes, and the culture of Rave, like Punk, eschews the cult of the individual, 'star' performer. 'Posses' or collectives of faceless DJs, producers and musicians with their own systems of production and distribution are more important here. In these ways certain elements of the Rave Culture - particularly the 'alternative living' collectives associated with the New Age Traveller philosophy (Smith, 1992; *The Guardian,* 12th November, 1993) - share much with the anarchic, anti-capitalism of Punk (Smith, 1992) [6].

The psychedelic imagery, the hippy paraphernalia, the centrality of drugs and the quasi-spiritual elements of the Rave Culture also owes much to the 'flower power' movement of the late 1960s. These are cultural continuities, borrowings from earlier periods of youth culture and it would be surprising if this sort of reassembly of cultural themes, icons and imagery did not occur. Hebdige's (1979) analysis of sub-cultural styles has shown how contemporary youth culture will almost inevitably be a rehashing of what has gone before.

Whilst accepting that Rave shares many thematic links with previous youth styles, we - like Redhead and his associates - would argue that Rave Culture does represent a significant break in the chain of post-war youth sub-cultures and that the analytical tools of sub-culture theory (as manufactured by the CCCS) are not sufficient for the job of understanding the Rave Culture.

The following points would seem to mark out Rave Culture as something distinct from its youth cultural predecessors.

Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, previous youth sub-cultures have only ever been populated by a small minority of young people (Clarke, 1982; Coles, 1986). Whilst the majority of British youth have not become active participants in Rave Culture, we would argue that its appeal has been far greater than that of, for instance, Punk, Skinhead or Teddy-boy culture. Hundreds of thousands of young people now attend Raves. A survey by *Time Out* in 1993 found that one-third of 25 year olds in London had been to a Rave. Rave has become a mass youth cultural phenomenon (Newcombe, 1992); one of the defining features of previous sub-cultures was that they were the province of the minority, the cool elite, the fashionable few.

Secondly, the Rave phenomenon is not wholly nor *essentially* working-class. Some even suggest that Rave is a middle-class affair (Fraser et al., 1991). Middle-class students in higher education certainly have their own Rave nights (often advertised as attractions in college 'freshers' weeks).

In our study (and that of Gilman, 1991), participants in Raves were predominantly working-class teenagers (in first jobs, unemployed, on Youth Training and in colleges), but many were also in their late twenties and even thirties and in well-established, working-class careers.

Rave Culture holds appeal across class lines (pulling in working-class kids and middle-class students) and across class fractions (with disadvantaged youths from the outer estates of Tyneside and older and more securely placed working-class people all taking part). Some Rave clubs cater specifically for those over the age of 25 (*The Independent*, 4th April, 1993). Thus, the Rave Culture is made up of quite diverse class cultural/ age groupings. Given that the fundamental element of the CCCS thesis was that sub-cultures should be understood as the symbolic responses of working-class kids to the material inequalities they faced, it is therefore impossible to conceptualize Rave in the same way.

Thirdly, and related to the above, we argue that attempting to comprehend youth culture as falling on one side of the resistance/ acceptance dichotomy neglects the realities of youth culture. The CCCS tended to argue that those in the sub-cultures they described were the few who had not been incorporated into bourgeois society. Sub-cultures, for them, were all about resistance, through rituals, to the dominant forms of society. Rave Culture cannot be understood in this way.

On occasions it has offered up direct opposition to the powers that be (particularly when the State has attempted to control and outlaw Raves), but even here the demand has been for no more than the 'Right to Party'. Rave Culture is essentially hedonistic; it is about having fun and feeling good. It does not seek to change the

status quo but to allow room for young people to enjoy dance music and to take drugs like Ecstasy. Despite Smith's claims to the contrary, Rave Culture in the North-East of England and in terms of its mass following, does not share 'the old hippy philosophies' (1992, p.31) if we understand these to be about wholehearted, political and spiritual protest[7].

Fourthly, unlike all the sub-cultures described by the CCCS women are not marginal to the Rave Culture. At those Raves we attended there were roughly equal numbers of women and men. The Rave is not an essentially masculine affair and Rave Culture, unlike many other youth sub-cultures, is not dominated by machismo and masculine styles of behaviour. The more egalitarian gender relations and the lack of sexual threat at Raves make them virtually unique. Again, in terms of ethnicity, Rave Culture seems to be unusually democratic[8].

Fifthly, Rave Culture does not - to the extent associated with groups like the Punks and the Skins - involve all-consuming and readily identifiable visual styles of dress, body adornment or hairstyle. The only unifying 'focal concerns' it has are those connected with getting to and being at Raves and getting and taking drugs; these are temporally specific activities organized primarily around the weekend. During the week young Ravers may be living for the weekend, but they will be largely unidentifiable in their workplaces, their colleges and in their homes. Rave culture is not gang culture. It is more diffuse, disorganized and invisible.

For these reasons we feel it is not appropriate to describe Rave Culture as simply another youth sub-culture, nor is the sub-cultural theory of the CCCS suited to our task of understanding Rave. This has also been the conclusion of Redhead and associates from Manchester University (Redhead, 1990, 1991, 1993). Taking a post-modernist perspective, and drawing upon the writing of Baudrillard, they suggest that there is little real authentic depth to Acid House and Rave and, therefore, analyses which attempt to 'read' and get beneath surface appearances to discover the 'true' (class cultural) significance of youth phenomena are misdirected. They even suggest that the groups directly studied by the CCCS were also unamenable to sub-cultural analysis (Redhead, 1991).

So where does this leave us? Unfortunately the contribution from Redhead and colleagues (1993), in our opinion, does not take us much further forward (MacDonald, 1994). Whilst challenging the work of the CCCS they fail to develop a systematic, theoretical approach which could take its place. We have attempted to outline exactly how Rave Culture is different to its predecessors. But we feel that it is extraordinarily difficult to build a convincing theoretical account without first attending to a series of crucial empirical questions which remain unanswered:

(a) Solid evidence concerning the prevalence of Ecstasy and other drug use is hard to come by and most estimates are really only best guesses. Large scale surveys (for instance, in the ESRC's *16 to 19 Initiative*) of youth leisure patterns have asked teenagers about their favourite television programmes and, rather quaintly, about their 'going to discos and dances', but have not sought to map the contours of the most obvious youth culture of the late 1980s. A more systematic, quantitative survey of the Rave Culture could reveal not only the extent and forms of drug-taking that go with it but also its social composition.

(b) The class and age composition of the Rave Culture is still vague. Rave Culture is far from homogeneous. Different studies report quite different age and class cultural groupings taking part. The extent to which Rave has democratized youth culture, and the perhaps differing appeal and experience of Rave to such different groups, requires investigation. Older groups of 'young people' (in their late twenties and thirties) participate as vigourously as teenagers. This empirical point supports the methodological argument that studies of youth have traditionally closed their accounts too early (for instance, when their subjects reach the age of 19). Youth culture does not magically cease then, as studies of Rave can show us.

(c) Questions about the ethnic composition of Rave Culture also remain. Whilst in the North-East of England white faces certainly predominate at Raves, this is perhaps understandable given the ethnic mix of the local population. It has been argued that elsewhere Rave Culture has actually acted as a catalyst for closer and improved relations between young blacks and young whites. Evans (1990) describes how Sheffield DJs, during the Acid House period, purposefully mixed musical styles in order to appeal to a broader, racially-mixed clientele.

(d) Further investigation of the sorts of issues raised by Henderson (1992) is required. She has suggested, as have we, that the patterning of gender relations in Raves is more egalitarian and less oppressive for women than in more traditional nightclubs.

Can the welcoming, egalitarian and democratic atmosphere of Raves be explained solely as a pharmacological affect? Does the influence of gay culture on Raves serve to reduce macho aggression? Is the warmth and empathy of the Rave Culture just an ephemeral, stylistic trapping or is it spilling into other aspects of youth culture, as suggested by writers like Henderson (1992)? Gilman (1991) has suggested that the decline in football hooliganism in the latter part of the 1980s was related to the rise of the Rave Culture and that there is 'a clearly observable overlap between nightclubbing and terrace cultures' (p.16).

(e) It is likely that locality will influence patterns of class, gender and ethnic participation in Rave Culture and will also give rise to different forms of dance culture and patterns of drug taking. We have seen how particular urban centres provided the initial homes for Acid House. In places like Manchester and Liverpool, with established cultural industries based on popular music, the Rave Culture is more advanced than in other areas of the country and the musical styles have become more diverse and diffuse. It is to be expected that patterns of drug use will similarly differ according to locality (e.g., new drugs will circulate first in one place before becoming more widespread). Saunders (1993, p.24) reports a North/ South split in patterns of drug-taking.

(f) What is the relationship between Rave Culture, drug-taking and juvenile crime? An obvious question concerns how young people fund what are relatively expensive activities. Some professional informants, and one or two young users, suggested (through anecdotes) that patterns of property crime (particularly those associated with theft of, and from, cars) in the North-East of England were intertwined with the Rave Culture and drug-taking (a point also made by Moules, 1993). Another way that money can be earned in the Rave Culture is to engage in small-scale, petty trading of drugs (for friends and acquaintances). Again the relationship between using and dealing as part of a 'moral career' of drug use needs exploration.

(g) The Rave Culture provides us with a good opportunity to explore the relationship between youth cultural innovation and the commercial exploitation of youth culture (the interplay of 'authentic' youth styles and 'manufactured' youth fashions). Rave Culture moved rapidly from the underground to the mainstream (Redhead, 1993) and advertisers have been keen to appropriate and cash in on the spirit of Rave in order to sell products (Willis, 1993; Prestage, 1993). One report estimates that the Rave 'industry' is worth £2 billion per year and that the popularity of Rave is threatening jobs in traditional leisure industries (*The Times*, October 27th, 1993). Also of interest would be an examination of the way that Rave Culture has impacted upon the more 'ordinary' youth cultures of the mass of young people who prefer to frequent pubs, bars and nightclubs (rather than Raves or Rave clubs).

These are, to us, interesting and important empirical questions suggested by our research for which we were unable to find answers in the published research.

Rave Culture has become increasingly fragmented and patterns of drug-taking and musical styles have diversified to the point where even the term 'Rave Culture' is used less and less. This is not to say that the immense popularity of the dance music, nightclubbing (and drug taking) associated with Acid House and Rave Culture has waned. Evans (1989) reports that three-quarters of all Sheffield teenagers had been clubbing *before* their eighteenth birthdays. As Elms (1988) has put it, the culture of young Britain has become a nightclub culture; a culture of which youth 'experts' know virtually nothing.

We predict, tentatively, that Rave will leave other significant cultural legacies. Following Evans (1990), we would argue that Rave Culture has served to democratize youth culture and to involve large numbers of people from diverse social backgrounds. Women, in particular, have been able to enjoy Rave Culture more equally. In contrast to previous youth cultures, it is likely that those in the future will be similarly open and non-elitist.

Furthermore, many thousands of 'ordinary' and working-class young people have, probably for the first time, experimented with powerful, illicit drugs. Given the popularity of Ecstasy (and other drugs like Cannabis), it is unlikely that young people will forget the positive experiences they have had and return to the consumption solely of alcohol.

6. Final Remarks.

Elsewhere it has been argued that youth research in Britain stands at a crossroads (MacDonald, Banks and Hollands, 1993); funding bodies like the Economic and Social Research Council are currently considering future directions for youth studies. In planning new research agendas for the 1990s we need to design research which is cognizant of the strengths and weaknesses of the 'two traditions' of youth research in Britain over the past twenty years (see Jeffs and Smith, 1992). We now know much about the experiences of youth in the labour market and the processes of transition to adulthood that they make through schemes, unemployment and jobs (eg. Banks et al., 1992). But we know astonishingly little of contemporary forms of youth culture.

It may well be that sub-cultural analysis is inappropriate for the task of understanding developments in, and forms of, youth culture in the 1990s. We have shown how phenomena like the Rave Culture differ from previous youth cultural forms.

But we cannot conclude (as Redhead and colleagues seem to do) that issues of class, gender and ethnicity - and other social structures of inequality - are no longer of importance in shaping youth identities and cultures, especially if this conclusion is based on insubstantial and weak empirical evidence.

Certainly the relationship between young people's cultures and social structural formations of class, gender and ethnic inequalities have become more complex and less easily traced. Hollands (1990) has charted, for instance, the changing ways in which the identities of working-class individuals are shaped through prolonged career transitions in early adulthood. Profoundly reconstructed patterns of working life for young people (the decline in traditional manual jobs and apprenticeships, the rise in persistent and widespread unemployment, subemployment in marginal sectors of the labour market, etc.,) have fractured previous routes toward working-class adult careers and identities.

Whilst we have begun to investigate the cultural responses of youth to their changing economic circumstances, we must now begin to think as well about (re)exploring the cultures of youth *away* from the spheres of economy and production. The time has come for a broader conceptualisation of youth, for cultural explorations which, as well as detailing the often depressing realities of young lives limited by unequal and narrowing economic opportunities, touch upon the high points of youth.

Jacqueline Merchant *is a Lecturer at the University of Sunderland where she teaches in the area of health studies and researches, particularly, issues of health promotion and young people and health.*

Robert MacDonald *is a Lecturer at the University of Teesside and has written about various aspects of youth culture, youth transitions and economic life.*

Notes:

1. This article is based on original, empirical research carried out by Jacqueline Merchant (for an unpublished MSc Dissertation for the University of Edinburgh in 1992), who also takes responsibility for our discussions of health. Later fieldwork was undertaken by both authors and Robert MacDonald is mainly responsible for the discussions of youth culture in this paper.

2. The main volume of work (Banks, et al., 1992) produced by the Economic and Social Research Council's 16 to 19 Initiative - the most expansive study of youth in the 1980s - made no reference whatsoever to Rave Culture, Acid House or Ecstasy; a pitiful omission given their importance to a large band of contemporary youth.

3. A study currently being undertaken in Newcastle, England by Robert Hollands and his colleagues (as yet unpublished) confirms that patterns of drug use vary by locality and, similarly, patterns of health promotional response differ regionally. The Northern Regional Health Authority (which covers our fieldwork area) has not developed an extensive policy of harm reduction, whereas agencies in the North-West have moved away from the focus reported by Gilman.

4. This sort of simple statistical point may, however, be deceptive. Tobacco and alcohol have always been readily available and much of the annual death toll reflects long-term abuse. If Ecstasy use continues to be a central and popular aspect of youth cultural practices, it may be some years before the health consequences of Ecstasy are properly revealed in mortality and morbidity statistics. Having said this, it is also possible that individuals will use Ecstasy over relatively short periods during their youth.

5. Such harm reduction policies could also be targeted at other significant players in the Rave scene (for instance, club-owners may need to be reminded about the dangers of poor ventilation, overheating their premises and the importance of having cold water freely available to Ravers).

6. Part of our argument is that the Rave Culture has become increasingly diverse since 1986. The term can now be used to include quite different phenomena (e.g. ranging from Friday night student 'raves' to the outdoor festival events hosted by those described as 'New Age Travellers'). A close ethnography and

history of the relationships between the apparently ill-matched partners in the Rave Culture would be intriguing and necessary before we could properly assess the phenomena as a whole.

7. Although it should be added that in May 1994 a demonstration in Trafalgar Square, London against the new public order legislation (introduced by the Home Secretary) succeeded in bringing together youth groupings (New Age Travellers, Ravers, Squatters) targeted for further criminalization. Representatives of these have now formed a loose organisation called the Advance Party to protect their interests.

8. For instance, young Asians in Britain have fused their own indigenous musical styles with contemporary dance music to create Bhangra Raves.

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IDENTITY POLITICS & YOUNG 'ASIAN' PEOPLE

PAVITER SANGHERA

This paper focuses on the politics of identity/identity politics and young 'Asian' people. In the not too distant past there was a generally accepted truism that young 'Asians' in Britain faced an 'identity crisis'. The explanation usually advanced was that as they became 'westernised' they automatically came into conflict with their own traditional culture. But more recent developments have shown that young 'Asians' have constructed a new, more dynamic identity, an identity which is linked to movements in the Middle east, the Indian Subcontinent and the West. This identity offers a critical perspective on the experience of racism in comtemporary Britain.

Black young people are one of the 'folk devils' in popular British thought. The moral panics which produce such devils are documented most vividly in Cohen's work in the Sixties (Cohen: 1973) and its further explication regarding Black youth is clearly demonstrated by Stuart Hall et al (Hall,1986). The key to this process lies in the much discussed and much criticised labelling theory whereby one group, usually powerless, is labelled as being of a certain type and capable of certain behaviours. This labelling is carried out by another group which is powerful and dominant. Howard Becker looking at deviancy saw the deviant as '..one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label' (Becker,1963). Labelling on this reading is a process from the dominant to the dominated group. The latter are portrayed as being passive, manipulable and lacking agency. My purpose is not to rehearse all the arguments concerning labelling theory but to look at a process that allows the appropriation of such labels and by so doing develops strategies of survival and protest. The labels lead to an identity construction which is out of control of the dominant group. It is in this process of struggle that Black youth have forged identities for themselves. My contention is that amongst many Black youths this identity is merely reactive and ultimately counterproductive and harmful. This is due to the jettisoning of the identity dynamic mentioned above, for participation in a racist discourse. This is the discourse of the 'Other';the Other not only as different but threatening and dangerous, the racialised Other.

'Identity Politics' or the 'Politics of Identity' has gained much currency in academic circles in recent years (Bourne,1987; Weeks,1987). Identity centred on sexuality, race, ethnicity has been commonplace but what is new is the articulation of a political analysis that is dependent on the chosen identity. I will have more to say about the notion of choice later. It is this political element that will be interrogated here. Specifically, the politics of identity as articulated by what is known in the literature as 'Asian youth', that is, young people who have some sort of connection with the Indian subcontinent even though the vast majority have been born in Britain. Now it was exactly this group that was seen by many commentators to be 'between two cultures' and/or experiencing an 'identity crisis' or becoming 'Westernised' (Anwar,1978; Watson,1977) If this is so, how would we explain the attraction of Khalistan and Islamic fundamentalism for a large number of these young people? I will adopt this nomenclature as I wish to include young females in my analysis.

There is a further interlinked question. This identity politics spans the generations - why? Concomitant with this question is the problematic nature of the chosen identification. For example, in the case of Khalistan, why should peasants - the Sikhs in Britain are predominately from an impoverished agrarian background - sympathise and actively support demands which would, if granted, mean very little to them in their daily lives here or in India? The answers to these questions lie in the heart of Britain, in a society that has relegated these people to the lowest strata, that daily insults and ridicules them in the street, on television, in newspapers etc. Racism and its machinations has constructed a subject who articulates his/her subjectivity through identity politics. After elucidating this process of constitution I will attempt to show the dangers inherent in such a formation.

An important explanatory framework is the discourse that Edward Said identified as 'Orientalism'. It may be useful at this stage to say something about the term 'discourse'. It is by the circulation of certain discourses that power is legitimated. It is through these discourses that actions can be justified and explanations made to seem veridical. But these discourses are not manifestily obvious, in fact for them to 'do their work' they should be about something else. As Foucault pointed out:

> *...in any society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected,organised and redistributed according to a number of procedures whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers,to master the unpredictable event (Foucault:1970, pp. 10-11).*

Orientalism is such a discourse, but discourses can also be appropriated; that is, the same content or 'facts' of a discourse can be utilised by different groups for different ends. My contention is that Orientalism has been stood on its head by young Sikhs and Islamic fundamentalists. This will become clearer as we look more closely at Orientalism. Said in his book 'Orientalism' wrote:

> *Orientalism responded more to the culture that produced it than its putative object which was also produced by the West. Thus the history of Orientalism has both an internal consistency and a highly articulated set of relationships to the dominant culture surrounding it (Said 1978, p 96)*

The representations a Western person has of the Indian for example, is made up of 'truths' which conform to a certain specific Idea. It is almost as if there were Platonic 'Oriental' Forms of which Indians or whoever were manifestations. These reified Forms were created by a vast literature on politics, sociology, religion and produced a 'thing' which came to be known as Orientalism.

> *The 'oriental' was both exotic and mundane, rich beyond belief yet poverty stricken, a genius but impractical, robust but lazy: The Orient at large, therefore, vacillates between the West's contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in - or fear of - novelty (Said, 1978,p. 59).*

Delacroix's 'Death of Sardinapulos' incapsulates this vacillation admirably. Here we have wealth, position, pleasures of the flesh and spirit in such over - abundance, but underlying this veneer is death, decay, waste and ultimately an 'uncivilised' and incomprehensible being. From the writings of Aeschylus and his 'The Persians', through Shakespeare, Byron and Burton, Victorian painters such as John Fredrick Lewis and John Singer Sargent, philosophers such as Hume and Locke to the modern

day Oscar-winning depiction of Gandhi and 'A Passage to India', we can trace the discourse concerning Orientalism. 'Europe's collective day-dream of the Orient', as V.G.Kiernan (1979) so aptly termed it, certainly was a phantasmagoria. Through this 'dream' the Oriental was shaped and sculptured into a completely different sort of being. That the Oriental was irrational and prone to outbursts of violence was a belief not to be questioned, but as usual, the Oriental was also passive and non-demonstrative - 'the inscrutable Oriental'. We can see now the process by which the 'Asian' steps into an already established, very elaborate picture of him/herself. The discourse constituted Orientals as subjects. But as Said (op cit) has already argued, this discourse had more to say to the dominant culture than to the dominated. Their internal constructions of identity were quite different, they did not recognise themselves in the Other's discourse even if they were aware of it, which is doubtful.

The Asian migrant's construction revolved around 'The Myth of Return'. This myth postulates that the first generation migration took place because of economic reasons, that is, poverty. Asian Migrants believed that they came to Britain to earn and save money. At some point in the future they would return 'home'. This was the light at the end of the tunnel. In fact very few returned home and many who have did so knowing that their sons and daughters and grandchildren would remain in Britain. So why was the myth necessary? Badr Dahya offers an explanation:

> *...the myth enables the migrants to keep alive social relationships, the chain of communication and movements between the village and Britain, which in turn enabled the migrant and his village-kin group to persist as a social group for mutual aid,for mobilizing socio-economic resources and for social control. Also the myth is a means whereby the migrants are able to make a socio-psychological withdrawal from a commitment to the norms of the wider society ... (Dahya, 1973, p 24).*

This myth was necessary, therefore, because it legitimised for the new migrants their observance of tradition, customs, language and religion. It was a means to keep their identity intact in a cold and unwelcoming environment. But on the whole an attempt was made to 'fit in'. Hence the reluctance to wear traditional clothes, the wearing of caps and hats instead of turbans, for example. Difference was underemphasised.

It will be obvious now that Orientalism and the Myth of Return were clearly at variance with each other and served different functions. Both concerned themselves with identity but they explained it rather differently. The former situated the migrant in a subordinate and exploited position. It was racist both in intent and outcome. The Myth on the other hand helped to explain racism, and sustain a coherent identity. It did this by articulating a 'them and us' dichotomy. This simply meant that it was *their* country and *they* could do what they wished, whilst *we* come from somewhere else and we will return there one day. It was not until the present decade that the descendents of these migrants took up both discourses with a vengence.

The process by which the young appropriated these discourses was initially instigated by the West. Events in the Indian subcontinent had meant little to the migrant's offspring. Riots in Bengal or the Emergency of the Indra Gandhi period were events too far away to be of any concern. Media images showed poverty, chaos and disease. All this belonged to past history, the history of their parents. There was also something embarrassing, something unpleasant about these images; Black people

were not only a problem but also had a surfeit of problems. In fact what had happened was that the Orientalist discourse, through these images, had constructed the subject through the eyes of the Other. The young had accepted a view of their history, and therefore of themselves, given by a white dominant culture.

But from the1960s onwards the situation slowly began to change. It was then that the media began to give coverage of the conflicts in the Middle East and Latin America. These events enabled the young to make the Orientalist discourse their own. This was possible because with any discourse there is always a possibility that they can '..circulate without changing their forms from one strategy to another..' (Foucault, 1978). News coverage of the events in the Middle East slowly painted a picture of Black people which to many gave another,more substantial dimension to Orientalism. Here were people in a hostile environment struggling for freedom, their homeland and above all an identity. That terrorist tactics were used only adds to the fascination. After all had not the West been weaned on Hollywood films and T.V programmes which, if not condoning, then certainly glamorised such violence? The subject of Orientalism was speaking back and had much to say in an attempt to define him/herself. So it was with this new developed discourse of Orientalism that we must view Indra Gandhi's attack on the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

Initially most British Sikhs but particularly the young, viewed the taking of the Temple by Indian troops in almost a detached manner. The key event which changed all this was the assassination of Indra Gandhi. The Middle East scenario and all its layers of meaning was being enacted in India by Sikhs. The young and to a limited degree the older Sikhs in Britain, therefore, through Orientalism, the Myth of Return and the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister by Sikhs, devised for themselves an identity which was visible for all to see. They could grow beards, wear their turbans, wear tradional clothes and openly demonstrate who they were to all who were interested. The media reflected their new found identity back to them. Orientalism became for the young a liberating discourse. It was the differences that Orientalism had attempted to use as a weapon that now became the very things which gave the Sikhs a cohesive base to build on. The young revelled in the 'exoticism', the difference, the uniqueness, and above all the feeling of power that came with it that had been denied them for so long. They had a clear strong identity in the context of post-industrial Britain.

Islamic fundamentalism served the same purpose amongst Moslems but with some very important variations. The most obvious difference is the element of choice. The Sikhs chose an identity which gave them self- esteem, a feeling of being in control and a direct link to the Myth - that is, return is always an open option even though it will never be exercised. Islamic fundamentalism only offered the first element and more importantly the choice was made for them. The history of the Middle East and the West's interpretation of it pushed religion, that is Islam,to the fore. The discourse of Orientalism painted Islam into a very uncomfortable corner. Racism in Britain has appropriated this discourse and posed Islam as a threat to all things Western. So the identity 'chosen' by young Moslems is viewed as a threat in a way other Black identities are not - for example, Sikhs, Rastafarians, various religious groups amongst people from the Caribbean. As a consequence young Moslems are pushed into, and at the same time are being pulled towards, fundamentalism - which in many cases is different from the older generation - for a securer identity. But this is still achieved

by rearticulating the Orientalist discourse and, via this move, they gain access to the Myth of Return. Islam and its negative Orientalist evaluation is inverted and 'decontaminated by reinsertion within a non-pejorative vocabulary,and then reappears as an identity description which is held up for emulation..'(Taylor, 1976, p. 86). By this move the link between this identity and Pakistan/Bangla Desh is established. So we have a situation where the racist discourse of Orientalism combines with the Myth of Return to produce an identity for 'Asian' young people which legitimates and authenticates, socially and psychologically, albeit differently for the two groups under discussion. But it is exactly at this point that Orientalism reasserts itself and disrupts this identity. A disruption which helps in incorporating elements of these groups into the British class structure. We will be able to comprehend this process more clearly if we introduce the notion of Essentialism.

What do I mean by Essentialism? Classically defined it is a belief in true essence - in something that is irreducable, unchanging, natural, ahistorical and therefore at the very heart of identity. This is the popular psychological construction of the unified self, the 'real me', the elusive self that is inside us somewhere waiting to be discovered. A relevant example of this is the belief by the Israeli state that all Jewish people are Israelis no matter where they were born or actually live. The soil of Israel is an essential element in the constitution of a Jewish identity. Similarly, misogynists as well as some feminists, albeit differentially, believe in the essential nature of women. If Asian young people have combined the Orientalist discourse with the Myth, then they have done it in a way, or at least as seen and reread by the Orientalist discourse, that privileges the differences, that is religion or homeland. Orientalism essentialises these differences, which as we have seen is a necessary part of its process, but not as before. This time it incorporates the new articulation, it assimilates the new identity formations, but at the same time excludes and exoticises as before. It does this by developing the argument from experience.

This is the argument promulgated by many, if not most, Black people, that because of the differences between them and the dominant white identity, their experience of the world is radically different.This being true, the argument goes, it follows that there must be an exclusive Black perspective on any situation. This perspective is then privileged over any other. The Orientalist discourse takes this as one of its key notes. If only Black people have this perspective then they are the ones to give advice and guidance on any situation that involves Black people, only they understand each other. For white people 'the oriental' is still 'a dark mystery'. They are essentially different. But as mentioned earlier young people felt they had control and power through this identity and, sought to exercise it. They wanted equal opportunities in all areas, including housing, employment and education. The Orientalist discourse could easily accommodate this. Social work, the police, education, local authorities and many large companies suddenly needed Black people - they needed a Black perspective. The unstated argument here was that since they could not understand Black people why not employ Black people to interpret other Black people's needs and wants.

In other words a buffer was devised between white authority,power and control, and the Black communities. In many cases,this buffer consisted of Black people and in others of the 'Black perspective', but more often than not, both. This was by no means a new tactic as it had been tested and developed in the age of imperial-

ism and colonialism. Its structure was quite simple. Some local people, usually landowners, were given the role of controlling the indigenous population. The military, judicial and economic power lay with the colonialists but was 'disguised' by the use of these intermediaries. The manifest source of power that is, the locals in charge, was quite different from the latent source of power. The 'Black perspective' argument lends itself to this same reading because it is articulated within the status quo and does not seek radically to challenge it. The changes it advovates such as Equal Opportunity Policies, leave the major inequalities untouched. But more importantly it allows more Black people access to the middle classes.

The Orientalist discourse as well as being racist is also the articulation of a specific class, ie the ruling class. This class has assimilated some Black people via the above process, while at the same time keeping them as the Other, and all this is achieved by the same discourse. This is why for example, the Black middle classes are still shocked by racism from white people whom they consider to be of their class. Their analysis and understanding of the situation is as professional people that is, they are all educated, rational and have access to knowledge in order to do their jobs. But it is exactly this point that the discourse disallows, because 'experience'as articulated above collapses into essentialism and therefore is outside of the purview of rationality; it is not knowledge. If we concede for the sake of argument that it is knowledge, then it surrepitiously becomes esoteric and only available to Black people, and again is denied the status of rational, scientific knowledge as defined by the dominant Western construction of scientific, rational knowledge. So even if middle class status has been achieved the discourse works to keep them 'in their place'. It is in this contradictory situation that the 'Asian'youths find themselves. On the one hand they can compete and be situated within the existing class structures, and on the other constitute and be constituted as the Other.

Is there any way out of this destructive impasse? The initial reaction must be pessimistic as 'the politics of experience is inevitably a conservative politics' (Gallop, 1983). It is this because experience becomes identity which becomes knowledge - ontology becomes epistemology. This process then begins to work the other way round; what is known, is known because of a specific identity. It becomes a closed self-sufficient system. This has happened because experience has become the privileged signifier of identity. It is this element of the discourse that both polarises the Black and white communities and yet has the potential and capacity to unite. I mean, of course,the experience of class. There is much common ground here which could be explored, made critical and used as a foundation for progressive and radical movement. But since class is not seen, by most Black people - and increasingly more and more white people - to be a determining factor in life there is no commonality of experience. Domination, exploitation and oppression is personalised - at best it is 'communitilised' - but the personal is no longer political because power has become

> *..primarily a personal issue between individuals - men and women, white and black, gentile and Jew, heterosexual and gay - and not the way an exploitative system is hierarchically structured so as to get maximum differentiation (Bourne, 1987).*

Any sort of dialogue or common understanding is sadly missing from this scenario. If the privileging of experience is left untheorised then there seems no way forward because experience certainly tells Asian youth that they live in a racist society and it tells white people that they are exploited and disempowered. The discourse offers them an obvious cause it constructs a 'them' and 'us'. It is by deconstructing the discourse and emphasising that the 'facts' of experience are themselves mediated through ideology - see Larrain, (1979) for a clear and concise elucidation of this concept - of which this discourse is a part that we can hope to uncover the commonality of experience. Experience does not speak, we make it speak through interpretation and analysis. By this process we arrive at a position where we do not exclude or essentialise experience in the manner outlined above, but theorise it and thereby situate it in the real historical world. 'Identity Politics' becomes then 'The Politics of Identity Politics'. From this would flow a politics that has at its heart the imbricating process that constitutes race, class and gender. That is, that one cannot be separated from any of the others - except for purely heuristic purposes - without profoundly distorting both theory and practice.

Paviter Sanghera *teaches in the department of Applied Community Studies, Manchester Metropolitan University.*

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THE CASE AGAINST THE SECURE TRAINING ORDER

PAUL CAVADINO

Clause 1 of the Government's Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill will introduce a new sentencing power for courts to pass a 'secure training order', under which juveniles aged 12 to 14 will be detained in a new system of secure institutions. There will be five centres, each with 40 places. The maximum sentence will be two years, and sentences will be determinate, with half spent in custody and half in the community under supervision.

Under the Bill's provisions, the new institutions *could* be managed by public, voluntary or private sector organisations; but it is clearly envisaged that in practice they will be built and operated by the private sector. The Bill's explanatory and financial memorandum states: 'It is anticipated that the design and build of secure training centres will be financed by the private sector.' Draft outline specifications were sent to potential contractors in July 1993. The centres will be subject to statutory rules to be made by the Home Secretary under the Prison Act 1952.

This article argues that the secure training order is a retrograde and damaging measure which will increase rather than reduce offending by juveniles.

Current Powers

Most young offenders can best be dealt with in the community. Monitoring of intensive supervised activity schemes for juveniles who would otherwise have received custodial sentences shows that the majority of young people successfully complete their programmes. Just 15% of juveniles attending these projects appear in court for further offenses, some of which may have been committed before entering the programme. Longer term studies in some local areas, such as Nottinghamshire, Surrey and Newcastle, suggest that reconviction rates covering a two-year period are also significantly better than for those sentenced to custody, with rates of between 45% and 55% compared with rates of 82% for juveniles released from custody.

Programmes of this kind hold out more hope than institutional measures of diverting young offenders from crime. Although the use of secure accommodation is necessary for a small number of juveniles, the Government's proposals are an inappropriate and unhelpful way of achieving this.

Courts' current powers to detain young offenders aged 10 to 14 are as follows:

1. **Offenders aged 10 to 13** can receive a supervision order with a 'residence requirement', which requires the local authority to place the young person in local authority accommodation (where necessary, secure accommodation can be used) for a specified period of up to six months. Those who commit homicide offences can be sentenced to long term detention under section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933; and Clause 16 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill will extend the use of section 53 for this age group to any offence carrying a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or more

when committed by an adult. Young people who are beyond control can also be taken into care through *civil* care proceedings and, if necessary, held in local authority secure units. Care orders last until the young person is 18.

2. **Offenders aged 14** are in the same position as those under 14 except that they can *already* be detained under section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 for any offence with a maximum penalty of 14 years or more in the case of an adult.

This range of powers is adequate to ensure that juveniles can be detained whenever this is genuinely necessary. Any gap does not occur in relation to powers, but in relation to facilities: local authorities are not infrequently unable to find a secure place within a reasonable distance for a young person for whom they consider secure accommodation necessary. What is needed is not more powers to detain juveniles but a small number of additional secure places in some areas of the country, which would enable courts to make appropriate use of the powers which legislation already provides. A reduction in the use of secure units for less delinquent and non-delinquent children could also free some secure places for more serious young offenders.

Past Experience

Experience shows that all forms of institutional care or custody for young offenders have high reconviction rates. It is well known that this is true of prison service custody. According to a Parliamentary answer by Earl Ferrers, Minister of State at the Home Office, to Baroness Faithful on 22 March 1994, the latest available figures for 15 to 16 year olds are for those discharged from prison service establishments in 1987 and followed up for two years. 83% of boys (2,270 out of 2,749), 43% of girls (15 out of 35) and 82% of all 15 and 16 year olds (2,285 out of 2,784) were reconvicted within two years of discharge.

However, high reconviction rates are not restricted to prison service establishments: they are also common to other forms of institution. Research into the effectiveness of approved schools (and community homes with education, as they subsequently became) indicates that they increased rather than reduced the likelihood of reoffending. The 1975 edition of the Home Office handbook, 'The Sentence of the Court' showed that 65% of first offenders and 78% of offenders with previous convictions who were given approved school orders were reconvicted within five years. When the characteristics of offenders were taken into account, those leaving approved schools had a reconviction rate *49% higher* than would otherwise have been expected from their characteristics and records.

Home Office Research Study No. 32, 'Residential Treatment and its Effects on Delinquency'(1975) assessed the results of work undertaken at Kingswood community home with education - formerly an approved school - in Bristol. The research, which spanned the period 1965-73, was undertaken in two of the school's house units, one providing intervention along 'therapeutic community' lines and another offering a more conventional approved school approach. The percentages of boys reconvicted within two years of leaving the two houses were 70% and 69% respectively, while those leaving the third house at Kingswood had a 68% reconviction rate. The researchers suggested that even these figures probably underestimated the real position: for example, of the 87 successes, 30 were known to have committed offences after the two year follow-up period chosen for the research.

In a report entitled 'Punishment and Welfare' (University of Lancaster, 1979), Thorpe, Green and Smith examined the subsequent behaviour of young offenders from Rochdale sent to community homes with education (CHEs) and found that two thirds had been reconvicted at least once following their first CHE placement. The authors commented that these figures were more or less in line with previous studies 'and may actually be worse, since they relate to a shorter period subsequent to discharge from a CHE than the two years to which reconviction data usually refer'.

Even institutions which adopt constructive regimes invariably produce high reconviction rates for young people. It is apposite to refer to two major research studies from the late 1970s into secure units for juveniles - the Dartington Social Research Institute's study 'Locking Up Children' (1978) by Spencer Millham, Roger Bullock and Kenneth Hosie, and 'Children Referred to Closed Units' (DHSS Research Report No 5, 1979) by Pat Cawson and Mary Martell. These studies showed that reconviction rates were very high, even though secure units were taking younger and less delinquent children than had been the case several years previously.

The Dartington Unit found that boys in secure units were younger and less delinquent than in earlier years: 62% were under 14½ years of age. Yet of 587 boys released from secure units and followed up for two years, 76% of those released to the community reoffended. The majority then underwent a further spell in an institution, usually a borstal. The authors observed:

> *For the majority of boys the secure units provide a brief sojourn in an expensive ante-room to the penal system.*

The DHSS study, which concerned children referred to four secure units from 1971-74, produced similar findings. It found that the children referred were younger than those admitted in earlier years, two-thirds of the referrals being 13 and 14 years olds. The children had fewer court appearances than earlier admissions to secure units, and a fifth had never appeared in court charged with an offence. Yet of a sample of 40 children whose subsequent progress was followed up by the researchers, 78% reoffended within the year following discharge and 40% of them committed six or more offences during the one year period. The researchers concluded:

> *...present indications are that admission to the units increases the probability of subsequent offending for younger children... children admitted to the units had in some respects a poorer record after discharge than would have been expected from their previous records, which may indicate a criminogenic effect of admission to a unit, particularly in the younger and less criminally sophisticated... there are clear indications that the trend towards admitting younger and less delinquent children to closed units is a dangerous one which should be reconsidered.*

The proposed secure training order would increase the number of younger offenders committed to secure institutions.

More recently, the Dartington Social Research Unit's study 'The Experiences and Careers of Young People Leaving the Youth Treatment Centres' (1989) followed up 102 young people leaving youth treatment centres between 1982 and 1985. After two years 72% of boys released from youth treatment centres into the community had been reconvicted. The overall figure for boys and girls was 59%, and after

three years the proportion had risen to 73%. The study found that 'some groups are more likely to be convicted than others, for instance, persistent delinquents who had three or more convictions prior to entry'.

Some advocates of the secure training order have likened the proposal to the 'training school order' in Northern Ireland. A study in the 1980s entitled 'Measuring Effectiveness in the Juvenile Justice System', produced by the Policy Analysis Branch of the Northern Ireland Office's Department of Finance and Personnel, found a reconviction rate for those given training school orders of 48.3% over a two year period *from the date the order was made*. As most of the offenders were detained for a substantial part of this two year period, this reconviction rate is a very high one. More recently, research carried out for the Northern Ireland Office (completed in 1993 but not yet published) found that the reconviction rate of young people leaving the Lisnevin training school in County Down was over 85%.

It is unlikely that the new secure training centres will succeed in producing low reconviction rates where borstals, detention centres, young offender institutions, approved schools, secure units and youth treatment centres have failed to do so.

As the Directors of seven national child care charities pointed out in a letter to The Times of 3 March 1993:

> *...there is a danger that all the lessons learned in recent years about the clear link between juvenile custody and high reoffending rates will be lost. Schemes to prevent young people being drawn into the criminal justice system, and to confront those who have offended with the consequences of their offending, have proved far more successful than custody in preventing reoffending.*

Containment

One argument advanced for the secure training order is that locking up a small number of highly persistent young offenders could make a substantial impact on juvenile crime by keeping these young people out of circulation during their sentences. The fallacy of this argument is clear from the Policy Studies Institute's study 'Persistent Young Offenders' by Ann Hagell and Tim Newburn (1994).

This study looked at a sample consisting of all young people aged under 17 in two geographical areas who were arrested three or more times in 1992 - a total of 531 juveniles. 25 of these young people could have been eligible for a secure training order because they had committed three imprisonable offenses, one of which had been committed while subject to a supervision order. They represented 5% of the sample and their offences accounted for 8% of the offences committed *by the sample of 531 young offenders* in 1992. The proportion of *all* juvenile crime in the two areas which was represented by these 25 young people's offenses will have been considerably lower than 8%.

Therefore, even if all 25 young people had been held in secure training centres all the time - which would not, of course, have been the case in practice - the impact of this on overall juvenile crime would have been slight.

Costs

The secure training order would be an expensive proposition. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill's financial memorandum states that 'overall costs including

supervision in the community are expected to be in excess of £30 million a year'. The running costs of *local authority* secure units range from £1,500 to £2,700 per child per week: as the private sector companies running secure training centres will also have to recoup their initial costs of designing and building the centres, the per capita cost of the centres could well be higher than this.

The secure training order would be a costly and ineffective measure which would replicate the mistake of the 1960s and 1970s. To devote such large sums of money to such a measure, at a time when resources for effective programmes of supervision in the community are being pegged back, is wholly unjustifiable.

Geographical Spread

If the new separate system consists of a small number of secure institutions, many young people will be held a long way from their home areas. This will make it very difficult to maintain close links, through regular visits, with families and social workers from their home areas - links which are very important for young people's resettlement after they leave the secure institution. Research by the Dartington Social Research Unit into the benefits of different types of regime indicates that work which addresses the family situation of the young person is the most likely to achieve some success - particularly as many young people leaving secure units return to their families. (In their studies of youth treatment centres, two-thirds of leavers returned to their parents during a two-year follow-up period). Such family-centred work is made much more difficult when there is a long distance between the secure establishment and the child's home area. The Association of Chief Police Officers pointed out the problem in relation to existing secure accommodation in its evidence to the house of Commons Home Affairs Committee in February 1993:

> *...in areas of the country where secure places are not available, the young offenders are taken long distances, which often reduces the opportunities for family contacts to be maintained, thus actually increasing the difficulties of the offender and weakening family support when it should be encouraged.*

In its response to the Home Office's consultation on the proposed secure training order, the Magistrates' Association commented:

> *It is vital that links should be maintained with the child's family and community by a designated social worker so as to facilitate rehabilitation. In the Association's view, this can only by achieved in small, locally based units.*

The Justices' Clerks' Society, in its response, said:

> *We are opposed to the creation of large institutions which, of necessity, could be some distance from offenders' homes, thereby limiting any opportunities which do remain for contact with families and the offender's home community to which he or she will have to return in due course.*

In its report 'Juvenile Offenders' (1993) the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee endorsed these views and recommended 'that there should be a wide spread of units containing no more than 15 inmates' (para. 153).

For these reasons, if additional secure places are required they should be provided as part of the local authority secure unit system in a way which improves the geographical spread of such units.

Bullying and Suicide Attempts
The intimidation and bullying of younger and weaker juveniles by older or tougher young people is a common problem in all types of institutions for young offenders. There is no reason to believe that it will be less of a problem in the new institutions than in other forms of detention for young people. The ages of those in the centres will range from 12 to nearly 17 (the latter occurring when a young offender is nearly 15 when sentenced and is recalled from supervision to the institution). There is a very great difference between 16 year olds and 12 year olds, and the scope for intimidation of the latter by the former is very considerable.

The experience of custodial establishments for older juveniles has shown that suicide attempts by young inmates are often precipitated by bullying. Another common factor is depression aggravated by lack of contact with families - which, as explained above, is also likely to be a feature of the secure training centres.

What Else Should be Done?
If the creation of additional powers for courts to lock up juveniles is not an appropriate answer, then what further measures are needed to deal effectively with persistent young offenders?

It is generally agreed that the number of persistent juvenile offenders is not large. However, it is of the greatest importance that such young people and their families should receive effective, timely intervention of a kind likely to divert these young people from crime. Inter-agency arrangements should be established in each area to identify this small group and to target intensive joint work and supervision on them and their families. This work should actively confront and challenge their offending behaviour and provide a wide-ranging package of supervision and support to the young person and his or her family.

Work with persistent juvenile offenders can only be fully effective if measures are implemented to ensure that every area has a comprehensive range of intensive supervised activity schemes, bail support programmes, remand fostering facilities, and arrangements for support services for cautioned young offenders, in addition to local authority secure accommodation. The latter should be used only where it is genuinely necessary while such young people are on remand, are subject to a 'residence requirement' or have been taken into care when they are beyond parental control.

Any additional resources for work with juvenile offenders should be devoted to ensuring that every area has a full range of programmes working with young offenders and defendants in the community. They should not be wasted on an expensive new system of secure institutions.

Conclusion
As the Rt. Rev. Philip Goodrich, Bishop of Worcester, wrote in a foreword to the Children's Society report 'A False Sense of Security' (1993):

> *The facts reveal that a large majority of those juveniles who are locked away are thereby prepared for a life of crime, reoffending very soon after they are released. They become marked youth, bunched together with others who will draw them into an underworld of crime. It is not enough for*

government or anyone else to play to the gallery and allow the media to manipulate us into a response which looks brave, tough and responsible, when in fact it is not any of these things.

The new secure training order would be an expensive mistake. A range of powers already exists to detain those young people for whom this is genuinely necessary. A small number of additional local authority secure places are needed in some areas to enable courts to make proper use of these existing powers. But a sentence of detention in a new and separate system of secure institutions (run by commercial organisations with no experience of caring for vulnerable young people) would be a retrograde step. It would mean unnecessarily locking up many more young people in establishments which would increase their chances of reoffending.

Paul Cavadino *is Principal Officer (Criminal Justice Policy) of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders.*

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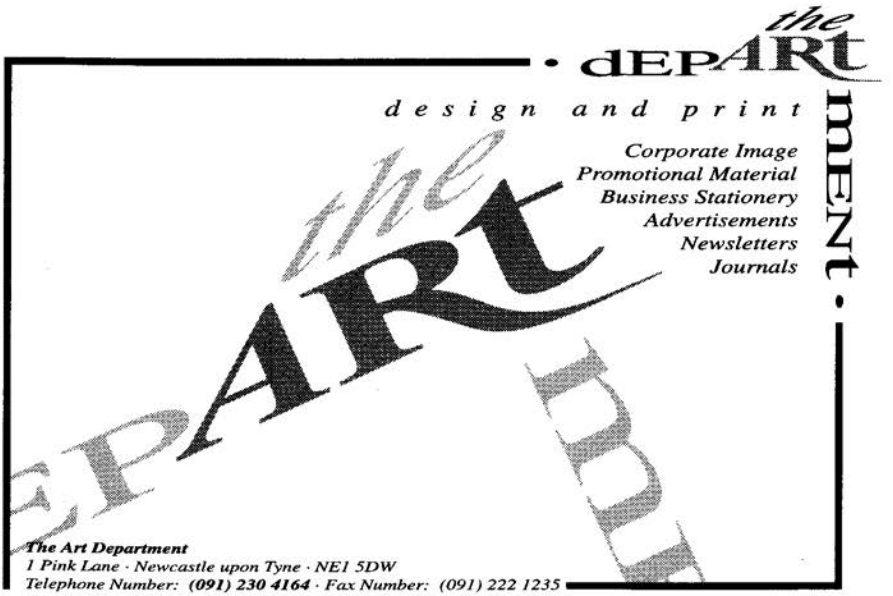

WORKING SPACE

How far has the northern region adopted a harm reduction approach in dealing with drug misuse?

CAROLYN YOUNG AND ROBERT HOLLANDS

Background to the Study

A vast amount of literature has been written about various strategies and policies to deal with drug misuse and their effectiveness. In particular harm reduction has received a great deal of attention, partly due to the failure of the abstinence approach and partly due to its implementation in other parts of the country, such as the North West. Practitioners working within the drugs field appear to be facing a conflict between responding to the needs and demands of their clients (which tend them towards harm reduction practices) and receiving mixed messages from a government who has largely promoted an abstinence approach through its various health education campaigns. A recent report from the Institute for Public Policy Research (Coffield and Gofton, 1994) also suggests that young people themselves have a very different view and experience of drugs use than that promoted either through the media, official government documents or health education materials. Concerning the wider political spectrum, the Scottish Affairs Committee has just published a report outlining strategies to deal with drug misuse in Scotland, and a substantial part of its recommendations follow a harm reduction approach (reported in *The Guardian* 10.5.94).

In view of these developments, it was decided that it was necessary to review the approach adopted by drug professionals within the Northern Region to assess how far they have adopted a harm reduction approach in dealing with drug misuse. The Northern Regional Health Authority agreed to fund a study undertaken at Newcastle University for three months from February to May 1994 and here we report on the main findings of this research (Young and Hollands, 1994). For the purpose of the study it was decided that drug misuse should refer only to illicit drug use and exclude alcohol and tranquilliser use.

Despite public awareness and debate over the harm reduction approach, there remain definitional difficulties and questions over its implementation, and most importantly evaluation. Prior to the research a definition was drawn up based upon the work of O'Hare et al (1992) and Heather et al (1993). Harm reduction is a philosophy based on the premise that the abstinence approach to drug misuse has been unsuccessful. It involves minimising the amount of physical/mental, social and economic harm caused by drug misuse at three levels, the individual, community and society. In order to operate this philosophy it is necessary to select a sub-set of desired targets from a matrix of hierarchical harm reduction options in order to change a drug user's behaviour to the optimum point on a chosen dimension. Abstinence can be viewed as the ultimate goal on a continuum of proposed targets. Harm reduction strategies need not advocate pleasure promotion or legalisation.

Methodology

Thirty interviews were carried out in total. A structured quantitative and qualitative questionnaire was used as the basis of the interviews with 19 specialist substance mis-

use services who were carefully selected according to a quota method involving type of service, geographical location and known prevalence rates of drug use. Semi-structured and unstructured qualitative questionnaires were used with the remaining professionals involved in the drugs issue and included interviews with 3 drug educationalists, 2 representatives of Northumbria Police, and 2 interviews took place with the Northumbria Probation Service. In addition an interview was carried out with Newcastle Drugs Prevention Initiative and a student councillor. Representatives from a drug service in Merseyside and Manchester were also interviewed to enable a comparison to be made with the North West. A harm reduction forum was attended which comprised representatives of drug agencies in the region particularly interested in harm reduction. A review of the current literature about harm reduction was also undertaken.

Results

i. Views on Harm Reduction

Eighty nine percent of drug agencies interviewed thought that harm reduction was the most effective approach for dealing with drug misuse, while none preferred an abstinence approach. Two respondents thought that both approaches were necessary. While all respondents associated harm reduction with the individual, 17% also associated it with the community and society. Therefore there was some confusion within the drug agencies in the Northern Region as to how widely harm reduction can be applied.

Ninety four percent of drug services either supported the idea of a regional policy of harm reduction or advocated regional guidelines. The drug services interviewed thought that such a policy/guideline should focus on recreational drug use, young people, alcohol and community development. While an overwhelming number of drug services were supportive of a harm reduction approach, they were also asked to describe any potential problems which they could envisage being caused by such a policy. Comments included issues such as an increase in the availability of drugs and encouragement of drug misuse, moral contradictions within treatment, the creation of 'geriatric drug users', clients' exploitation of the system, and workers having to compromise values. Despite the strong support for a harm reduction approach the drug agencies appeared to operate such a policy to limited and varying degrees.

ii. Intravenous Drug Users

Only 42% of the agencies had a needle exchange programme and one particular area had no agency or pharmacy based needle exchange scheme. An issue pertinent to young drug takers is that there is a legal restriction that those under the age of sixteen are not allowed to use needle exchanges. Therefore harm reduction in the form of syringe exchange schemes cannot be applied to this age group.

Seventy four percent of agencies were aware of pharmacy based needle exchange programmes in their area. Several areas within the Northern Region did not have a pharmacy based syringe exchange scheme at the time of study. It was found that there was the need to provide more training and support to pharmacies to encourage them to become involved in the scheme. Merseyside has been successful in engaging pharmacists in syringe exchange schemes by targeting those pharmacies amenable to such a scheme and has provided them with support and training. It was found that steroid use is widespread across the Northern Region and there was a call for a separate steroid users' clinic. One particular agency had no contact with steroid injectors prior to setting up a syringe exchange programme.

iii. HIV and Hepatitis

Only 26% of the agencies interviewed carried out HIV testing and only one carried out anonymous testing. This is not in line with the ACMD's recommendations (1993) that more testing provisions should be made available in a variety of settings and that anonymous surveys of HIV prevalence should be undertaken more widely. Only just over half of the agencies taught clients how to clean their equipment effectively. This is a practice which should be extended in view of Herrod et al's findings (1989) that 70% of drug injectors cleaned their equipment in a manner that might result in the retention of blood products. Under a third of agencies immunised against hepatitis B despite the ACMD's recommendation that drug injectors and their sexual partners should be encouraged to seek hepatitis B immunisation. Perhaps of greater concern, only 16% of agencies tested for hepatitis C, which appears to be a particularly large problem amongst intravenous drug users in the Northern Region.

Several drug agencies commented upon the considerable demand which they received for condoms from young people. It appears that local family planning clinics are not accessible to young drug users and they are therefore turning to drug agencies. Although condom distribution within drug agencies is recommended by the ACMD (1993), it also suggests that family planning clinics should be made more accessible. This seems to be a particularly large problem within the Northern Region.

iv. Substitute Prescribing

It was found that only 26% of drug agencies prescribed methadone in the form of a maintenance dose and it was apparent that there was a problem in encouraging General Practitioners to become involved in methadone maintenance prescribing. Many doctors would only prescribe methadone as a reduction dose and others did not prescribe high enough doses, resulting in clients topping up their scripts with other drugs. Only 11% of agencies prescribed naloxone (an opiate antagonist) and most agencies disagreed with Strang and Farrell's suggestion (1992) that naloxone could be useful in cases of overdose.

v. Educational Materials

It was found that a lot of agencies were having to buy educational materials from other parts of the country or produce their own literature, suggesting that the materials provided by the Northern Region are inadequate. There was a call for more materials designed using the drug culture of the region to make the literature more appropriate to young drug users (Lifeline's 'Peanut Pete' cartoon strip, produced in Manchester, is often held up as an exemplary model in this regard).

vi. Access to Services

An important issue surrounding harm reduction is whether the harm minimisation message reaches all sections within society. It was found that services are not accessible to all cross sections of the community and at present the harm reduction message is only reaching long- term working class male opiate users in their twenties. Thirty seven percent of agencies deal only with those over the age of sixteen and there is some concern over the legal status surrounding work with those under this age. At present there is only one service within the region which deals specifically with young people. This is of some concern, as Steve Barrigan of the Walker YMCA Detached Youth Project in Newcastle stated that 'Five years ago the age of most of the people who had drug problems was 16 to 18, now 12 and 13 year olds are involved' (Bennetto, 1994, p.1)

The amount of female drug users accessed by the agencies varies across the region and available evidence would appear to suggest that many young women do not find many of the services approachable. Most agencies have a 1:3 gender ratio (3 males to every 1 female), while the 1992 Census found that there are slightly more females than males in Tyne and Wear. In some areas the gender ratio is as poor as 1:5 and the problem is particularly great among residential programmes. A prevalence survey of drug use in Newcastle amongst school children found that while at year 8 more males than females had tried drugs, by year 10 more females than males had experimented with drugs (Health Related Behaviour Survey, 1992).

It was also found that services were not sufficiently accessible for ethnic minorities, the middle and upper classes and students. The estimated percentage of clients from ethnic minorities in this study ranged from 0 to 8%, while the percentage of the population in the Northern Region classed as non-white is 1.3 (Regional Trends, 1993). Eighty four percent of agencies said that they dealt mainly with the unemployed and most of their remaining clients were from the working class. It was found that many students are unaware that help is available to them and those who do seek help find drug services to be inaccessible. Hollands et al (1994) found evidence to suggest that drug use is common within the Newcastle student population. There is the need to extend outreach work to all of those groups who are not accessing the drug services.

vii. The Police

Regarding the police response to drug misuse, it was found that Northumbria Police are involved in three initiatives with Newcastle pub and club owners in order to reduce the harm caused by drug misuse in Newcastle city centre. These are Pubwatch, a door registration scheme and closed circuit television surveillance. Although certain aspects of their practice correspond with a harm reduction approach, such as their cautioning policy and agreement not to carry out surveillance on needle exchange programmes, they could incorporate referrals to drug services as a part of or as an alternative to sentencing.

viii. The Probation Service

The Northumbria Probation Service has a formal policy of harm reduction, however a high percentage of clients with drug misuse problems are not being given probation orders with a condition of treatment. Some residential centres for the probation service will no longer accommodate probation clients with a known drug problem.

ix. Drug Education

It appears that there is no coordination of school based drug education within the Northern Region and materials are not being sufficiently updated due to the abolition of the Health Education Coordinator posts. This has resulted in schools organising one off sessions from outside agencies such as the police and specialist drug agencies. It is now up to the discretion of the head teacher or School Governors whether a school incorporates drug education and what approach it takes. As a result there is the possibility that drug education may regress back to being moralistic and judgemental. This is particularly disturbing in view of the fact that a survey in 1992 found that by year 10 approximately a quarter of school children in Newcastle had tried drugs (Health Related Behaviour Survey, 1992).

Drug education can be studied in either Personal and Social Education (PSE) or Science. Coffield and Ridley (1992) found that PSE was not included in the time

table for some pupils, while those who did study it found that drug education ranged from being constructive to side-stepping the issue or using shock tactics. Many pupils felt that they knew more about the subject than their teacher. Pupils stated that they wanted confidential discussion groups and role play exercises with a young trustworthy person, preferably with personal experience of drug use, who emphasised the positive as well as the negative aspects of drug use. Drug educationalists within this study felt that there was a need to establish greater links with community groups and utilise their services in drug prevention. There are a lot of untapped resources which exist within the local community.

Conclusion

First, it appears that there is considerable support from drug workers, the police and the probation service for harm reduction within the Northern Region, while the extent to which they operate such an approach is variable and limited. However several General Practitioners and pharmacists within the region appear to still advocate an abstinence approach as does much of government policy. There is a clear need for a more public debate on the issues surrounding harm reduction and abstinence and this should involve all of the groups concerned with drug use and misuse, as well as those currently researching drugs and young people.

Second, there is also the need to evaluate the harm reduction work which has and is being carried out in the Northern Region. The report which these findings are based upon (Young and Hollands, 1994), raises important issues concerning the implementation and evaluation of a harm reduction policy. In order to facilitate this the region needs to outline acceptable targets on prevalence, risk and harm variables, and produce a regional policy or guidelines which set out targets which could form the basis of such an evaluation process.

Carolyn Young *is a Research Assistant in the Department of Social Policy, University of Newcastle.*

Robert Hollands *lectures in the Department of Social Policy at Newcastle University and is on the Editorial Board of Youth and Policy.*

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pp 158

JEREMY WALKER

My first reaction to this book was a telling one: I felt inadequate and then guilty. I had never heard of 'family preservation practice' and felt I should have done. I needn't have worried, though, because, if it is anything at all, it is our old friend social work packaged and promoted under another name. It has been given a re-fit, just like Windscale, Townsend Thorensen, Ratners and all the other names which acquired a reputation for being dangerous or dodgy. The concept, of course, is supposed to sound innovative and impressive, and the book's eighteen or so contributors certainly sport a glittering array of titles: there are Professors, Assistant Professors, Associate Clinical Professors, Associate Professors and one Adjunct Professor.

It would be nice to report that its content is as erudite as the rank of its authors might suggest but, apart from one or two flickers of elementary common sense towards the end, it is repetitious, grandiose and obsessed with underlining the status and superiority of its practitioners at the expense of any kind of rigorous examination of what they were doing or real empathy with those at the receiving end. The system is uniformly inflated and the language a strange mixture of the new-fangled and the archaic. In the world of family preservation, people are not 'hard up' but have 'resource deficits': mothers who don't get on with others have 'a specific pattern of social contacts within the community that are characterized by a high level of negatively perceived coercive interchanges with relatives and/or helping agency representatives and by a low level of positively perceived supportive interchanges with friends'. Fossils such as 'eschewal' and 'undergird' come almost as a welcome find after struggling through prose as dense and charmless as this.

Nevertheless I was intrigued to find out whether something of real substance was detectable behind this veil of carespeak. We are introduced to 'family preservation practice' by E. Susan Morton, a Clinical Director of a school for emotionally disturbed children. She tells us that it is 'an essential specialized component of delivery of services to children who are at risk and their families' and, in doing so, introduces us to the rule that 30% of the words in any one sentence should be superfluous.

Unwisely she leaves the theory of family preservation practice to one E. Kevin Grigsby who is responsible for the weakest chapter in a weak book. He cites 35 references at the end but no amount of academic underpinning would save this flimsy piece. We are given a whistle-stop tour of crisis intervention theory, systems theory, social learning theory and ecological theory, none of which is given more than a page. It comes to a halt with social attachment theory but the four pages devoted to this are, again, extremely repetitious and banal. His observations are relentlessly rudimentary. For

example, he tells us that 'the decision to remove a child from the family in order to protect the child, must be weighed against the possibility of traumatizing the child in the process of out-of-home placement'. Seemingly unaware of the triteness of this statement, Grigsby carries on in an increasingly grandiose vein: we are told, in passing, that 'the use of a crisis intervention model reaffirms the emphasis that the functional approach places on the use of time limits as a structuring variable in the process of intervention'.

With a flourish he introduces us to the 'Intensive Family Preservation Service clinician' who, in a scant six to eight weeks, will restore the struggling families of urban America with a dazzling supply of services. These include help with 'improving self-esteem, improving communication between family members, teaching stress management, increasing frustration tolerance, and increasing the caregiver's repertoire ...crisis intervention, advocacy, information and referral, case management, respite care, and homemaker services'.

I was eager to find out from the following chapter, by Ann E. Quinn, what the effects of this impressive portfolio of services were. Her opening remarks were not promising: 'intensive family preservation intervention has a positive influence on family functioning in terms of upgrading parenting skill.'

In spite of producing no evidence at all to support her claim (which, for all we know, may indeed be true), Ms Quinn rattles on in a confident tone: 'the true value of family preservation intervention lies in what we learn about the family and the dynamics which led to the need for protective service intervention'. This sounds suspiciously like that old social work failing of mistaking explanation of a problem for its management.

Her chapter at least ends with an incontrovertible truth: 'intensive family preservation involves significant investment both in time and money'. Unhappily, however, this is not a spur to greater rigour or self-examination but an opportunity for another limply hopeful observation: 'many families seem to be positively affected by IFPS intervention'. I was reminded strongly at this point of those social work closing summaries in the bad old days which tended to end thus: 'Mrs Jones seemed to benefit from our sessions together'.

Indeed, the central failing of this book is an apparent lack of real interest in what approaches are effective with families in distress and, for that matter, in what we mean by 'effective'. Most telling of all is the absence of any awareness of the power of class relationship between professionals and such families. Instead, its authors are preoccupied with essentially trivial issues because they are also preoccupied with status. So we have Charles R. Soule and others spending a whole chapter comparing 'single-clinician interventions, in which all services are provided by a master's-level or doctoral-level child and family clinician' and 'clinician-support worker team interventions where clinicians work along with agency-trained family support workers.' Time and time again while reading this book, I was reminded of the Jasmine Beckford tragedy, in which the only person to emerge with any credit at all was Dorothy Ruddock, an untrained family aide.

In fact it becomes clear that what is actually provided by 'family preservationists', regardless of title or academic qualification, is a kind of ad hoc

grandparental care to families with no status but with what are called 'a high number of concrete service needs'. We are told that a 'clinician made several emergency visits to deal with violence between Dee and Pete, and to provide transportation to a local hospital emergency room following an accidental injury to the one-year-old. In addition, Dee was assisted with telephone service, utilities and emergency food'. This sounds uncannily like the sort of thing I used to do in the days of generic social work and I found myself wondering if I would have felt better about it if I had called myself a family preservation clinician. Did the emperor feel warm because he deluded himself he wore a beautiful set of clothes? Maybe he did. Perhaps I would have had more success or job satisfaction if I had called myself a 'Homebuilder', a character who surfaces in a chapter by Sandra D. Erickson on 'The Florida Experience'. This is not a new kind of mortgage or a DIY chain, as you might expect, but a new brand name for our old favourite, the social worker. At least, though, some hard data make their way onto the stage here, and astonishing they are too. The number of children deemed to be 'at risk' in Florida in 1990-1991 was a mind-blowing 3,058,988, while the number of children 'reported for abuse and neglect' went up from just over 4,000 in 1970-1971 to over 180,000 in 1990-1991, an increase of over 4,000% in just 20 years.

Erickson looks at the effectiveness of Florida's 'Intensive Crisis Counselling Program' against this background. This would appear to consist of a six-week stint of a mix of 'concrete and psychological services' at a cost of about £1,000 per family. Her measure of success was extremely crude - meaning simply 'that the family .... were intact during the time period' of their intervention. It is no suprise, such is the proselytizing tone of the chapter - and most of the book - that she claims that placements away from home were prevented by the application of their not inexpensive skills. However, aware that 'a causal relationship between this new home-based service and a reduction in shelter and foster-care could not be determined', she nevertheless goes onto conclude airily that 'families were being taught new skills and new methods to deal with crises'.

No amount of therapeutic optimism, however, could prevent the longest chapter in the book - on 'Family Preservation with Neglectful Families' - from finally giving the game away. We could pass over the fact that the evaluation of the scheme in question - California's 'In-Home Family Care Program' - is extremely vague and woolly: we can admire the honesty of its author, Marianne Berry, in revealing that a fifth of families in the scheme actually declined from opening to closing in the areas of general child care, discipline and encouragement of child development'. But what this telling chapter really reveals is the way in which families are perceived by America's family preservationists - which is as empty vessels waiting to be filled by the great skill and learning of the expert. Clients are helpless, hapless souls whose lives could be transformed by the 9 hours per week of wisdom dispensed by the programme's practitioners, setting aside the fact that 'the most common service provided was that of case planning'!

This is the deficit model, pure and simple. There is also a kind of rampant classism at work here - and maybe something worse, since 'minority eth-

nicity' and being ' a multiracial family' are two of the nine criteria for being deemed 'at risk'. But, above all, there is a paternalism lurking just out of sight which, more than anything I suspect, traps families in their roles as subservient, subordinate consumers of welfare.

Just as my exasperation was becoming almost unbearable, the penultimate chapter produced a glimmer of enlightenment. The author, Julia H. Littell, observed that there is 'little evidence that family preservation programs affect placement rates for the relatively small number of families who are at risk of placement'. She takes this line further, noting that 'workers often report that a case was a success because they do what they are supposed to do - they met the family within 24 hours, provided in-home and concrete services ...even if there was no improvement or some deterioration in the family's situation'. But the freshness is not sustained and she too is soon bogged down in the language of this brave new care-world, writing of the importance of 'establishing specificity and congruence regarding the identification of problems' and of the difficulty of designing 'an effective algorithm for specifying a target group of cases'. Her conclusion that 'intensive family preservation programs may benefit children and families in many ways' is as limp as her analysis is laboured.

Nevertheless, these welcome gusts of scepticism and humility did sustain me as I gritted my teeth to get to the finishing-line, when suddenly I realized that what was missing from this book, like the dog in the Sherlock Holmes story which failed to bark, was the authentic voice of the client. Unhappily, what we heard instead were the sounds of practitioners and pundits extravagantly promoting their wares with minimal concern for their value. In the final chapter - on evaluation of family preservation - Bruce A. Thyer's parting shot is 'keep it simple, think small'. If only he and his colleagues had followed this advice.

Jeremy Walker
Senior Social Worker, Mental Health
Wandsworth Borough Council

Gillian Klein
Education Towards Race Equality
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CAROL VINCENT

This volume is one of a series designed primarily for trainee and practising teachers. With this in mind, Gillian Klein has written a clear and accessible introduction to the substantive topics concerned with education and 'race'.

The book is divided into two main parts. The first contains a historical and theoretical consideration of developments in education in a multi-ethnic society. The second focuses on issues at the school level.

Thus the first five chapters cover key topics within the area such as under-achievement, and also provide a comprehensive historical account. The latter includes all the areas one would expect (early immigration, 'bussing', the Rampton and Swann Reports and sources of media bias), and several one might look for, but which are not, however, always included in such introductory texts for teachers (the separate schools debate, immigration law, and Race Awareness Training). There is a useful section outlining organisations which 'work for racial justice' including the Commission for Racial Equality and the Runnymede Trust. This section concludes with a cogent assessment of the teaching unions attempts to address racial discrimination in schools. There is also a welcome emphasis on bi-lingualism; a section in chapter 4 traces developments in professional responses to linguistic diversity, a topic taken up again in Part Two, in relation to teaching styles (ch. 8) and assessment (Ch. 11).

Part Two covers recent legislation, planning a whole school policy, whole school issues (such as staffing, racist harassment, and parental involvement), teaching styles, and classroom ethos, practical suggestions for 'embedding educational equality' (p. 148) into curriculum areas under the National Curriculum, and overviews of materials and resources and assessment procedures. The section on race and racism as a classroom topic is a helpful introduction to this contentious area. It points out the potential pitfalls of 'contrived discussions' (p.139), which can either allow racist views to be freely aired, or encourage the children to simply respond unthinkingly, to what they believe the teacher wants to hear. Klein favours instead participative approaches, perhaps using drama as a stimulus. She gives full details of one example, aimed at children in years 4-6. The chapter on printed and published materials is extremely good in its consideration of bias, stereotyping and censorship, and the need to develop the skills of critical information handling. These issues were, of course, given a high profile in some education authorities in the early 1980s, including the ILEA, where Gillian Klein once worked. However, a glance at the publication dates of Gillian Klein's suggested further reading (most are from the early to mid-1980s) highlights the marginalisation of this area in recent years, as teachers, publishers, and LEA advisers concentrated on the National Curriculum. Gillian Klein is addressing crucial issues by bringing these topics to the attention of new teachers.

One of the books strengths is its clear structure and layout. The chapters all start with an overview, and finish with a short conclusion and a list of further reading. Main arguments are often contained with a box, so that they are separated from a block of text. Klein incorporates research findings, competently using a wide reference base. However, a more comprehensive index and use of explanatory footnotes would have been welcome, particularly for guiding readers new to the area though the wealth of references. Unfortunately, some early references, for example to Culloden School (p.46) and PACE (p.44), are not explained until much later in the text and are absent from the index.

Klein seeks to avoid the polarisation of the stale multicultural/anti-racist debate by using the term 'education towards racial equality' (abbreviated to ERE). However, I did not find her usage of it as clear and comprehensive as she appears to assume her readers will. Chapter 1 concludes with a glossary of terms in the book, a useful addition to readers unfamiliar with the language and terms of debate in this area. However, on ERE, it proves unhelpful, the definition simply being 'what it says!' It seems that her approach is one that recognises 'power inequality in schools and society' (p. 12) and also maintains that a multicultural curriculum can 'further race equality without undermining academic rigour' (p.165). Therefore education towards race equality is concerned, firstly, with 'the experience of children from ethnic minority groups in schools, and their equal opportunity to acquire and show talent' (p.5), and also with white children 'unlearn[ing] commonsense and stereotypical notions about the ethnic minorities' (p.6). However, this definition is culled from various parts of the book, and a section at the beginning offering a clear definition of ERE might have been useful.

The book does not mention the more recent theoretical developments and debates around anti-racist education. These are, no doubt, outside the brief of an introductory volume but the inclusion of some references in the further reading would have been helpful for any readers who wished to pursue their study in this direction.

These caveats apart, Gillian Klein's book fulfils its major aims (listed on p.3). It outlines the experience of ethnic minority pupils since the 1960s at the hands of the school system. It also examines key topics for practitioners. The result is an accessible, lively text which will be particularly relevant for teachers and student teachers seeking to increase their knowledge and develop their practice in this crucial area.

Carol Vincent
Research Officer, Institute of Education, London University.
Lecturer, Open University

National Research Council (USA)
Losing Generations: Adolescents in High-Risk Settings
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GARY COURTNEY McGHEE

This book represents the results of a comprehensive presentation and analysis by the 'Panel on High-Risk Youth' of extensive empirical research done in the last few decades into the relationship between adolescent experience and the 'settings' in which they have to grow up. The inevitable focus is on working class, minority ethnic young people and children, given the brief

to develop the notion of 'high-risk' settings. The central starting point of the book is the fact that this research comes out of two decades of focus on 'individuals'. The book recognises that 'there are settings obstacles that even the most energetic youth cannot overcome.' From this the book examines a wealth of data from the 70s and 80s in an interrelated fashion which covers employment/earnings families, neighbourhoods, health and health care, education, school to work and juvenile and criminal justice. Underpinning this is the overall finding that fully one quarter of 10 to 17 year olds may be at risk of failing to achieve productive adult lives. The reasons for this are laid out very clearly.

My initial response to receiving this book was to ask the question, will this research provide more indicators as to the way in which things are fast developing in Britain? The depressingly predictable conclusion having read it is yes - and overwhelmingly. These findings show that 'family income is the most consistent and most powerful predictor of adolescent success and well-being.' Income or lack of it is *the* issue. It is important to consider that the British governments' privatising of provisions and cutbacks in state resources across the range is clearly relatable to the consequences that are already a reality in the USA, which provides, after all, the primary model for the reforms of the (not so new) Right in this country. Consider academic schooling. 'Economic and social stratification influence many key aspects of the educational system. The homogeneous composition of many schools stems directly from neighbourhood stratification on the basis of family income, race and ethnicity.' Wealthy areas have well-resourced schools, poor/minority ethnic ones don't. There is also a clear empirically proven link between 'low-income' schools and less challenging and more boring forms of teaching/instruction. Back to basics indeed.

Consider employment. 50% of black, 42% of Hispanic and 32% of white young men are inactive in the labour market for 2 years after leaving high school. The creation of increasing involvement in local crime economies is the consequence. Beatrix Campbell in her excellent book 'Goliath - Britains Dangerous Places' (1993 Methuen) in a revealing analysis of 'lawless masculinity' makes the point that there is a large national shortfall of places on youth training schemes, which means that there are increasing numbers of young men with absolutely nothing to do and with no income of their own at all. The governments response? Cut training places, cut benefits to young people and imprison more young offenders. In the USA these researchers note that 'the US differs from other industrialised countries in its reliance on market forces to effect the transition of young people from school to work.' It's not that different at all now in Britain.

Consider families. The percentage of young people still living with their parents (over the past 15 years), increased to about *54%* at the age of 24. At age 29 the figure is still *30%!* Just consider the psychosocial and emotional effects of that for both young people and parents. A whole generation of young people is being produced who are not making the transition to adulthood in the most fundamental ways. Self-respect/reliance and dignity are going out of the window.

The above figures and outcomes show the clear consequences of reliance on market forces. What strikes you powerfully from reading the research into the juvenile and criminal justice systems is that in the USA it is overwhelmingly racist and anti-poor in its enactment. (A criticism I would make of this book is that it is light on coverage of some of the gender implications of all this - something which Bea Campbell's research and feminist analysis op cit compensates for.)

As an indicator of the shape of things to come in terms of youth policy and reality this book is very revealing indeed. We are fast catching them up in all policy areas is the clear overall conclusion. The settings in which increasing numbers of British young people are trying to grow up are almost entirely detrimental/inadequate for their needs. Political indifference, contempt and market forces are to blame. We are now mirroring the USA and soon our statistics will be as bad as theirs.

Gary Courtney Mcghee M.Ed
Youth and Community work tutor/counsellor and writer.

Ian Cole and Robert Furbey
The Eclipse Of Council Housing
Routledge 1994
ISBN 0-415-0-09900-5 (pbk)
£11.99
pp. 272

MOYRA RISEBOROUGH

This is a timely addition to the literature on housing studies since it brings together much recent and past 'classic' housing research and provides a coherent analysis of public housing's Cinderella fortunes. In my view it should become a staple component of every housing studies course reading list. However, it contained one or two disappointments in later chapters which I will return to.

I particularly welcomed the blend of empirical research and theory in this book. In chapter one Ian Cole and Robert Furbey revisit the historical analyses of Mark and more recently of Castells, in order to provide an interpretation of the role of the state. This is a well constructed and cogently argued chapter which examines the uneasy relationship between public housing and welfare. Chapter two deals equally well with the complex and often shifting ideological interests of the various central and local stakeholders which shaped the nature of council housing tenure. Chapter three turns to the post war period while chapter four examines the shortcomings of council housing. It looks at the design faults and building failures as well as issues surrounding unfair access and discrimination in council housing allocations. Both chapters are useful to the student and well researched.

In chapter five the authors roundly reject the disparagement of council housing made notable by Alice Coleman. This is not to say that questions are dodged

indeed the real problems arising out of careless public planning and paternalism are dealt with squarely. Moreover these matters are discussed while drawing on balanced mixtures of research evidence and grounded theory.

Chapter six on council housing management provides an interesting series of discussions on the processes underlying management actions and approaches including the influences of local politicians and housing professionals.

The book does therefore have a great deal in its favour. However, as I said at the beginning there are one or two disappointments. For me these concern omissions and a certain light weightedness in chapters six and seven. I had been eagerly awaiting chapter six on tenant experiences since earlier chapters led me to expect that the previously unheard views of council housing consumers would reveal new and exciting perspectives. The promise was unfulfilled and chapter six brought out very little in the way of tenant views. The chapter was also disappointingly short which is suprising since so much empirical research has been carried out in recent years by, with and about public tenants.

Chapter seven which looks at the impact of Thatcherism on housing and chapter eight (the way that public housing may be rescued) are also short and lack the detailed analyses of earlier chapters. Lack of attention is paid to the processes and effects of the large scale voluntary transfer of council housing to specially established housing associations - a major change which has affected public housing.

Despite these shortcomings I would still recommend the book and I will be including it on my reading list for post graduate housing students. In fact I must confess that I had already bought a copy before I was sent one to review!

Moyra Riseborough *is a lecturer at the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of Birmingham. With colleagues David Mullins and Pat Niner she has recently completed a five year study for the Department of the Environment on large scale voluntary transfers of council housing.*

Butcher H, Glen A, Henderson P and Smith J (Eds)
Community and Public Policy
Pluto Press in association with the Community Development Foundation and Bradford & Ilkley Community College (1993)
ISBN 0-7453-080-5
pp 281

MAE SHAW

This welcome book represents a collaboration between Bradford and Ilkley Community College and the Northern office of the Community Development Foundation. It has grown out of a process of exploring the policy, practice and training implications referred to in the title.

In recognising the paucity of literature which analyses (as opposed to 'describes') community intervention since the 1980s, the editors have identified an important vacuum to be filled, and in contributing to the literature, go some way towards addressing this. The book is aimed at a varied readership: community workers, policy-makers and implementers, managers, students; and the range of content and contributors should make this an interesting read across a broad spectrum of interests.

The book is divided into sections which reflect respectively on concepts and context, practice, critical perspectives and conclusions and seeks to offer critical commentary on existing thinking and practice.

The contributors define their terms of reference clearly and offer frameworks which are useful both for analysis and critique, though some of the contributions are more descriptively reflective than analytical. The chapter on Community Government stands out in the practice section in terms of its theoretical and analytical clarity, offering a means of effectively theorising practice beyond its specific area of concern. The book aims to provide a wide-ranging overview of theoretical and political debates about the relationship between public policy and community values as a way of developing relevant practice and it is in the spirit of collegial engagement that I would like to identify issues raised by and in the book itself.

Although the conceptual ground is raked over early on, it is never wholly 'cleared' as the editors intend. Indeed in some instances (for example the unproblematic use of needs in almost all the chapters) it is littered with conceptual holes.

To talk of 'community values' in abstract is to make a double assumption: (1) that despite the acknowledged contestability of 'community', there is nevertheless something which is distinctive, though not really demonstrated in argument and (2) that there are values which can be ascribed to this abstracted 'community', specifically 'solidarity participation and coherence'. The problem with an essentialist view of community is that it implies a homogeneity of interest which can subsume the range of diversity and shifting definitions of identity, which are present in any 'community' context. To then argue that these principles 'provide the distinctive value base for community initiatives and policies' seems to compound the difficulty by ignoring the policy context which is outlined so comprehensively elsewhere in the text (Meekosha, Ch 11).

Furthermore, to suggest that the development of community policy is a process aimed at solving difficult problems confronting 'those wishing to make a reality of democratic citizenship in modern society' (p 233) is to sacralise what is in its worst form 'helping people to tolerate the intolerable' (McShane, p 160). Henderson is much nearer the mark when he locates the pressures for policy change in a political, economic and ideological arena (p 249).

I am certain that the authors do not believe or intend to make arguments for the neutrality of policy-making, but although the book is strong on

conceptual analysis, the consequences of analytical ruminations are not wholly engaged with. So, although there is recognition of the concept of community as 'value' and how that has been used to devastating effect by a government committed to the privatisation of welfare there is nevertheless a reluctance to 'name' the opposition and to address issues of 'power' as distinct from a rather ephemeral concept of empowerment.

The key section on concepts and context does not, I feel, sufficiently engage with the realities of a stratified and unequal society; treating inequality and injustice as the contextual backdrop rather than the substance of discussions about the nature of community and its relationship with policy.

In contrast, in the section on critical perspectives, the contribution by Helen Meekosha which tackles issues of power and marginality head on produces a coherent and welcome addition to the debates surrounding difference and diversity, arguing for a 'politics of location' which offers a way of framing Butcher's 'active community' so that essentialist notions are not reinforced (p 191).

Her reference to community policies as 'those which carry labels associated with them' (p 175) comes as a refreshing acknowledgement of the ideological purpose which the 'community additive' can fulfil - in selling ideas and policies which are often more to do with economic than democratic considerations. In recognising that the State is both recipient of demands and constructors of categories in the interests of maintaining harmonious social relations, she gets to the heart of the contradictions in the concept (and implementation) of community policy (p 175); that it creates as well as responds to marginalisation by polarising opportunities often further disadvantaging the most oppressed in society (p 178).

By defining purpose in context, she avoids falling into the trap of reifying the policy process as responsive and rational and shifts the focus of practice from responsive to critical participation.

In highlighting the purpose of reducing overall State expenditure in the name of respect for difference (p 193), she also locates policy initiatives in 'managing diversity'. Whilst acknowledging the importance of the discourse about identity and difference she also warns about a one-dimensional symbolisation of the complex needs of people (p 184) and how that often leads to a crude conflation of 'groups' and 'needs': women need childcare, disabled people need access and so on. In extending the logic of equivalence it might be said that communities need participation!

Unlocated ideas of participation are more likely to lead to the incorporation of community groups; a danger warned against in many of the chapters. The increasingly common notion of 'corporate responsibility' (for example) with 'the community' as stakeholders (p 121) would seem to me to benefit from the kind of scrutiny implied by the 'politics of location'. As Lynn acknowledges, (ch 7) issues of power and purpose need to be addressed in analysing partnership, if it is not to be more akin in reality to the 'hole in the road' politics described by Haboobullah and Slater (p 147).

The chapter on methods and themes in community practice conceals more than it reveals and is disappointing as a conceptual map for analysing practice. To identify the (sole) goal of the community development approach as developing self help (p 25) is to substitute argument with functional assumption. The oft quoted description of the Community Development approach by the United Nations cannot be decontextualised to justify the prescription of 'self-help' represented here. Within a 'contract culture' self-help has a particular currency which could be used to support the 'enabling' State at its most repressive. Although the author acknowledges the range of interpretations, the question which remains unanswered is what makes the difference between the 'self-help' we've seen effectively employed by the BNP in the Isle of Dogs and that which exists to challenge as well as to provide. I would argue that the role of the worker is a crucial element in developing an answer, an issue which is insufficiently addressed under the heading 'Being non-directive'.

Similarly, to characterise community action as a largely radical activity is to ignore some of the ends to which it has been used - In a Scottish context we've seen it used very effectively to prevent the siting of an AIDS hospice and the systematic harassment of isolated Bengali families. It is useful to make distinctions in methodology but to mistake process for purpose is unhelpful and leads to a flawed paradigm for practice.

The question of citizenship is discussed with characteristically theoretical thoroughness by Butcher and Mullard, but the focus of the dicourse is limited, it seems to me, to those conceptions which are ultimately consensual.

The communitarian vision to which the editors gently guide us, is that welfare, to be effective, must both recognise the limitations and build on the strengths of exisisting social relationships, an essentially collaborative approach. However the argument to be made for acting on reality rather than adapting to it would need to encompass the legitimate role of the 'dissenting citizen'.

It seems to me that the way forward requires the development of 'critical' participation in which people retain autonomy to challenge and criticize whilst seeking concessions within policy-frameworks whose purpose or implementation must never be taken for granted as benign. The role of the community worker can then begin to encompass the notion of 'providing inspiration and support to the disillusioned in challenging prevailing values'.

There is a larger agenda required than is encompassed within this book though it raises some important issues. The attempt to seek a unifying notion of active citizen within a communitarian vision is not borne out sufficiently in argument and therefore weakens what is nevertheless an important contribution to the debate about what constitutes and sustains communities.

Mae Shaw
Lecturer in Community Education
Moray House Institute

Frank Reeves et al
Community Need and Further Education
Education Now Publishing Cooperative
ISBN 1-871526-14-0
£10 (pbk)
pp 150

SUE HARLEY

This book is about one college's community education philosophy and practice, dealing in turn with each aspect of its provision. The vision statement of Bilston community College in Wolverhampton is of an open-access, equal-opportunity, tertiary, Community college. It has some 18,000 students and a catchment area of social disadvantage and poor staying-on rates with a population low in personal expectations and aspirations.

The aim of open access is to provide individuals with a learning programme from which they can benefit and progress, especially concerned to overcome negative memories of school. For equal opportunity, the college identifies further education as having an essential role to play in increasing social equality and tries to ensure that its provision is distributed fairly in relation to the four main social categories of class, gender, ethnicity and disability.

The community aim relates to the initial two in seeking to achieve increased participation, progression and achievement for those under-represented in education. However, there is a more specific view that the curriculum should be personally meaningful, life-enhancing, developed in relation to the culture of the local population, linking knowledge with recognised skills, and developed to the advantage and convenience of the students. Of particular concern is to offer an effective, general, holistic education rather than a narrow, occupationally-specific training.

The notion of partnership emphasises the value of collaboration with other organisations and agencies. This aims to alleviate wasteful discontinuities between the various sectors of education and public, private and community providers and the nature and extent of these relationships comes clear from the examples used throughout the book. Becoming tertiary has, though, proved typically problematic for Bilston due to the resistance of schools to sixth form closure, a situation which may well have changed significantly since the book was compiled.

From this explanation of the lofty principles of the vision statement, the rest of the book is devoted to elaborating on the way it has been put into practice. This is indeed interesting, considering the conventional wisdom that vision statements are notoriously easier to write than to implement.

The results of the college's community needs survey are presented, giving some in-depth demographic data and a disturbing account of the severity of local recession. From the needs survey comes the educators

response, the 'community curriculum'. This is seen as a curriculum which fits the life of the population in such a way that the educational element becomes a natural and exciting part of their existence. It is regarded as a measure of the success of the college's strategy, that in 1991-2, they had attracted sufficient unemployed people to make up some 42.5% of the college's student population.

A 'tree' model of access is presented to conceptualise the movement of people through the education system. Although this is a vertical model, the reality of zig-zag pathways of people's learning is also acknowledged and a unitised learning framework based on 10 hour credits is being developed to facilitate the progression of students. The college has the now familiar range of student services to support their learners, including information, advice and guidance, drop-in learning centres and computer-assisted learning, whilst the child-care service is, unusually, based on the principle that both sexes are equally responsible for the care of children.

There is a useful recognition that the process of getting people into college is complex and involves a gradual acclimatisation into education. The community operational model therefore involves a progressive increase in the level of educational participation by individuals and groups, focussing on activity at the interface between the college and its surrounding social environment. The process of outreach starts with community liaison which leads to community activity. This is followed by community projects, community education programmes and finally further education itself. The content of this process focuses on popular, common sense knowledge and domestic skills and crafts on the one hand leading to formal systems of knowledge and economically valued skills on the other. There is, however, an interesting comment on the difficulty of getting this provision recognised within the college as a valid form of further education activity.

In seeking to address the specific needs of major target groups, four projects have been set up. These comprise the Centre for Afro-Caribbean Education and Training (CACET), Centre for Asian Training and Education (CATE), the college of the Third Age (C3A) and a flexible learning centre concentrating on the needs of older people. The book also describes the college's provision and programmes for women, people with learning difficulties and disabilities, basic skills and dyslexia, and ESOL.

One unusual project is set on the island of Montserrat. Following the 1989 hurricane, a task force was set up to undertake reconstruction work. As part of this post-hurricane task force, the college's construction students were to redesign and rebuild six schools on the island. This would provide the students with both construction competencies and the valuable experience of a Third World Aid project. Another less common idea is the open access security system provided by Bilston Youth and Security Team. They have adopted the positive methods of youth and community workers to assist the maintenance of order in the college by better integrating some students into college life.

Closer to home, there is an interesting account of a self-build project planned by the college and its partners with the intention of giving local unemployed people the opportunity to build community-owned premises, to train and gain NVQ qualifications. Related to its job training, the college offers customised pre-recruitment training to meet the needs of specific employers, involving five week courses with some post-course support if necessary.

The book reflects a considered community policy and genuine commitment to its practice by Bilston Community College. For those who work in further education it provides an uplifting account and a timely reminder of community education principles. For those who find further education colleges remote and instituional, it will provide a useful eye-opener to the way in which one college attempts to meet community need.

Sue Harley *is Programme Director for Continuing Education at Gateshead College, Tyne and Wear.*

Melvyn Rose
The Trouble With Teenagers
Positive Publications 1993
ISBN 0-9519584-45
£8.00
pp 60

Nancy Hazel and Andrew Fenyo (eds)
Free To Be Myself: The Development of Teenage Fostering
Human Service Associates, St Paul, Minnesota
ISBN 0-9637696-0-X
pp 68

Roger Bullock, Michael Little and Spencer Millham
Going Home
Dartmouth Publishing 1993
ISBN 1-85521-329-X
pp 264

JOHN HORNCASTLE

Tempora Mutantur! The effects of the sad conflagration which destroyed the fabric of Peper Harow School and the Community working within were considerable: a flagship of the therapeutic movement disappeared, not to be replaced. In his book, Melvyn Rose, who was appointed to create the Community, describes the structures which had been developed, from a broadly psychodynamic perspective, to offer an atmosphere in which young people could explore and better understand their behaviour.

It is clear from the text that the disturbance of many of the residents was acute, and that imaginative and sensitive methods were used to challenge the inappropriate. The strain on staff of living with turmoil, and the necessary daily analysis of community life, must also have been considerable, if stimulating.

Although the book is subtitled 'a guide to caring for disturbed adolescents', it appears to be as much a sentimental journey as a guide. Advice is relatively vague and expressed in generalisms, except for the section on setting up the Daily Community Meeting. Much of the book is devoted to fascinating, accessible case material, and the successes of residents are noted in their increasing creativity, lessening impulsivity and educational attainments.

However, we are not presented with the facts by which to make an informed judgement about the Community's success: there is no breakdown of premature exits from the School, no 'A' level results or follow-up of departed residents. Surely this evidence must be available if Rose expects local authorities to take seriously his suggestions: that, Phoenix-like from the ashes of his creation they will develop therapeutic approaches in their group homes and local educational establishments.

While Peper Harow is synonymous with therapeutic communities, so is Kent with teenage fostering. Nancy Hazel (who has been involved in the Kent initiatives since their inception) and Andrew Fenyo chart their development and edit this concise and lucid text; and whereas Rose appears to rely on a mixture of faith and experience, Hazel and Fenyo add reason to faith.

The general principles of the Kent scheme are too well-known to need elaboration: the attempt to provide care for challenging teenagers by recruiting specialist foster-parents and offering them enhanced payments and a variety of supporting mechanisms.

In addition to outlining its genesis, Hazel and Fenyo briefly survey the considerable amount of research in the area, including studies from Germany and the USA. The fact that other, imitative schemes have been established in the UK is flattering to Kent, but reflects more than disillusion with residential care; results of research into teenage fostering have been 'encouraging', and the admirable principles of normalisation, localisation and participation can be effectively pursued. The 1989 Children Act also supports much of the philosophical basis on which the scheme was built.

However, times change, and the book also describes innovations developed by foster-parents, and spawned partly by the current political climate. Two of the most striking are the establishment of a special educational facility for foster children, and the formation of a private, independent fostering service by disaffected fosterers.

The text is informative and readable, and enhanced by personal accounts in the appendix of fosterer and fostered.

Despite the amount of research on fostering, Hazel and Fenyo claim that there is a dearth of follow-up studies. They will be eating their words after seeing the latest publication from Dartington. For Bullock, Little and Millham faith is reason, and they have produced a closely-argued survey of the experiences of children and young people leaving care; reading is heavy, but lightened occasionally by case studies, in which the authors are able to include more humorous touches.

The writers claim that, although there is a large corpus of material examining children and young people's movement into care (either voluntarily or by Order), the process of return to families is far more sparsely documented; the work by Stein is a notable exception. The importance of the reunion can be gauged from the fact that, from their figures, 87% of the research group lived with their parent(s) or extended families at some stage after departure from care. The chief aims of the research were therefore:

> *to chart the experiences of returners, either by scrutinising documentation or personal observation to highlight factors significantly associated with successful and unsuccessful returns, and to inform social workers about the most effective ways of preparing for and managing returns.*

The research design falls into two main parts: firstly a reworking and extension of existing material from former research, and secondly a small-scale original study.

Bullock, Little and Millham convincingly justify the use of previous studies on economic grounds - that it is easier to extend existing work (for up to five years after the subject's leaving care) than to start anew. In this way they have ready access to the experiences of nearly 900 children and young people who at some stage were in care. Of more immediate interest, however, is their own fly-on-the-wall study of 31 children expected to leave care during the course of the research (though, as it happened around a third did not).

Some of their conclusions will be self-evident: that, with such a high proportion of returners, the maintenance of family links is absolutely vital; the child's retention of some 'stake' in the home which has been left (keeping a room or bed) also appears to favour successful reunions. They stress the critical nature of the period immediately after return - the need to renegotiate roles, achieve compromises and, for some young people, give up relationships made with carers: reunion can be equally as stressful as the original separation. Many families felt that the resolution of disputes at this time was an important learning process, and could illuminate the reasons for the reception into care; the social work task clearly has a place here as part of a continuing contact.

However, perhaps potentially the most useful part of the study is the production (from the evidence of hundreds of separations and reunions) of a set of checklists to assist social workers to predict outcomes in various situations. While superficially appealing, the lists often still depend on the individual judgements of social workers for accurate completion.

Nevertheless, they are important enough to be utilised and market tested as an aid to existing methods of decision-making.

The book is not beach reading, unless you prefer adventure holidays; more of a compendium than a guide, its detail will deter. This is unfortunate, since the conclusions deserve publicity, and the checklists marketing and refinement. Here is the disciplined style of evidence Rose needs to accumulate, and show that he, too, is changing with the times.

Stein, M. and Carey, K. *(1986) Leaving Care.* Blackwell, Oxford.

John Horncastle *is a lecturer in social work at the University of Portsmouth.*

Patricia Anthony, Stephen L. Jacobson
Helping At-Risk Students:
What Are The Financial And Educational Costs
Corwin Press 1992
ISBN 0-8039-6049-2
£19.50
pp 320

DON BLACKBURN

This book is a collection of articles produced for the thirteenth Annual Yearbook of the American Education Finance Association. It is concerned to evaluate the financial and educational consequences of various special education programmes for disadvantaged young people and those with special educational needs across the United States. The focus of interest throughout the book is on the macro level of analysis, that is analysis at the level of the federal government or the state, on the economy or social system. The book is consequently divided into three sections: the first section deals with the relationship between federal legislation and the provision of educational programmes; the second section addresses the various funding programmes; the third section assesses the impact of various policies on the population of young people.

In one sense the book fits into a rather traditional model of educational research in terms of analysing the costs and benefit of providing education. I also have to say that I found it to be quite refreshing to be reminded of the level of research which social scientists can achieve when considering issues of inequality and disadvantage. The book displays many of the virtues of an analysis which maintains its gaze firmly on the sources of power which sustain the disadvantage.

Through the late 1950s, 1960s and 1970s the provision of education in the United States and in the United Kingdom was usually discussed within a framework that saw the process of funding the education service as a form

of investment in the future development of the state and society, and usually more specifically in the future of industry and commerce. For example the assumption was that the amount spent on education should be regarded as investment in 'human capital' which would give a good financial rate of return. In addition to this it was also often argued that the amount spent on the education service would give a significant return to the individuals being educated. The more education that people have (it was argued) the more that they would personally earn during their lives. A strong commitment to this theory could be seen right across western economies in the 1960s in a massive expansion of spending on education systems at all levels. Whilst this viewpoint has not disappeared it has suffered something of a reverse in the 1970s and 1980s.

Now I don't at this stage wish to enter a debate about the merits of this particular 'human capital' view of educational expenditure, except to indicate that since the 1970s that interest has been superseded to some extent by a closer interest in the internal processes of schooling. The reasons for a decline in confidence in human capital theory may be many, but the decline in western economies through the 1970s undermined the assumed relationship between education and the economy. During the 1960s education systems across the industrialised nations expanded at an extremely rapid rate. Just to give an example of the degree of commitment to education 'investment', when the Robbins Report was published in 1963 it recommended an expansion in higher education. The day after the report was published the Government allocated £400 million for this purpose! Whatever the limitations of this agreed expenditure, there is a clear indication of the assumption that education is an economic good.

In contrast with this human capital approach to education, since around 1970 there has been a strongly developing focus of educational research which has been more and more concerned with the internal processes of schooling, whether classroom practice or school organisation. This has also been accompanied by the growth of interpretative and ethnographic methods of research. As a consequence it could be argued the analysis of political, and particularly economic factors has largely become invisible in educational research - unless framed by free market assumptions.

Overall this is an interesting and useful book which provides a model for an underdeveloped area of academic work in this country. There is a dearth of good books on the economics of mainstream education in the United Kingdom which provide the level of analysis available here. In the area of special education the field is even more barren. Claims and counter claims about the efficacy of special schooling are made consistently on the flimsiest of evidence. The dearth of research in this area is not suprising given the agenda of the Tory Party. Studies which evaluate the overall effectiveness of systems are not popular when it is more politically astute to blame the classroom practice of teachers for the assumed failures of the system. As Alvin Gouldner has remarked in another context, classroom based research does offer the dual advantage

to the researcher of enabling her or him to appear to be radical through contact with the 'victims', but at the same time remain friends with those holding the purse strings; since those who get the blame are inevitably the teachers, rather than the politicians.

This book then provides a welcome contrast to those forms of educational analysis which remain firmly rooted to the spot in the classroom. The range of issues which are addressed in the book covers both the needs of the young people themselves and the disparities between providers of education. It also addresses the range of provision and provides some useful analysis of the variety of strategies available to assist young people with a wide range of needs. The most striking aspect of some of the analyses, was the amount of data provided to underpin the argument of the chapter. In the case of Cox and Verstegen, an analysis of State models for financing special education immediately underlines the considerable disparities in provision of funding between states. So for example we learn that whilst New York spent $10,613 on each pupil with special educational needs, Montana spent $2,440 per pupil. The authors use the financial data to evaluate the degree to which states can implement equal opportunities policies and indicate the key mismatch between policy assumptions and the reality of need.

Mueller and Mueller, in a chapter considering federal legislation affecting Native American students, chronicle and analyse the severe disadvantage experienced by this group of students. The authors regard their plight as unique among ethnic groups in the United States, partly because of the history of their oppression and their status as native people as opposed to immigrants. Their plight is compounded by their relationship as citizens with the federal government. The social inequalities that they endure have been compounded by the legislative status of the students whose education is nominally the responsibility of the federal government, but which in reality is supposed to be a responsibility of a 'partnership' between state and federal government. Consequently the education service for Native Americans is fragmented and uncoordinated.

My one disappointment with the book was that there was not a more sustained introductory chapter to the collection, placing the arguments more firmly into a coherent structure. In addition a concluding chapter might have drawn the threads together. However this is perhaps an unfair piece of carping.

I would therefore recommend this book to readers. It is a shame in one sense in that the nature of the content and the title are likely to lead to a more restricted readership than ought to be the case. For anyone interested in comparative study of policies towards young people, it is important, equally for those interested in gaining some insight into the dynamics of inequality it is also important. For those tempted to take a rather smug view of the provision of special education in the United States as a consequence of reading the book, I would advise against it. Since, in addition to describing a range of significant disadvantage, the book does identify useful strategies being attempted to address the problems. I would not be very

optimistic about the chances of a similar range of studies in the United Kingdom being able to point coherent attempts by the state to combat inequality. Finally, and to return to a point made earlier, the book ought to be required reading for those carrying out educational research in this country, essentially to show them how it might be done!

Don Blackburn, *University of Humberside.*

Christine Griffin
Representations of Youth:
The Study of Youth and Adolescence in Britain and America
Polity Press, Cambridge 1993
ISBN 0-7456-0280-0 (pbk)
£12.95
pp 253

PHIL MIZEN

Through a wide ranging review drawn primarily from the psychological and sociological literature on 'youth', this book is a welcome attempt to critically consider the portrayal of young people by the academic and related literature of the 1980s. Clearly written and largely successful in simplifying what are often far from simple arguments, Christine Griffin undertakes the considerable task of outlining the ways in which 'youth' research has struggled to make sense of the apparent inability of a new generation of school leavers to make a smooth and uninterrupted 'transition' into work, marriage and family life on both sides of the Atlantic. Sympathetically examined through a series of detailed and informative chapters organised around a series of 'moral panics', the reader is steered through some of the key debates on the maintenance and reproduction of inequalities in the 'transition from school to work'; how these debates have been given a new impetus by the collapse of the 'youth' labour market and the wide-ranging 'impact of youth unemployment'; how a new generation without work have been linked to heightened fears about 'youth, crime and "delinquency"'; how this in turn has raised concerns about the wider implications to the social order of large numbers of young people without the imposition of work to structure their 'free time'; and how these 'public' concerns over the failure of many young people to make a smooth 'transition' into work have been parallelled by an increasing anxiety over their apparent inability to do so in the 'private sphere' of marriage and family as well.

The 'moral panics' constructed around these issues are themselves examined through the prism of competing analytical perspectives which the author sees as comprising the diverse academic literature on 'youth'. Organised loosely into 'mainstream' and 'radical' approaches, the author sets about deconstructing the texts to reveal their underlying assumptions, omissions and silences. Rooted in their individualised conceptualization of adolescence as a biologically determined phase of life, triggered by hor-

monal changes and accompanied by a period of physiological and emotional 'storm and stress', the 'mainstream' accounts are largely dismissed for submerging youthful *representations* of class, race, and sex/gender behind the unitary ideal of the white, middle class, heterosexual male norm. The inevitable result, it is argued, is a series of accounts characterised by their fruitless search for the causes to the 'social problems' they construct, their eagerness to resort to 'victim-blaming' arguments and their readiness to label all those who do not confirm to their norm 'deficient' or 'deviant' individuals. Constructed largely in opposition to the pervasive individualism of the 'mainstream', 'radical' accounts are given a more sympathetic treatment. The contribution of cultural Marxism to 'youth' analysis is generally welcomed, with its concern to illuminate practices of resistance, defence and survival, although its over-reliance on structural explanations of social action and its appeal to unitary notions of class are presented as formidable constraints to any further development of its explanatory potential. Its inability to deal rigorously with the insights of feminism and its discomfort with the emergent work of radical Black, lesbian and gay scholars is seen as particularly limiting, since this too is taken as indicative of an incapacity to deal with the differing *representations* of youth the author demands as a precondition for effective analysis.

So for Griffin, the 'crisis of youth' outlined in the main body of the text is simultaneously a 'crisis of theory' and one whose solution lies in a methodology which can 'reclaim the notion of "difference" and "diversity"' (p 200). To start this process of theoretical renewal, she begins to sketch a possible outline for future analysis which draws heavily on three inter-related influences: feminism for its critique of the 'malestream' of both orthodox and radical accounts; Gramscian hegemony for its use in explaining the importance of dominant ideas and cultural values in obscuring relations of domination; and post-structuralism for illuminating how discourses construct *representations* of normality which can silence and marginalise. Summed up as a call to celebrate diversity, she argues 'the important question here is not whether "differences" have a basis in material reality, nor whether they produce divisions between people, since the priority is to understand how "differences" are constructed in practice, and how they can shape, limit and restrict our lives' (p 55).

'Written in the spirit of critique' (p 214), this book has much to offer students and researchers both for its systematic exploration of a wide-ranging comparative literature and for its uncompromising exposure of the assumptions and silences which pervade much contemporary youth research. In this sense it is required reading for anyone interested in 'youth' and I will certainly be adding it to my reading lists. However, for me, its biggest short-comings lie in its analytical aspirations and its wider intention to throw a 'conceptual spanner' into the theoretical workings of 'youth' research meets with only partial success. Peering through the call to construct *representations of youth* which extend to class, gender, race and sexuality, we are left with a conceptualization of 'youth' in which the subordination of these groups rests in their apparent inability to influence the discourses which are seen to ultimately shape their lives. Despite assertions to the contrary, the result is not only a passive view of 'youth', one whose social life is constructed by its (lack of) representation in the text, but it is

also one in which the whole concept of 'youth' is separated from any form of concrete self-activity as young people struggle to make and re-make their own social life. Whether through the continued opposition of young adults to government make-work schemes as an alternative to unemployment, whether through an emergent 'gang culture' as drug dealing and consumption becomes a major economic and social activity for increasing numbers of inner-city 'youth', or whether through the rejection of traditional family life as irrelevant to the widespread poverty and squalor that many are forced to endure, it is these forms of self-activity which make 'youth' such a distinctive social category. And it is for this reason that I remain unconvinced by an account which only gives these meaning through its *representation* in the text.

Phil Mizen *is a lecturer in Applied Social Studies at University of Warwick.*

Lesley Johnson
The Modern Girl: Girlhood and Growing Up
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JEAN SPENCE

The 'modern girl' of the title of this book is the Australian young woman growing up in the 1950s and early 1960s, a period which the author characterises as dominated by the culture of modernity in westernised societies. However, in her introduction, Johnson tells us that the book is *not* about these young women. It is not 'a straightforward history of teenage girls'; it is not 'attempting to discover what young women actually thought and did' in the period under consideration; and it is not written to 'simply revive memories' of the women who grew up then. Anyone who attempts to read the book from any of these perspectives will therefore to some extent be disappointed. At the same time, the analysis covers such a wide range of issues and questions that anyone concerned with questions of gender, youth, cultural studies and social policy might find something of interest within it.

It is sometimes difficult to ascertain exactly what the book *is* about. The unifying theme is not at all clear in the relationship between the chapters. Nor does there appear to be a developmental argument. My experience of the text was one of a series of disparate parts, focusing upon and analysing a range of different issues, each interesting and sometimes important in their own right, but I had to work hard in my reading to identify the links between the various parts and to sustain an awareness of the theme which Johnson explicitly outlines.

The author explains her main theme to be that of the problematic nature of achieving adulthood for women. She argues that this has been an important question in feminist thinking and that feminism has in many senses been con-

structed in response to this problem creating methods and analyses designed to enable women to achieve what might be understood as full adulthood. In arguing this point, she refers to some of the key thinkers of early post war feminism such as Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer and points to some practices of the women's movement, particularly consciousness raising. These thinkers and the corresponding practices, Johnson suggest, pursued as a central issue women's sense of being denied the status of full grown responsible adulthood in a period when the self defined, autonomous individual was presented as the ideal model of such adulthood. In response to this, the analysis presented here is intended to demonstrate that the problem of achieving adulthood is historically and culturally specific, that the cultural context which gave rise to the particular understandings of femininity and adulthood are past, its conditions no longer relevant, and that feminist thinking must therefore move beyond this concern if it is to survive in the post modern world.

My feelings of dissatisfaction in reading the book stem from what I think is an unwarranted importance given to the problem of achieving adulthood. It speaks of a very personalised and self-centred feminism peculiar to middle class white liberal thinking. The question of what it means to be grown up has indeed been one which women have encountered and attempted to address but it is not particularly representative of the wide range of questions addressed by women who identify as feminist. Neither is it a question upon which many of us would want to spend much time and energy. Given the weight which Johnson accords the issue of 'growing up' for women, it is hardly suprising that the work seems to speak of a peculiarly white, classless experience of growing up in post war Australia. In some senses, probably inevitably, given the subject matter, but perhaps unintentionally, the text of this book reflects the dominant cultural discourses of the period and place which it documents.

The analysis offered seeks to demonstrate that the modernist project of creating the self-defined, autonomous individual was contradicted by the manner in which the adoption of what was deemed to be an acceptable femininity led to closure in marriage and motherhood. This contradiction between personhood and femininity created complexities for young women regarding self development, personal identity and their social and sexual relationships. The problems addressed by the women's movement were, as such, a reaction to the complexities of women's adult status. This analysis in itself is interesting and Johnson makes a very powerful case outlining with well informed research the social and institutional spaces and limits within which the female self could be constructed. However, it is also the case that female selves were created within a cultural context wherein gender was only one of a number of contradictions faced by many women. Limitations and closure in relation to the project of creating the autonomous individual operate in all areas of structural inequality. What Johnson is analysing is one small, if culturally dominant, section of the women's movement and she is correct at one level - this particular branch of feminism often appears irrelevant and outdated - but most of the real social, political and economic questions which feminism has addressed are still important and significant. Women and girls growing up are still faced with contradictions and problems in relation to sexuality, marriage, family and self development but these problems are experienced in, for example, and particularly, class-specific contexts.

Having said that, the manner in which Johnson maps the cultural terrain of 1950s and 60s Australia provides both important insights about some current feminist concerns as well as a wealth of historical information about growing up at the time.

In particular, the analysis explains the power of essentialism in feminist thinking as a direct response to the monolithic presentation of femininity as a natural condition for women. Johnson demonstrates the power of early feminist thinking and consciousness rasing to be located within a particular historical moment relevant to particular groups of women. In this sense, her arguments are important in explaining why 'feminism' as it is crudely presented and understood seems to have little appeal to contemporary young women.

Similarly, Johnson's analysis of the role of youth in the modern world is significant in informing our understanding not only of the masculine connotations of youth, but also of the growth in youth work and statutory support for such work in the post war years. In this sense, she goes some way towards offering a particular theoretical interpretation of the current crisis in youth work which suggests that changing cultural definitions of what it is to be young have displaced the need for universal youth provision.

The book's descriptions of the cultural and institutional context of growing up in post-war Australia have direct parallels and similarities in Britain. The author frequently draws upon her knowledge of British institutions and policy developments as well as a wide range of British and American literature to inform her understanding. There is a great deal of information about what young women were supposed to think and do in the period in question. Here, the ideology of femininity, superimposed upon the modernist idea of the autonomous individual sending contradictory and complex messages to young women, informing institutional policy which created particular spaces and limitations in which young women could grow up, is as relevant to the British as to the Australian context.

Inevitably, for those of us who grew up at that time, memories are revived by the text, despite the author's disclaimer. In reading this book, there were, for me, moments of nostalgia which were encouraged and reinforced by the inclusion of photographs from the period.

The historical information and the moments of recognition are actually important aspects of this book. They help to locate and ground Johnson's sometimes convoluted theorising and keep the reader involved in a work which is constantly threatening to lose its point.

'The modern girl' is not a particularly smooth read. It is sometimes complex, sometimes irritating and sometimes interesting. It is limited particularly in terms of class, race and geography. However, it is ultimately a worthwhile text for some of its theoretical insights into contemporary questions relating to youth and gender and the debates surrounding these categories.

Jean Spence *teaches Community and Youth work at the University of Sunderland.*

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