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Youth, Crime and Justice

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YOUTH, CRIME AND JUSTICE:

Editorial Introduction

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Over the latter part of the 1980s and through to the mid years of this decade, the problem of youth crime has been one of the most fiercely debated, most difficult and most enduring of issues on the British social policy agenda.

Rarely absent from the headlines of tabloid and 'quality' newspapers, a recurrent rallying cry to the faithful at Conservative Party conferences, the subject of concerned television documentaries and - it would seem - a day to day fact of life for some of its victims, the problem of youth crime is more than just flavour of the month.

The private security industry booms. Vigilantism becomes the new leisure pursuit of the 1990s. Charles Murray utters grim warnings about the danger of the 'new rabble' marauding into 'decent' areas. The virtuous and vigilant are encouraged by the Home Secretary to 'walk with purpose' around their threatened neighbourhoods (before, perhaps, returning to the safety of home and an evening's viewing composed of the now staple T.V. diet of lawyers, cops, bad guys and *Crimewatch*).

Why should this be? How is it that crime - and especially youth crime - has taken such a central place in the lives of the populace (as Brown's evidence in this volume suggests) and in the political posturing of our leaders? Part of the answer, of course, is that youth crime is a real problem for real people. In this sense the hullabaloo about it reflects everyday, private troubles which bubble up into issues of national, political concern. Getting a clear picture of the ebbs and flows of actual crime is notoriously difficult. But that there is a stubborn and troubling crime problem is clear from numerous statistical sources, (despite the plethora of now well-known problems in arriving at incontrovertible measures of crime).

The Home Office estimate that there was a rise of 7 per cent in recorded crime between 1991 and 1993. The British Crime Survey, which relies less on police records and more upon surveys of victims (and which is thus regarded as a more serious register of the problem), suggests that during this period crime rose by 18 per cent. It also found that the risk of being a victim of crime was greater for people who live in the inner cities, in council or other rented accommodation or in the North of England. The risk of being a victim of a contact crime (involving some form of assault) was greatest for men and young people (the results of both surveys reported in *The Guardian*, September 28th, 1994).

Despite falls in property crime recorded by both the Home Office and the British Crime Survey in the year to mid 1994, it is important to warn against complacency. These falls only dented the record rises in the previous years, violent crimes (such as robbery and rape are on the increase) and, it is suggested, this most recent drop might indicate not so much a fall in crime as an increase in the use of informal cautioning of offenders by police (such offences are then not registered in the statistics) and/or a fall in people reporting crime (as victims guard insurance 'no

claims' bonuses or see little point in reporting what come to be seen as common, petty crimes). For instance, two in three attacks on vehicles are either not reported to the police or are unsuccessful (and therefore omitted from police statistics) according to a recent survey (*The Guardian*, 14th November, 1994).

But the statistical 'facts' of crime alone cannot account for its pre-eminence in the discourses of politicians, journalists and the public in general. It is important to note that over the past few years youth crime has actually decreased whilst the public clamour about it has escalated. Certainly there seems to be political mileage in promoting the problem of youth crime (see Gibson, this issue).

The Right have, as ever, been at the fore-front of the attack upon the youthful wrong-doer, castigating a lurid parade of folk demons for their sins against 'decent' (ie middle-class and middle-aged) society. The squatter, the Raver, the New Age traveller, the single mother, the dole fiddler, the inhabitants of 'yob culture', the 'lager lout' (whatever happened to him?), the ones who want 'something for nothing', the 'welfare underclass', the 'bail bandit' and the 'persistent young offender' have all taken their place in the Tory Hall of Shame, offered up as wraiths to haunt the public imagination.

The Liberal Left has also been quick to see the electoral value of a hard line on crime. 'Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' became the epithet which symbolised the new Labour leader's brand of 'social-ist' populism. The attitude to crime, even if expressed through no more than 'soundbite' politics, has become a key benchmark by which the credentials of hopeful politicians are judged.

Crime, especially that committed by children and young people, seems to have become a leitmotif for a general social malaise, capturing public fears about the moral health of the nation. Yvonne Roberts (1994) recently argued that the supposed decline in public morality and standards of social life epitomised by allegedly uncontrollable levels of youth crime - and the exhortation to return 'back to the basics' of a long-lost 'golden era' (cf: Pearson, 1983) - symbolise part of the rumbling, *fin-de-siecle* anguish about the perilous state that we are in.

Thus, when we confront the 'problem of youth crime' we confront *both* an issue of critical and real consequence to relatively powerless people (particularly for the victims of crime but also for its perpetrators) *as well as* a fashionable element in the discourses of the powerful. We must thus guard against ignoring or brushing aside the viewpoint of those who suffer annoying, sometimes frightening and occasionally barbaric crimes, when we explore the ways in which the problem of youth crime might be socially constructed and the way that the powerful seek to harness popular fears to their own ends.

Sections of the academic disciplines who study youth, crime and justice - and of the youth justice professions - have, perhaps, been guilty of this. Partly as a consequence the Right have been allowed political room to successfully champion the cause of the victim and to attack the alleged misplaced 'do-gooding' of the Liberal Left. Given all this there is no one, easy or simple way for us to approach the 'problem of youth crime'.

We *should*, of course, engage in debates about how the problem might be socially constructed by those with the power to label and to define social problems. We must continue to deconstruct the persuasive myths which do more to hide than they do to reveal the true nature of the relationships between the powerless and the powerful and the younger and older generations in our society (see Pearson, 1983). Brown, in this issue, provides a carefully balanced discussion which whilst attending, firstly, to the accounts given by older people of how they suffer from crime and anti-social activity, goes on to set these against the quieter voices of young people who describe their own, less publicised fears.

We might, on the other hand, talk of the problem of youth crime as the problem of (apparently) increased lawlessness, particularly amongst sections of the young, working-class, male population (Campbell, 1993). We might seek explanations for these trends, for the origins and causes of these phenomena, in the competing theoretical approaches which have been deployed by academic criminologists and sociologists over the decades. The contributions by Steve Craine and Bob Coles, and by Steve Hall, concern themselves with such questions.

Subsequently we might begin to think about the most effective and useful ways of dealing with young people on the wrong side of the law. The 'youth crime problem' is thus discussed in terms of the practical responses of youth justice professionals to those young people who offend. The articles by Bryan Gibson and Paul Cavadino take such a perspective by tracing recent political developments in the field of youth justice. They suggest progressive ways for youth justice workers to respond to the prevailing punitive ideologies which have become enshrined in legislation like the *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994*.

The papers collected together here are, of course, by no means exhaustive of the variety of perspectives that can be taken on the problem of youth crime. They do, however, all share a similar motivation; a motivation that reverses John Major's demand that we should 'understand less and condemn more'. This special issue of *Youth and Policy* has at its heart a belief that despite the clamour surrounding issues of youth, crime and justice there is still much more to be said and to be understood.

Perhaps at the heart of the continuing debate about youth, crime and justice lie two related but separate questions. Firstly, how can we explain the wrong-doing of young people and, secondly, how do we best respond to those young people who, as a result of their actions, become involved with the criminal justice system?

In attempting to explain youthful offending certain poignant facts need to be borne in mind. It is an often-quoted fact that of every three 30-year-old men in Britain, one will have been convicted of a non-motoring offence (Graef, 1992). In this sense crime is not something particularly strange or peculiar but rather is a common, unremarkable thing. The danger in casting the young offender as the intolerable 'other', as the threatening outsider, is that we are tempted towards asocial, individualist and/or pathological explanations and - subsequently - vengeful reactions to the offender. The argument of the authors here is that we cannot understand the facts of young people offending without understanding the realities of

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their own biographies (Craine and Coles), their own localities and (sub)cultures (Brown), and their own place in the historical development of the economies and societies (Hall) which shape the 'opportunities' and 'decisions' which lead them into or away from crime.

In considering what should be done about those who do 'choose' criminal careers commentators in this volume (particularly Gibson) do much to dispel Michael Howard's rather stupid 'prison works' pronouncement and also to challenge the 'nothing works' school of thought. The progress in the 1980s made through community-based programmes to reduce the financial and social costs of incarceration has been reversed by the 'law and order' onslaught mounted by the Right in the 1990s, despite the fact that England already keeps more young people in prison than any other European country.

Nevertheless, Hall's analogy of the see-sawing between justice/punishment/discipline and welfare/treatment/rights perspectives through this century as being like 'a drunk walking up and down a dark narrow alley, bouncing uncontrollably from one wall to another' is a pertinent one. It reminds us that it is unlikely that the victory currently enjoyed by those in favour of more punitive youth justice regimes is going to be anything more than temporary. Whilst there is widespread popular anger about youth crime there is no solid consensus in favour of greater punishment and incarceration (see Brown). Even Prison Governors have sounded warnings that the *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act* will lead to a steep and dangerous rise in the numbers of young people (e.g. ravers, squatters, travellers) with unconventional lifestyles who are incarcerated for relatively minor - and newly criminal - offences (*The Guardian*, 14th November,1994).

It is against this political backdrop that the writers in this issue seek, in their various ways, to address the 'problem of youth crime'.

Steve Craine and Bob Coles bring their separate research endeavours together in a paper which seeks to understand how it is that some young people embark upon criminal 'careers'. It draws upon Craine's in-depth, ethnographic work with young men and women involved in crime in Manchester and upon Coles' discussion of the importance of the concept of career in understanding the processes of transition from youth through to adulthood. The paper highlights the importance of dealing critically with notions of 'choice' and how, for some, the severely restricted structures of opportunity existing in poor localities make criminal careers understandable.

Sheila Brown, a criminologist from the University of Sheffield, presents some of the first results from extensive research with young people and adults in a high crime area (in Middlesbrough in the North-east of England). Her data does much to challenge many of the cosy, taken-for-granted assumptions that we have of youth crime. It emerges, for instance, that whilst a fear of crime pervades the area and blights the lives of its older inhabitants it is, in fact, children and young people who are the most likely to become the victim of often quite serious, but hidden, crime.

Steve Hall takes a different perspective. Although he distances himself from the punitive approaches of the political Right, he argues that social administrators (social workers, youth workers, probation officers) allied to the Liberal left must

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also shoulder much of the blame for their historic failure to deal effectively with youth crime. Without a proper and critical understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of competing approaches to youth crime and youth justice - and without a more historical materialist conception of the causes of youthful criminality - we cannot, Hall argues, hope to go beyond the reform/punishment stalemate which has beset the field.

Although these three papers all consider how their academic theorising and research might engage with youth justice policy, Bryan Gibson, a barrister and writer on youth justice issues, focuses more directly upon issues of policy and practice. In reviewing some of the guiding principles of the youth justice reforms which began to emerge in the 1980s he reminds us how quickly a progressive consensus on questions of policy can be overtaken by more reactionary political agendas. He concludes, for instance, by discussing how some of the valuable ideas of the last decade could be restored by drawing upon models of good practice from overseas.

Paul Cavadino, who presently works for a consortium of youth justice agencies (the *Penal Affairs Consortium*), takes this discussion further by focusing in detail upon the *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act* which passed into law at the end of 1994. He usefully outlines the various provisions of the Act as they impact upon young people and outlines a variety of ways in which practitioners might respond to the pressures for the greater punishment and incarceration of young offenders which are contained within it.

In *Working Space,* Fred Robinson of the University of Durham investigates the stereotype of the 'persistent young offender'. Focusing upon four case studies of young people with emergent alternative, criminal 'careers' - from fieldwork in Newcastle upon Tyne - he illustrates how such stereotypical labels are vague, arbitrary and unhelpful. Also in this section Sue Gow and Lindsey Menhennet (Probation Officers from Northumbria) argue that young women's needs cannot be met within a probation system designed with the interests of men in mind. From their experience of a young women's group initiative they make the case for separate provision and greater resources to be developed in this field of youth justice work.

Together these papers contribute to and in some ways, we think, progress current debates about the offending of young people and the treatment of young offenders. Whilst we have devoted a special issue of the journal to these matters it is our hope that future editions of *Youth and Policy* will see further critical discussion of youth, crime and justice.

Dedication
Finally, I would like to dedicate this volume to Patrick, my own 'troublesome youth' who was born between the first and final drafts of this short introduction.

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ALTERNATIVE CAREERS:

Youth Transitions and Young People's Involvement in Crime

STEVE CRAINE and BOB COLES

This article examines the development of young people's careers in crime. Central to this task is a framework which seeks to understand youth transitions using the concept of 'career'. The article is based upon two different, independent, but inter-related projects. The first is an attempt to develop an analytical framework for youth policy based in part upon the concept of 'career'. Elsewhere this project argues that by focusing the attention of youth policy upon 'career' we can examine 'critical choice points' through which young people's lives are shaped (Coles, 1995). It is argued that this is an important first step towards the formation of an interventionist policy agenda designed to promote better the welfare of young people. It must be emphasised immediately, however, that this approach does not imply either some naive 'voluntarism' in which young people are defined as in charge of, and responsible for, their own destinies, nor a mechanistic approach to the social engineering of young people's lives by others. Whilst young people do make decisions, including decisions to commit crime, clearly these decisions are considerably influenced by the social and economic environment in which they grow up (Foster, 1990; Hobbs, 1988; Robins, 1992). Social and economic conditions are shaped by decisions made by policy makers and those responsible for the implementation and administration of policy and, in this sense, are the result of choices made by people in authority. Members of the Dartington Social Research Unit have similarly argued that in order to understand the formation and development of careers of young people within the juvenile justice system, and subsequent careers after they are returned to the community, we must take account of two main factors: young people as active choice making agents, and the key authority figures whose decisions 'route' young people through one system of treatment rather than another (Bullock et al., 1994). There are, therefore, two important sides to the careers equation and a host of different actors influencing both the opportunity structures available to young people and their choices with regard to them.

Young careers and the three main youth transitions

Elsewhere, and in line with a number of other authors, it has been argued that in understanding the changing shape of youth in the 1990s we must understand the interlocking nature of three main youth transitions: educational and labour market careers (from education to the labour market); domestic careers (from families of origin to families of destination); and housing careers (from living with families or surrogate families to living independently of them) (Coles, 1995; Jones and Wallace, 1992). Each of these three dimensions of career must be understood as constructed through the interplay of several sets of decision making both by young people themselves and those charged with responsibility for the social and economic contexts in which they grow up. Both sides of this equation must be understood in order to understand micro-patterns of each individual career development and the macro-patterns of 'youth' as a general and socio-structural phase within

the life-course. So, for instance, the 1990s have witnessed a rapid expansion of post-16 and post-18 education which have fundamentally reshaped the transitions of many young people. To understand this, we need to understand not only young people's choices to stay on in education for longer periods of time, but also policy choices made by government, schools, colleges, employers and careers advisers in shaping the opportunity structure in which young people 'choose' their careers at the ages of 16 and 18. It is not, however, the main purpose of this article to argue for the importance of the concept of 'career' as a framework for youth policy. This is developed elsewhere (Coles, 1995). Rather this article uses the 'careers' perspective to examine the development of 'alternative careers' including alternative careers in youth crime. It is one of our central contentions that to address properly the question of youth crime, we must set that question within a framework of the structure and dynamics of youth transitions more generally.

The massive growth of youth unemployment at the beginning of the 1980s had an enormous and far reaching impact upon the career chances and choices of young people leaving school at 16 (Banks et al., 1992; Coles, 1995; Furlong, 1992; Jones and Wallace, 1992; Roberts, 1988; Roberts, 1993; Roll, 1990). As well as the three *dimensions* of youth careers outlined above, namely labour market, domestic and housing careers, a number of authors have pointed to the development of three main types or patterns of youth transition (Roberts, 1986, 1987, 1993; Willis, 1984). The first of these, 'traditional transitions', describes a pattern which up until the late 1970s was the most common post-school transition. Within the traditional transition young people left school and got jobs, found partners or got married, left the natal home to establish independent households and started families of their own. Youth research is unequivocal in documenting how this traditional route to adulthood has become a minority transition in the 1980s and 1990s. What has replaced traditional transitions are 'extended' or 'protracted transitions' whereby entering the labour market is delayed by periods of unemployment, youth training or further education, and family formation and leaving home are similarly delayed and embarked upon at a later age (see for example Banks et al., 1992; Hollands, 1990; Jones, 1993; Jones and Wallace, 1992). For some young people this results in 'fractured transitions' whereby for significant periods of their lives they may never secure work in the formal labour market, nor form stable partnerships, nor secure accommodation independent of the parental home (Craine, 1994). At the extreme, 'fractured transitions' result in long term unemployment, social isolation and homelessness (Jones 1994; Williamson, 1993).

'Beggars Can't Be Choosers?'
The second project from which we draw is an empirical examination of youth transitions in a high unemployment inner city area (Craine, 1994). The study was based upon a cohort of unqualified school leavers who left school in 1980 at minimum school leaving age. The research was both longitudinal and ethnographic. Thirty-nine young people (19 young women and 20 young men) were studied throughout the decade of the 1980s, with five years of intensive fieldwork between 1985 and 1990. Whilst based in the Manchester area, in writing up the research place names and the names of the young people were 'fictionalised' in order to protect their anonymity, and this procedure, common in many ethnographic studies, has been

further elaborated for this publication. The lives we describe, however, are very real. Based on lengthy, semi-structured interviews, participatory research and participant observation, information was collected about study participants' work and employment patterns, friendships and partnerships, where, and with whom, they were living, their leisure activities and their involvement in crime. Data on their activities was complemented by young people's own accounts, explanations and legitimations of the activities in which they were engaged. It is, therefore, a study of the three main dimensions of youth transitions, as described earlier, and also a study of the individual subjective, and socio-sub-cultural, response to the experience of youth transitions in inner-city Britain during the Thatcher decade.

This study employed a similar analytical framework to that described earlier in that it examined three main dimensions of youth transitions and the way in which the social and economic environment of inner city Manchester interfaced with young people's decisions about their lives. It is a study of the dynamics of career development within a social and economic context which was, itself, changing rapidly and radically. Different groups of young people responded to this in different ways including a number of young people who withdrew from the formal labour market and developed careers which involved lucrative, successful 'alternative careers' in the 'alternative economy' and crime. What we mean by this is that, as some young people experienced the frustrations of training schemes with no job outcome, many (but by no means all) developed careers which involved minor acts of benefit fraud, 'fiddly jobs', more major and systematic benefit fraud, illegal marketing, drug dealing, forgery, organised shop lifting, burglary, property theft, robbery and armed robbery. None of this, of course, should be news. Research indicates that such crime is often committed by young people (Tarling, 1993). Indeed Home Office research indicates that, by the age of 30, one in three young men will have been convicted of a standard list of offences (Home Office, 1989). What researchers rarely have, however, is an insight into 'successful' careers in crime; that is, young people who don't get caught and do not, therefore, offer themselves as a captive audience to the scrutiny of the authorities and commentators (Polsky, 1963). This article examines the ways in which such careers were developed, and the interplay between the 'career choices' of young people and the shaping of the socio-economic context of their lives (Guardian 7.1.94; Guardian 8.1.94).

One further point needs to be made clear about the aims of this article. It does not intend to be judgmental or evaluative. The young people we describe contravened the law. In this sense they are criminals and they have 'chosen' to develop a career in crime. But in another sense 'beggars can't be choosers' or, as Willis has argued, 'there are choices but not choices over choices' (Craine, 1994; Willis, 1990). The young people Craine studied made choices but when they did so they chose from a range of available alternatives which were predominantly 'illegitimate'. This article examines how, and under what circumstances, alternative careers were chosen, and attempts to understand this process in young people's own terms in order to, 'interpret the world as it appears to them' (Matza, 1969, p 25). This we see as an important first step to exploring crime prevention strategies through which young careers in crime might be displaced and prevented. First we turn to the socio-economic environment in which the sample studied grew up.

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The physical, social and economic setting of 'Basildeane' and young people's responses to it

The study which we summarise here was based in one electoral ward which, in the early 1980s, was an area of housing decay and chronic and long term unemployment (Craine, 1994). All the young people studied were based in an area we have called Basildeane in which council housing predominated. Some council estates in the area had developed distinctive reputations amongst both public authorities and those who lived there. One of these, the Chicken Lane estate, was colloquially known as 'the jungle'. The housing was mainly deck access and high rise flats with inter-linking walk ways. Flats on the estate offered the anonymous spatial structure of a windswept, litter strewn amphitheatre (cf Cole and Furbey, 1994). Architecturally 'brutalist', this is not unusual and is replicated in many inner city areas, as has been described by Harrison in the following terms:

> *Quite apart from their structural faults many ... estates have a dirty, down at heel feel about them: a scattering of refuse across court yards, murals of graffiti, and a battered, stained look about brick and concrete, wood and metal. These things ... are the outward sign of a house that is not in order. The causes are multiple: poor design, bad management, worker management conflicts in refuse and repair services and ... lean years of public spending restraint, community and family collapse. (Harrison, 1983, p210)*

The physical environment in which the young people grew up was the result of a number of policy decisions made by housing and public service managers. The families living there were largely decanted from areas of slum clearance during the 1960s. This produced an influx of families from some of the city's most deprived areas (cf Gill, 1977; Jenkins, 1983). By the 1970s the estate had developed a reputation of 'roughness' and undesirability. Local authority housing allocation procedures tended to exaggerate and exacerbate this growing reputation (see also Cole and Furbey 1994, chapt. 4). Once ensconced, families in the flats were refused council transfers elsewhere. In short, the estate became a dump for so called 'problem families'. A careers officer described it as 'full of defaulters, lay-abouts and thieves' (Craine, 1994).

Young people brought up on the estate turned the stigma of 'the jungle' into a badge of pride, indicative of them being distinct from 'ordinary respectable' working class kids, and as being particularly 'tough' and 'hard'. Many were also keen football fans and members of the 'the Northside Jungle Crew', known throughout football supporters' culture nation-wide, as particularly violent and wild. Within the collective mythology of Manchester United's Northside supporters responsibility is claimed for such acts as the burning down of the main stand at Norwich City Football Club and other major acts of 'hooliganism' (Readhead, 1987; Robins, 1984). Living in the jungle, they turned their label 'animals' into the raison d'etre for behaviour others regarded as animal-like. Their label became something to be proud of, rather than diminishing or derogatory.

In the 1980s, Basildeane was an area of high and persistent unemployment. According to the 1981 census data of heads of household, nearly 60% were manual workers predominantly employed in manufacturing, which during the 1980s were the jobs most likely to disappear. In Manchester, in particular, employment in man-

ufacturing was decimated and the jobs previously held by the inhabitants of Basildeane vanished, never to return[1]. Throughout the 1980s, the ward had rates of unemployment amongst the under-25s of over 50%. Among young people leaving school without qualifications and at minimum school leaving age, unemployment came to be regarded as the norm. They left school hoping to follow the traditional transition from school into work, only to experience unemployment or early 'make-work' schemes such as the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP). This left their work commitment and employment aspirations 'cooled out' (Goffman, 1952). Aspirations were not only deflated by early encounters with the local labour market, but also by their subsequent experiences on what they described as 'the black magic roundabout', the revolving door of government inspired 'sink' schemes (Roberts and Parsell, 1989). Schemes were often the main precursors of the slide into disillusionment, cynicism and labour market withdrawal. They soon came to recognise the reality of an economic world which offered them few opportunities of 'proper jobs', and the demeaning pantomime of being conscripted into scheme after scheme, often under threat of benefit suspension if places on schemes were refused.

'The Black Magic Roundabout'
There was no evidence amongst the group studied that multiple scheme participation provided access to employment or compensated for social and educational disadvantage. The thirty nine young people between them had amassed a total of almost ninety training schemes of different varieties and styles. In terms of the aggregate amount of time this represented a total of almost sixty years of their lives. In only one case had scheme participation provided access to a 'proper job'. Tracy, for example, left school wanting to find a respectable, working class, job. She eventually did get a job as a cook in a local community centre but only after six years of unemployment and several placements on schemes which did not lead to employment. When interviewed she commented: 'It was like a bloody circus, except we were the clowns'. The majority came to reject any attempt by careers officers to steer them towards the labour market. Maz typified the feelings of bitterness and disillusionment:

We knew there was nowt down for us. It's what they were telling us right from the off, teachers, probation, my old man ... Fuck em all, no work, no money, we knew it was up to us to get it sorted.' (Craine, 1994)

Such responses became part of a local sub-culture a 'profane' or 'common culture' represented in graffiti and the lyrics of local bands (Willis, 1990). Outside the Careers Office in Basildeane, for example, was a complex 'piece' of graffiti which was strangely disconcerting. It displayed the familiar characters from the Children's Television Series *The Magic Roundabout*, but the faces of the various characters were grotesquely distorted, with demonic eyes and seemingly embittered scowls, or faces drawn in pain or anguish. Underneath this disturbing tableau were to be found the words: 'Black Magic Roundabout'. The significance of 'the piece' took some time to unravel, but it emerged that it was connected to a cult amongst the young unemployed of watching day-time repeats of the Children's Television series, *The Magic Roundabout*. The phenomena of excessive day-time television viewing by the young unemployed has been noted by several researchers (Coffield et al. 1986; MacDonald, 1988; Wallace, 1987). Over time *The Magic Roundabout*

repeats became 'a pervasive part of (their) cultural and symbolic life' (Willis, 1990, p 30). In the early 1980s, the small group of *Magic Roundabout* devotees would meet in one or other of their homes, to, 'get stoned' (on cannabis) in the mid afternoon, and watch the latest adventures of Zebedee, Dylan, Dougal and friends. Such was their attachment to the series that they would compile videotapes of sequences of episodes and spend time discussing the hidden drug-related meanings contained within the story lines (Dylan takes a trip, for instance).

Coggs, one of the young people studied, was not only a leading figure in the small group of *Magic Roundabout* devotees, but, it transpired, had also constructed the 'Black Magic Roundabout piece' outside Basildeane's Careers Office. He explained that the inspiration for 'the piece' also related to a song of the same title by the local band *Slumshine*. Some of the lyrics include the following:

Round and round and round we spin
There's something evil hems us in . . .
Keep your faith with the dreamers
Not the YTS schemers
They'll make you spin and do you in.
(Slumshine, The Black Magic Roundabout)

Whilst this extract does not capture the intense emotion generated by the song when played by the band at live 'gigs', nevertheless such lyrics had enormous local significance for the group of young people studied, as this was a band generated from within their community singing about their lives and experience. It was something that had to be explored.

SC: OK, so what's the song about?

Coggs: It's to do with yer life ... Runnin round in circles and gettin nowhere ... Like YOPs and all the other shit ... Goin nowhere when yer think you should be goin somewhere. That's where the fuckin grief is man. Goin round on a fuckin ride that's goin nowhere. (Craine, 1994)

The meaning and symbolism of 'the Black Magic Roundabout' exemplifies Hebdige's argument that, 'Humble objects can be magically appropriated; "stolen" by subordinate groups and made to carry "secret" meanings ... which express, in code, a form of resistance' (Hebdige, 1979, p 18). As a metaphor for futility the Black Magic Roundabout concisely articulated the (not so) merry-go-round of diminished opportunity and thwarted ambition. In music, sub-cultural activity and their own forms of art-work, the young people of Basildeane expressed their growing disillusionment with what the legitimate opportunity structures offered them and reflected their unwillingness to be passively locked into the cyclical *non-transitions* which were available.

The old traditional transitions from school to work had largely disappeared in Basildeane, demonstrated by the fact that only three of the sample secured a traditional post-school transition directly to employment. Yet, despite their experience of

the 'black magic roundabout', some of the remainder persisted with their search for employment and by the 1980s, eight had obtained some sort of legitimate work - what they described as 'proper jobs'. For some, the (not so) merry-go-round of extended transitions was long and painful. Jimmy, for instance took almost 8 years from school leaving to finally get a job as a butcher's assistant. Whilst they were unemployed they were also likely to be surrounded by parents, friends and neighbours who were also unemployed. Of the 39 young people studied, 25 became long term unemployed, and of these, 22 had other members of their family who were also unemployed. In the square on the Chicken Lane estate where Maz's mother lived, for example, 23 out of the 30 surrounding flats contained families he described as 'dole-ies'. Similarly in the low-rise maisonettes on the block where Digger and Stella lived, 13 out of the 15 families who lived there were what he described as 'giro-technicians'. The relationship between 'high risk settings' and the career choices of young people has been explored recently in the United States by the National Research Council (1993). Their analysis concludes that unemployment is a significant factor in the development of localised crime economies (see also MacLeod, 1987). The study also outlines the impact of poverty, inferior housing and education, and family breakdown in constituting a 'high risk setting', which puts one quarter of all 10 to 17 year olds, in the United States, 'at risk' of failing to achieve the transition(s) to, what are described as, 'productive adult lives'. Faced with a local 'high risk' ecology which manifestly demonstrated the lack of legitimate labour market opportunities, some young people in Basildeane explored options which were less legitimate, and thus started the drift into careers involving crime.

Local Illegitimate Opportunity Structures

The careers framework this article is using emphasises two main sides to the careers equation; young people making choices about their careers, and others (mainly those in authority) making decisions which help to shape and re-shape the opportunity structures with which they are faced. As we outlined earlier, in Basildeane by the early 1980s legitimate opportunities in the labour market had all but vanished (Ashton et al., 1992; Ashton and Maguire, 1983). The young people in the study thus experienced the severe limitations of the formal labour market, but as they did so, they were also all too aware of the alternative 'work' possibilities available to them (cf Hobbs, 1988; Foster, 1990; Robins, 1992). Indeed some had engaged in paid work before leaving school. Many of these opportunities were controlled by two notorious 'hard families' (The Hattons and the Donaghues) who operated a range of activities, from running market stalls, providing manure for garden centres, organising prostitution, drug dealing, running protection rackets, acting as fences for stolen property, to commissioning shop lifting, burglary and armed robbery. Young people involved with the two families started (almost literally for some) at the bottom. Dilly, for instance, recognised where to look for the means to fund a trip to the 1977 FA Cup Final at Wembley. At the age of thirteen, and egged on by his mates, he went into the local pub, utilised by the Hattons as a base for their various enterprises, and asked for a job. The result was employment 'bagging up' horse manure for re-sale as garden compost. Not only did the work provide enough, in terms of 'wages', to pay the coach fare to Wembley, but also, more importantly, as a result of this initial encounter, he established a youthful connection to the 'main man' in the Hatton family. From that point on, Tom Hatton went out of his way to reward Dilly's bravery, by offering other forms of paid work. Having served

such early 'apprenticeships' Dilly and his mates were later offered work with the Hattons 'touting' and were also recruited as 'barkers' by the Donaghue family. These activities are further described below.

Early careers: 'Jobs' for the boys (and girls?)

Jobs within 'touting' and 'barking', together with part-time working on market stalls, were, therefore, available to some young people in Basildeane. Market trading involved working, often part-time and before school leaving, on market stalls owned or controlled by the Donaghue family. After school leaving, a number of young men and women in the sample continued work on the market, whilst claiming benefit, the first real form of activity on the edges of crime. The strategy of 'working and claiming' is extremely common amongst employees in market trading and is a strategy often actively encouraged by traders to justify wage levels below that normally acceptable. Evidence for the insecurity and marginality of such careers is provided by the fact that markets were periodically 'raided' by Social Security and Department of Employment special investigations teams, which often operated 'undercover', with a roving commission to investigate 'benefit abuse' (see, for example, *Marketeer and Discount Trader*, 'Swoop on Dole Fiddlers': 1.4.88, p1). Within the market community, local knowledge about the intricacies of the benefit system was extensive and such understanding gleaned from 'old heads' would enable noviciates to circumvent the official harassment encountered as a consequence of long-term benefit claims. The young people who engaged in this activity, whilst they knew it was illegal, did not consider it wrong and held a self-justifying rationale which 'condemned the condemners'. Wendy, for instance argued:

> I don't think it's wrong (claiming benefits whilst working; on the contrary) it's them that's wrong ... Everyone's gotta live ... I've got a right to a life ... Anyway I work ard for me money. (Craine, 1994)

Becker's study of 'deviant careers' similarly notes how careers develop through three important phases. In the first phase, 'deviant' groups initially adopt a self justifying rationale or ideology. During the second phase, they acquire the knowledge to conduct themselves within the deviant group with the minimum of fuss until, finally, they become confident enough to condemn the laws they break (Becker, 1963). Other writers have argued that, in order to understand criminal 'careers' we need to study *both* the *'cultures of legitimation'* as well as the availability of alternative opportunity *structures*, and the ways in which the two dynamically inter-relate (Farrington, 1990; Little, 1990). Recent research indicates that whilst some women, like Wendy above, are able to secure 'fiddly jobs' from within localised alternative opportunity structures, their alternative economic options are generally constrained by the 'domestic apprenticeship' and later, as young adults, by home and child-care routines (MacDonald 1994). Similarly, with regard to the availability of informal work in Basildeane there was a clear division by gender, with young men having greater access to fiddle jobs and, moreover, finding more lucrative forms (see also Cohen 1982, p45; Wallace 1987, p137). The inequalities generally associated with the domestic division of labour and lack of access to the street networks which supplied the necessary contacts ensured that divisions in the 'alternative economy' reflected those in the formal one (Wallace and Pahl 1986; MacDonald 1994).

'Intermediate alternative careers' on the edges of crime

Aside from crossing the boundaries of illegality by registering fraudulent benefit claims, other young people in the study who were employed on the market stalls owned by the Donaghues were also exposed to association with further illegalities. This occurred as a result of the periodic use the Donaghues made of their legitimate business concerns in market trading to disguise other, more illegitimate, activities. So, for instance, the family used their activities around the market as a method for concealing the transportation and fencing of stolen goods and also for the movement and distribution of proscribed drugs. Though often not actively involved in these additional, more illegal, activities, some of the young people in the study were expected to at least 'know the score', 'keep it buttoned', and turn the required 'blind eye'. In this way young people were vetted by the families before becoming more fully involved with them in more serious illegal activities

After they had served early apprenticeships within the milieu of market trading and had been suitably vetted by the Donaghue family, some of those studied were eventually provided with more remunerative employment. Such careers included 'barking' (known elsewhere as 'fly-pitching') a form of unlicensed street trading which usually took place around the city centre, or on the fringes of legitimate market sites (Pinch and Clark, 1986). The sort of goods sold from illegal pitches included, for example, cheap jewellery, chocolates, sports-wear and sports equipment, and counterfeit 'designer' perfume and clothing. Goods were frequently sold from a large suitcase, or a makeshift stall erected in the street. Not all the goods to be sold would be on display, but would be held in quantity in a van parked nearby. The 'barker's' role was to attract potential customers and encourage the purchase of goods by a constantly shouted (or 'barked') patter. The 'barker' was usually accompanied by several 'dogs' or 'dog-outs' - lookouts who could provide early warning of approaching police. The goods offered for sale were rarely stolen (as was often implicitly claimed), but were more likely to be obtained by the Donaghues purchasing end of range stock from cash-and-carry warehouses in the city. The 'barkers' were paid on a commission basis and often earned considerably more than 'dogs' who received a flat payment of between £15 and £25 per day, none of which was declared income, further compounding the technical illegality of the activity. Such rewards were also, of course, considerably more than could be obtained from welfare benefits, or the £25 a week, so called 'training allowance', paid (in 1983) to trainees on make-work schemes.

'Touting' another of the alternative economic enterprise options, was locally organised by the Hatton family. 'Touting' involved selling or 'touting' black market tickets for sports events and pop concerts, as well as unofficially printed programmes, posters and other ephemera, usually at inflated prices, outside sports or pop venues. Such activities also extended to participants being recruited to queue overnight, on behalf of the Hattons, in order that large quantities of entrance tickets could be purchased for sports and pop events (for which there was considered to be a likely popular demand). On those occasions when ticket sales were limited to a certain number per person, a measure of intimidation or force would be invoked by the family to enable participants to constantly 'jump the queue'. The strategy allowed for two or three separate purchases of tickets to be made by each participant. Moreover, forgeries of tickets and official programmes would also be produced by the Hattons for 'touting' at major sporting or entertainment events.

As with the teams of 'barkers' recruited on behalf of the Donaghues, those employed for 'touting' by the Hattons would similarly operate as a team, or 'crew', for 'working the punters' (pop and sports fans outside major venues). Like the teams involved in unlicensed street trading, the 'touts' also employed similar methods of protective organisation to ensure a measure of safety in what were essentially illegal street transactions. When the focus was on the retail selling of sports and pop ephemera, for example, the 'touts' would be serviced by 'runners' who supplied the 'touts' with goods held in a vehicle nearby. Like the 'barkers', the 'touts' would generally operate on a commission basis and would purchase their next supply of stock, *via* the 'runner', with the income generated from the initial supply of stock and so on.

Other examples of what Craine (1988) has described as 'the intermediate range of alternative careers' can be grouped under the local terms 'hustling' and 'totting' and involved a wide range of non-legitimate enterprise activities including 'totting' (from 'the Social' - fraudulent benefit claims), buying and selling second hand goods and stolen property, fiddle jobs in the local informal economy, unorganised shoplifting, opportunistic theft and unorganised drug dealing at street level. In its most common local use, 'hustling' refers to street level, relatively unorganised, drug dealing. In the early to mid 1980s, the most common proscribed drug to be 'hustled' was cannabis in its various forms. In their early post-school periods of unemployment, several study participants undertook early careers intermittently 'hustling draw'. Five young men in the group studied, for example, all utilised contacts with the two market dynasties to purchase cannabis at relatively cheap prices, in order to 'do it out to punters'. For two young men, such early careers provided the financial basis for movement into the higher level, more organised, 'dealing' of drugs in larger (wholesale) quantities to fewer punters. 'Punting draw' was a status role not restricted to male study participants, one young woman was also involved in the local drugs trade. What all these activities had in common were elaborate and developed divisions of labour between members of a group, involving systems of look-outs against apprehension by the police and lines of supply so that the seller was never in danger of being caught with large quantities of goods at any one time (which might lead to the confiscation of valuable assets as well as constituting a more serious offence).

The development of full-time 'professional' criminal careers

In many ways, the sorts of activities we have so far described, were well known and recognised as taking place within Basildeane and, with the possible exception of drug dealing, not regarded as serious wrong-doing. There is a good deal of evidence to suggest that, despite its illegality, acquisitive 'social crime' has been tolerated for generations and even 'condoned as legitimate' within some working class communities (see for example Downes, 1966; Ferguson, 1952; Hobbs, 1988; Humphries, 1981; Mays, 1954). Such careers supplied young people with a relatively regular source of income, provided an apprenticeship in collective protection against the intrusion of those in authority (including the police, social security and employment officials), and prepared the way for the development of an 'anti-legitimate work ethos'[2] which led some to turn their back on ever re-entering the legitimate labour market. As Maz put it:

> Workin's fer them who aven't got the bottle to sort summat fer themselves ...
> Ah wouldn't work now even if they wus undreds o jobs, ah wouldn't do it ...
> Naaw, no way, ah'd prefer ta risk what ah risk rather than be told what ter do
> every day ... Naaw workin's fer them that's got no bottle.

Tex, perhaps, put it more succinctly:

> *A job!? Fuck that! I can make more in a coupla ours than my ol man used to make in a week. Fuck workin!. (Craine, 1994)*

Once this 'ethos' had developed it was only a small step towards an increasingly professional approach to systematic involvement in serious crime. So for instance, two young men started their careers as part-time 'hustlers' selling cannabis in small quantities to friends and in and around local pubs. This involved them in buying 'an oz', or ounce, from the Hattons or Donaghues for around £80 (in 1986) and selling it off as 'teenths' (1/16th of an ounce) for between £6 and £10 depending on the punter. From the profits they accrued, they moved up the chain of supply, buying larger quantities, and selling to small scale hustlers as they had been themselves until, finally, they undertook the importation of proscribed drugs from continental sources, most notably Holland.

Other members of the group studied, Tex, Maz and Dilly, were first involved in minor acts of 'deviance' such as truanting from school, stealing from shops in the city centre often using a fairly primitive 'grab and run' technique (Sennewald and Christman, 1992). Initially these goods, such as clothes, sports wear and training shoes, were stolen for personal use as a means of enhancing peer group status. By the mid-1980s, however, they had developed a much more professional approach. It is to this group that we now turn in more detail.

'The Hoisting Crew'
Tex, Maz and Dilly were the core members of what became a highly skilled and professional shop-lifting gang. They served early 'career apprenticeships', under the tutelage of the Hattons and the Donaghues, and later developed professional patterns of organisation, technique and distribution originally acquired in 'touting' and 'barking' careers. By the mid-1980s, the Crew had escalated their activities and were 'hoisting' two or three days every week and every other Saturday during the football season. Much of their activity took place in towns and cities throughout the north of England. The 'hoists' were always carefully researched. In developing their careers, therefore, they moved from availing themselves of local alternative opportunity structures to exploring others available nationwide. Some were connected with Manchester United's away fixture list, the huge 'away' support of the team provided for geographical mobility as well as a measure of protective anonymity. A tradesman's van provided further cover for the movement of 'hoisting' personnel, or sometimes for the return journey with a particularly large amount of stolen goods. A regular routine developed whereby the core crew (Tex, Maz and Dilly), plus up to three others, would travel to the target area in the van and another vehicle early in the morning. After arriving in the target area, the day would be spent 'hoisting' as a team, sometimes in small groups of two or three, sometimes as a single large group. Stolen goods would be periodically transferred to the van for temporary storage. The storage of goods in the van ensured that, if a member of the Crew was detected and detained during a 'hoisting' expedition, the person involved would, at worst, face only a relatively minor, single, shoplifting charge. The crew utilised the second vehicle for mobility in and around the target area, with the vehicle providing a ready means of escape should a particular encounter with security personnel, or retail employees, 'come on top'.

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During a ten-year process of increased professionalism the Crew also devised a variety of strategies to ensure the success of a 'hoisting' expedition. Two of the commonest techniques involved collusion and/or diversion. One example of the technique of collusion involved one or two members of the Crew gathering up goods to be stolen and hiding them somewhere on the shop or store's premises - under a display fixture, in a changing room, or in-store lavatory, for example. Other members of the team would then retrieve the items from their hidden location. If the original removal of goods had been detected by floor walkers or security staff, generally they would seek to follow and/or detain the Crew member(s) who had moved the merchandise from their place of sale. More often than not this left the non-involved Crew members free from surveillance. Techniques of diversion involved a number of members of the Crew to employ various methods of distraction to divert the attention of retail employees, and/or floor walkers/security personnel, so that the Crew could operate without interference and with diminished likelihood of discovery. Techniques used to distract shop or store personnel ranged from simply seeking help in selecting goods outside the 'hoister's' target area within a shop or store, to staging loud and disturbing arguments or fights, etc.(see also Murphy 1986; Walsh 1978)

During the course of SC's preliminary fieldwork, partly, out of a voyeuristic curiosity, but also in the interests of reliability and validation of data, SC accepted the invitation to attend a 'hoisting' expedition as an observer (Craine, 1988). This took place in a major department store in a Cheshire town. The crew staged a distraction in which one of them feigned an epileptic fit. Indeed, this was so distracting that SC missed observing the actual hoist. Four hours later, when SC met Maz and Dilly in 'the Vic' (the pub at the heart of the Chicken Lane Estate) Maz explained that they had 'sussed' the store on a previous trip to the town, but had been 'saving it' for Christmas. Apart from 'quality gear', the attraction of the store was its lack of internal security systems such as surveillance devices, closed circuit television, or the electronic tagging of merchandise. The store was a very traditional family concern, with a one hundred year history of trade in the town. As such, it appeared to be one of the 'very few ... retailers [who] abnegated the use of conspicuous security devices in the belief that customers might find them offensive' (Murphy, 1986, p100).

The total haul from the scenario SC had attempted to observe, consisted of an incredible 137 men's suits, in various sizes, which ranged in individual retail price from £239 to £349. Dilly explained that during the dramatic distraction staged by Maz and himself, Tex and the two other members of the expedition had lifted from the rack of suits one armload each. He demonstrated by extending his arms and bringing them together in one deft movement. The tightly bunched suits were lifted from the hanging rack with the hangers intact inside the suits. The suits were then rolled into a compressed bundle and, once the Crew member was through the exit door, placed in black plastic dustbin bags. After which, the escape was made simply by walking down two flights of stairs to the busy street filled with Christmas shoppers and to the waiting vehicle parked nearby. The return journey from the Cheshire town to Manchester was taken by four of the Crew in the tradesman's van driven by Dilly. Maz returned in the second vehicle utilised for the 'hoisting' expedition, along with all the goods they had obtained that day, which included the haul of men's suits. As Maz explained: 'Well that way if I gets a pull [stopped

by the police] its only me gets topped [arrested]'. On the return journeys from 'hoisting' expeditions, members of the Crew took it in turns to drive the vehicle containing the 'hoisted' goods. This ensured protection for the majority. Should the vehicle be subjected to a random police stop and the goods discovered, travelling separately from the stolen merchandise assured immunity from prosecution for the majority. Maz was not stopped. The Crew received an immediate cash payment from their 'fence' of just over £1,000 for the suits alone. As with the proceeds of all 'hoisting' expeditions, this money was shared equally among Crew members. In the pre-Christmas period, the suits were sold at up to half price throughout the area to individual punters and also on the local markets (labels removed) and within the 'locker-room trade' of certain factories. The Crew went to Ibiza for two weeks holiday in the New Year and sent SC a postcard. It said simply: 'Fancy a C.D. [Christian Dior suit] for Chrissie [Christmas] Steve?'

Gender, the Three Main Youth Transitions and Careers Involving Crime

The above example of the activities of the 'hoisting crew' is only one instance of what we describe as 'professional crime' (see also Klockars 1975; Sutherland 1973). Others in the sample were involved in robbery, armed robbery and drug dealing as their major activities. For the 'crew' and their peers, their criminal careers also impacted upon other aspects of their lives and, in our terms, other dimensions of youth career transitions. At the beginning of this article we argued for the interlocking nature of three main transitions: entry to the world of 'work'; leaving home; and start- - ing new partnerships and families. It is to this wider context of the three main youth transitions that we now turn. By 1990, a complex pattern of domestic and housing careers had emerged which was deeply gendered. Long term unemployment and labour market withdrawal was articulated within distinctly gender-bound domains (the home and the street). Whereas the young men fell back on an exaggerated ver- sion of working class masculinity, and the locally available alternative opportunity structures, women generally retreated into home-based domestic careers.

The domestic careers of the eleven women in the study who were long-term unemployed, were circumscribed by a working class-cultural emphasis on a 'domestic apprenticeship' of homecare and child-rearing. Early 'precipitous routes' into motherhood were common and served to fix young women into situations of economic and domestic subordination. The four exceptions to this general picture were women who had created independent means of acquiring 'undeclared income' by, in one case, fraud and drug-dealing, in another prostitution, and in two cases by 'working on the side', one study participant worked in a City Centre nightclub and the second on a market stall. These were the minority. Amongst the long-term unemployed women withdrawal from labour-market activity into early parenthood was the norm. By 1990 of the eleven long-term unemployed women nine were responsible for the care of two or more dependant children, and ten were either cohabiting or married. Four of these young women had originally become mothers as lone parents in their teenage years. Although most women did not necessarily 'plan' to have children this was less the product of irresponsibility than the result of a fatalistic ethos generated within a context of institutionalised economic and social insecurity. Wallace's research similarly confirms that unem- ployed women 'drift into', parenthood, 'for lack of positive alternatives' (1986, p28). However, some had accepted pregnancy and early child-rearing careers as a

means for demonstrating adult identity and securing residential independence; just as others had sought to demonstrate their adult autonomy through the 'mothering option'. As Janet put it:

> They tried to say I wouldn't cope ... but I knew I was gonna ... this was summat for me, no one was gonna talk me out of it (Craine 1994).

Nevertheless aspirations, opportunities and choices were circumscribed by patriarchal assumptions in the home and the labour market, as well as sexism in training scheme allocation procedures (cf Cockburn, 1987). Domestic roles and duties ensured that the unemployed women were isolated, divided and economically dependant upon men, or welfare benefits. Within such a context there was a general pattern of withdrawal into home-bound domestic careers. Lack of viable options such as the possibility of a 'proper job' made the 'mothering option' a higher status occupation than long-term under- or un-employment.

Yet paradoxically, of all the young people studied, the eleven long-term unemployed women were those who had most successfully undertaken early movement towards sustained residential independence. In 1985-1986, by which time they had reached their early twenties, ten of the eleven had left home, seven to live in public sector rented accommodation and three in private sector rented accommodation. In part, early residential independence reflected local authority accommodation allocation procedures which favoured couples with dependant children and lone-parents. In general terms, whilst the Northside Crew looked towards the self-protecting milieu of their peer group with its celebration of masculinity, the young women sought maternity and parenthood as the only viable options for achieving adult status and residential independence.

Up to 1986, the fourteen long-term unemployed young men, by contrast, could be clearly divided into two groups; those who had left home and those who had not. At that time there were eight young men in the study group who, by their early twenties, had effected residential independence on the income generated from fiddle jobs and acquisitive crime. The housing careers of this eight conformed to the pattern displayed by the three young people in the study who had made a 'traditional transition' from school to work, and who, by their early twenties, were similarly able to sustain residential independence on the income derived from stable employment. The housing careers of the remaining six long-term unemployed young men conformed to a pattern of delayed residential mobility. Their 'housing career' most resembled those following a 'protracted' school-to-work transition. There were several factors which contributed to the delayed residential mobility of some of the young men studied. Unemployed young men were generally allowed a great deal of autonomy within the home, and, unlike the young women, were granted their own 'front door keys' as a significant teenage rite of passage. Domestic servicing by mothers, freedom from domestic responsibility, and local attachments and routines, tended to sustain residential dependence. For four of the six long-term unemployed men still resident in the home, having an absentee father ensured that 'breadwinning' fell to the eldest son. Success in 'alternative careers' enabled some to make welcome contributions to the household budget (see also Banks et al., 1992, p85; Bates and Riseborough, 1993, p172-173). The

necessity of such contributions ensured that both parental pressure to move out, and conflicts over life-styles, were minimal.

Amongst young men, what is also notable, is that for those involved in crime as the major means of earning a living, there was a marked lack of success in sustaining on-going relationships with young women. This can be attributed to a number of factors. The pressure, insecurity, lack of stable routine and sometimes danger associated with their lifestyle militated against stability or emotional commitment in partnership, or family, formation. Sometimes, continuity in the establishment of relationships and families was broken by young men's conflicts with the law which occasionally resulted in periods of absence spent 'on remand' or in prison. Although the majority had undertaken childrearing relationships and fathered one or more children, only three managed to sustain relationships with their original partners. The masculine 'code of honour' and the exaggerated subcultural emphasis on hardness, emotional detachment, and perceived machismo, also inhibited the development of a durable intimacy with women. There was a general pattern of absentee parenthood, of visiting their former partners periodically, ostensibly to 'see the kids'. Sometimes, these 'visits' would last for several weeks until they were called away again by a combination of financial necessity and the demands of 'the street'. Some lived semi-nomadic lives moving between their own flats, the homes of their friends and current girlfriends, their parental home and the homes of their former partners. The restless instability was fuelled by drug-taking and the lack of routine associated with a fundamental detachment from the disciplines of full-time employment. Such instability was also reflected in the 'booms and slumps' of their anti-employment, alternative careers.

The three main youth transitions and careers out of crime
Not all the young people studied by Craine were involved in crime, the 'alternative economy' or the development of 'alternative careers'. Indeed, as far as could be ascertained, the majority were not. Some of those fortunate enough to have found legitimate employment, however, were involved in routinised theft from their workplace and other activities they regarded as 'legitimate fiddles' and 'fringe benefits'. None of this is a new phenomenon (Humphries, 1981). What must be emphasised is that the drift into 'crime' did not involve a major moral dilemma for the young people concerned. Rather it was the result of a series of incremental choices to access the alternative opportunity structures around them. Each successive development led them to further alternative opportunities to 'make a living' and salvage some self esteem in a milieu which offered few 'legitimate' alternatives.

A number of studies have pointed out that it is the development of serious partnerships with young women which is instrumental in influencing young men to give up teenage criminality (Foster, 1990; Jenkins, 1983; Osborn and West, 1979). This proved to be of importance to some of the sample studied, but not always in a straight forward or predictable manner. On occasions, what proved to be most decisive were the decisions of those in authority which triggered a re-routing of domestic, housing and labour market careers. Jimmy, for example, was involved at an early stage of his career in 'fiddly jobs' for the Donaghue family, which required him to handle stolen goods and pass on vital messages about the criminal activities of others. Under other circumstances, this experience was normally the precursor

to a more fully-fledged involvement in crime. Jimmy was in a stable partnership with a young woman and had a new baby. However, two years after his marriage, as a result of delays in securing independent accommodation, Jimmy and his new family were still living with his parents. In his terms, his domestic circumstances rendered him a failure - 'a blown out nobody'. Yet because of his involvement with the Donaghues, Jimmy was regarded outside of the home as 'a sound guy' and was accorded respect by his peers. This combination could be regarded as a recipe for an abandonment of his domestic commitments and a growing involvement in the 'after- hours' sociability of his peers. Indeed, for a short period in the mid 1980s, he did avoid going home and was involved in heavy drinking and smoking 'draw'(cannabis). However, what provided for his escape was being finally allocated a council flat out of the area. Following this, he reverted to spending more time 'home making' (decorating and equipping the flat) and this drew him away from the network of 'the lads' involved in crime, the family organising it, and back into his marriage and family. He also redoubled his efforts to find legitimate employment, and eventually obtained a job as a butcher's assistant. Although he occasionally went out with his mates, contact with them eventually evaporated. In Jimmy's case the critical decision of a housing manager resulted in residential mobility, and triggered a change of perspective which led him to both stable employment and a reintegration with traditional working class family life.

Similar biographical characteristics could also be discerned in the cases of Charlie and Berksy. Both were brought up on the Chicken Lane estate, were central figures in 'the lads' informal networks, and at an early stage involved in crime organised around the two market dynasties. Like many others from the estate, both were in trouble with the law during the early days of their careers in crime. Court appearances resulted in borstal training for 13 months for Charlie. Berksy, on the other hand, twice narrowly escaped custodial sentences as a result of army enlistment. This provided the courts dealing with his cases the choice of non-custodial sentences. For Berksy, joining the army provided geographical mobility out of Basildeane and away from his network of friends and influences. After his release from borstal, Charlie similarly went to live out of the area with a cousin, and family connections enabled him to secure well paid employment with a major road haulage company. After obtaining secure employment, both got married and started families. Like Jimmy, residential mobility, stable employment, courtship, marriage and parenthood were important factors which enabled all three to move away from careers in crime.

Alternative careers and a growing 'youth underclass'?
Clearly the ethnographic evidence of the study reported here does indicate that some young people, and predominantly young men, become involved, not only in petty acts of crime but in fully fledged careers based upon crime. Clearly, many have chosen these alternative careers as preferable to the lack of opportunities for legitimate employment, or the 'black magic roundabout' of schemes, unemployment and yet more schemes. They had become trapped in a socio-economic milieu which offered very few traditional and legitimate working class jobs. The 'decisions' of others to deny employment, post-school training with a reasonable chance of employment at the end, housing, or an adequate 'safety net' of benefits, provided a bleak context within which alternative career 'choices' were made. To

those for whom employment was viewed as a distant and diminished possibility, alternative routes to income and identity became matters of economic and psycho-social survival. Seeing the seeming inevitability of unemployment and poverty, and continued economic dependence on families who were ill-equipped to pro-vide for them, many were tempted by the ready availability of 'alternative careers'. These offered not only the possibility of developing and using skills, inventiveness and entrepreneurial ambitions, but also allowed them a means of rejecting the rejecters, taking property from those who would not give them jobs, and using muscle and occasionally fire-arms to wrestle power from those who would deny them legitimate opportunity. On the Chicken Lane estate by the late 1980s the ani-mals had taken over the jungle and declared war on the humans who lived, worked and played outside of it. Indeed, on the terraces of the Stretford End at Manchester United, the chant had come from the 'Northside Crew', 'We hate humans!' (Robins, 1984)

Yet this picture is not to endorse the notion of an 'underclass' as it has been expounded by many of its leading exponents. Despite its descriptive appeal the concept of an underclass, especially the 'moral turpitude version' (Westergaard, 1992), should be resisted because it contains historically rooted associations with individualised pathology, moral defectiveness, personal inadequacy, and trans-gen-erational welfare dependency. Moreover, it has been argued elsewhere, that to lump together the homeless, jobless, socially isolated and unemployed, is to aggre-gate many who find themselves in such a position, not through any choices of their own, but because of a failure to protect jobs for young people with special needs and disabilities, and the failure of policies to better prepare young people, not liv-ing with their own families, for leaving the public care (Coles, 1995). For not only are the young unqualified early school leavers described by Craine likely to find themselves unemployed, but so too are important and neglected sections of what Coles calls 'vulnerable youth'. Many of these too become part of the long term unemployed. Young people with special needs and disabilities are heavily over-represented amongst those who are jobless and socially isolated. Moreover, young people leaving care are heavily over-represented amongst those who are homeless, unemployed, and availing themselves of 'alternative careers' involving crime.

The view of a leading exponent of the 'underclass thesis' is that communities such as the Chicken Lane estate, 'needn't bother us too much as long as it stays in its own part of town' (Murray, 1990, p35). This is clearly misguided. Those based in Basildeane and engaged in 'alternative careers' quite simply do not stay in their own part of town. Indeed under the guise of being Manchester United supporters, some travelled widely in developing their professional criminal activities not merely across the whole of Manchester and the North-West, but also in more pros-perous part of Britain and, on occasions, into Europe. Recent estimates of the cost of youth crime put it at a staggering £7 to £14 billion per year, much of it borne by private households as well as large corporations (The Independent, 22.9.94; The Guardian 17.8.92). In seeking to 'understand' the development of young criminal careers, we have been concerned to understand both the ways in which young people make decisions to avail themselves of non-legitimate opportunity struc-tures, and the decisions people in authority make about controlling such struc-tures. In understanding youth crime, and the causes of crime, and in searching for

means through which it can be reduced, we need to understand young people's choices to indulge in it, and the choices of others who seem to offer them so few alternatives. Only by understanding both sides of the social construction of young careers, young people *and* the opportunity structures around them, can we begin to develop adequate policies to intervene at 'critical choice points' in deflecting the development of 'alternative careers'. The policy agenda must be as complex and long term in its vision as the processes which lead young people into crime. We are not naively suggesting that solutions can be found in cosy chats with 'user-friendly' careers officers, social workers, benefits agency staff or probation officers, or in telling the lads to 'behave', or 'helping' them to see the 'error of their ways'. But there are now a number of schemes (such as victim-awareness schemes, community projects and 'headstart' schemes developed in the U.S.) (Coles, 1995; Utting et al., 1993; NACRO, 1991; NACRO, 1993) which are of proven worth. We do not have space to review these here but we do contend that there is a positive and realistic policy agenda which could be much more actively pursued. It must be directed to those involved in housing, education and training, as well as policing and the justice system. It is the choices that politicians and service providers make in shaping the opportunity structures of youth which we must address. The need for a co-ordination of youth policy has been avoided for too long. The social and economic cost of youth crime suggests we can no longer afford to ignore it.

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Notes:

1 According to reports published by Manchester City Council in the mid 1980s:

   There has been a dramatic decline in the number of jobs, with manufacturing, the traditional employment base of the city suffering the most severe decline. Between 1961 and 1983, 150, 000 jobs were lost, a decline of 36% (Poverty in Manchester, City Planning Dept. 1986, p5).

   the Greater Manchester economy can no longer fully employ the local labour force . . . This raises the possibility of an unemployed residue which may exist for the foreseeable future (Manufacturing Industry in Greater Manchester, County Planning Dept., 1985, p16).

2 Studies have similarly illustrated how juvenile law-breaking is part of an identifiable lower working class (male) pattern of behaviour and one to which the majority of those studied conformed. (Downes, 1966; Parker, 1974; Willmott, 1966). Other research has also investigated the ecological factors involved in the creation of an ethos of, and tolerance towards law-breaking in, so called, 'delinquent areas' (Baldwin and Bottoms, 1976; Ferguson, 1952; Gill, 1977; Jenkins, 1983; Spencer, 1964). Some research has indicated the significance of declining inner city council estates as a generating milieu for social/acquisitive crime especially those estates which, like the Chicken Lane Estate, had been utilised to rehouse 'slum-dwellers' (Jenkins, 1983; Ferguson, 1952; Gill, 1977).

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CRIME AND SAFETY IN WHOSE 'COMMUNITY'?:

Age, Everyday Life, and Problems for Youth Policy

SHEILA BROWN

Children, out of control children and out of control dogs

Resident of East Middlesborough, 70 years old

Introduction

In this paper I offer a critical perspective on youth policy from the standpoint of 'everyday life' by drawing on findings from current research in Middlesbrough. In doing so, I will underline the problematic nature of the relationship between (criminological) research and theory, and policy .

The discussion below is based on findings from the Youth 2000 Research carried out in Middlesbrough, Cleveland in the North East of England over the last three years. Substantially funded by Middlesbrough City Challenge Partnership and Middlesbrough Safer Cities Project, this is a five year programme linking a number of pieces of research to policy in relation to youth and crime - or more specifically, community safety. It has been possible to date to carry out two surveys, one with adults and one with young people aged 11-16 years; two pieces of qualitative research with the same groups; and ethnographic work on East Middlesborough estates.

Middlesbrough was one of the first areas in England to receive funding under Central Government's City Challenge Initiative. Launched in 1991, the City Challenge Initiative claimed to provide an extra £37.5 million of funding towards regeneration in selected areas. It is in practice doubtful as to whether this constitutes 'extra' funding rather than a reallocation of funds which would previously have been distributed amongst all Local Authorities or made available through other 'regeneration' schemes. The politically cynical may argue that City Challenge Initiatives were principally conceived to aid the dilution of Local Authority spending power, and to reinforce a market ideology as against regionally accountable public spending. This debate is beyond the scope of the present discussion, but has relevance in that the criteria for 'winning' City Challenge monies (would-be City Challenge Areas having to submit a competitive bid against other areas) include the demonstration of 'particular need' and the ability to demonstrate public sector willingness to work in partnership, not only with the private and voluntary sectors, but with 'the community' in order to 'bring about lasting improvements' in the area (Middlesbrough City Challenge, 1993). At the same time, Safer Cities was established in Middlesbrough as a Home Office funded initiative with a relatively small budget and a remit to work 'in partnership' to reduce crime and the fear of crime. The Youth 2000 research developed as an academic/policy sector project working through both these organisations.

By definition - that is, in order to qualify for City Challenge status - the study area of East Middlesbrough provides an ideal-type of the 'problem area'. Social indicators of deprivation such as high levels of unemployment, social class composition, housing need, poor health, and demographic profile (higher than average proportions of elderly people and single parent households) combine together here to create layers of multiple disad-

vantage. The area is relatively homogeneously working class, predominantly White with a small Ethnic Minority population of around 7% (Middlesbrough City Challenge, op.cit.) Youth provision (aside from 'special' projects funded by City Challenge or Safer Cities) is extremely limited. Crime and fear of crime, high in Cleveland generally, were identified by residents' groups, policy makers and the local Criminal Justice agencies as a particular problem.

Aims and Methodology of the Research

It is this context which influenced funders in determining the direction the research should take. In general terms, it was felt that the links between economic disadvantage, scarce policy provision, youth, and crime and their implications for policy were inadequately understood in the region. The specific focus of the research was decided by an initial project team of academic researchers, Local Government Officers, and through consultation with other Agencies.

The youth survey included a replication of that directed by Richard Kinsey in Edinburgh (Anderson et. al., 1994), but embedded this within a broader set of questions about the quality of life, youth provision, and young peoples' perceptions of relationships with adults (our 'everyday life' variables). 1,000 11-16 year olds were selected randomly from the registers of six schools, of which four served the Challenge Area and two lay outwith. Data from the latter two schools were taken for comparative purposes (comparative aspects are discussed elsewhere - see Brown, 1994a). The questionnaire was self completion, with researchers - but not teachers - present should any help be needed with reading. The bulk of the qualitative research was again schools-based with some complementary estates-based work. No teachers were present during interviewing in schools. The qualitative project with young people took an exploration of young peoples' everyday lives as a starting point and explored 'crime' as one facet of that experience. The adult survey covered adults' experiences of victimisation, their fears and attitudes towards crime, and *their* perceptions of the quality of life and of young people and crime; whilst the adult qualitative project again, explored these issues in greater depth and breadth. The survey consisted of an achieved sample of 500 adults (a response rate of around 65%) taken by random sample of the electoral roll and carried out face-to-face in respondent's homes at various times of the day and evening, weekdays and weekends. Adult qualitative work was carried out in various locations, for example, homes, parks, social, community and leisure centres, shopping precincts and so on. In addition to the above, ethnographic work such as observation and situated conversations was done on the estates, at residents' associations, in streets and shops, and in pubs. Although not intended as an ethnography per se, this was extremely useful both in devising interview schedules and for validating and further interpreting survey data. In addition some ten young people aged 18-25 and one older interviewer were recruited and trained from the study area to help with interviews (although they did not survey their own estates). The composition of both samples roughly reflected the distribution in the population, despite not being deliberately stratified.

A further piece of research, examining the effectiveness of youth provision in the area, is still underway. Thus the research encompasses a diverse range of aims and interests, revolving around a common concern with understanding crime, fear of crime, and victimisation as they are embedded within the everyday lives of residents.

By 'everyday lives' we mean the residents' social relationships with each other, their relationships to the material, policy, and cultural milieux within which they live, their routine practices, 'taken for granted' realities, their perceptions of the area; of themselves, the present, the past and the future. Of course one cannot hope to capture the totality of experience. But if 'crime' is to be understood at all, it is important to understand how it inheres in the very mundanity of typical experiences: without detracting from the seriousness of its impact, we wished to examine the 'ordinariness' of crime as well as its 'extraordinariness'. This approach is informed by work such as that of Sean Damer (1989) and Owen Gill (1977) in its concern with understanding how everyday perceptions and interactions on the one hand, and local policy on the other, intertwine to produce exclusion and division; and by the work of the 'left realists' in a number of other studies (Lea, 1992). But I am concerned here particularly with inter-generational relationships, and with the way in which age - as a cultural rather than a chronological category (Hockey, 1993; James and Prout, 1990; Kinsey, 1994)) is experienced. Although the primary concern was initially to study 'young people and crime', it was clear that we could not do so from this perspective without researching *across* the life course; for it is in their relationships with and perceptions of each other that the generations mutually create and recreate images of age and crime. Thus it was that our focus shifted from the study of 'youth' as a group, to the study of 'age' as a social division.

This is not to suggest that age may stand alone as a dimension of social division. Social power clearly intersects along many axes, and in purist terms the analysis below should of course interweave age with gender, ethnic divisions and class. The first two of these are not dealt with in this paper precisely because I wish, for present purposes, to present 'youth' and 'adulthood' as possessing a relative coherence vis a vis each other. The cross-cutting of these categories with others is a further analytical task. I will attempt, however, to set generational divisions within the context of economic and cultural inequalities and change at the broadest level, and to examine the production of social insecurity consequent upon these. Thus a general framework is offered for subsequent more detailed analyses.

I would now like to consider some of the findings of the research from the point of view of both their criminological interest and the difficulties which face the 'policy' orientation of the programme.

Adult Perceptions of Crime and Young People
Firstly, I will examine adults' perceptions of young people and crime, based on the survey of 500 adults in the Challenge Area of East Middlesbrough, and 200 qualitative interviews in the same area. As we shall see in a later section of this paper, adults were, in fact, considerably less likely to be the victim of personal crime than were young people. However, our data suggest that around one third had experienced some form of criminal victimisation over a twelve month period, with higher figures if 'grey area' victimisation such as harassment and intimidation are considered. Perceptions of crime as a problem locally are high, with 54% of the sample identifying crime as a serious problem in their area. Table 1 puts this perception of the crime problem in context with other attitudes towards crime and everyday quality of life issues.

Table 1: Crime and the Quality of Life - Adult Survey	
% Identifying as a serious problem in the neighbourhood:	
Crime in general	54
Young people committing crime	54
Dog litter	53
Young people being cheeky or rude	45
Litter/rubbish	44
Young people creating noise nuisance	43
Graffiti/vandalism	25
Poor street lighting	20
Poor maintenance of public areas	20
Poor maintenance of houses	18
Trouble with neighbours	15

As usual with such surveys, quality of life issues vie with crime in the intensity with which they are perceived as problems, particularly dog litter, litter in general, and young people being perceived as rude and noisy. It is the conflation by adults of youth, crime and the decline in quality of life which I wish to examine further in this paper. Adults tend to see young people as responsible for much of the nuisance and crime to which they are subjected. 11 to 16 year olds, in particular, are blamed. 48% of adults saw 11-16 year olds as the age group causing the most problems in their neighbourhoods. More broadly, adults ascribe moral deterioration of the social fabric to young people.

62% of adults interviewed thought that 'the young people of today are worse behaved than young people in the past', with the 1940s/50s being most usually identified as the 'golden age' when young people were best behaved. In fact, this result reflects the age composition of the sample, and it will be of little surprise to those who have read Geoffrey Pearson's (1983) work that adults were most likely to be identify the 'golden age' as the one in which they themselves would have been young people! Along with deterioration in moral standards, in adults' views, today's young people show a lack of 'respect' for older people. 93% of our adult sample felt that young people should show 'more respect' to adults.

Indeed, Pearson's general thesis (Pearson, op.cit.: pp229) has direct relevance to the present research. For Pearson, public discourse continually harks back to a tranquil era of stability and order, which is always 'twenty years ago', or 'before the war' (ibid.). This in turn links to a discourse of 'solutions', for as he points out,

> The idea that the past harbours a golden age of tranquillity also readily lends itself to the view that history might furnish us with effective methods of crime control.

> (Pearson, op.cit.:pp9)

Both the quantitative and the qualitative data suggest that adults operate a contemporary and everyday version of Pearson's notion of 'respectable fears'. It is not just a

question of public discourse, of newspapers, television, and the declarations of prominent social commentators. In their emphasis on the decline in behavioural standards amongst young people, linked to the perceived breakdown of moral authority and discipline, the adults we interviewed pointed out both contrast to their own past and a 'commonsense' solution:

> *Young people are a problem anywhere, for the simple reason society is too soft. Where I was born, was the roughest area of Middlesborough, Cannon Street, and I had nothing. None of us got into trouble, there was no crime, and when a policeman said move, you moved.*
>
> *(Woman aged 50 years)*

> *The kids have no respect for anything, never mind authority. No respect for other people, old people..they don't give a shit about nowt..people say it's cause there's not jobs, half these bastards wouldn't work if you paid them a fortune..they would rather go and rob and torment people, it's just too easy, nowt happens when you get caught nowadays.*
>
> *(Male, 40 years old)*

The past was seen by many of our respondents as a place where order and authority went hand in hand with a culture of work discipline, respect of the young for their elders, and a healthy fear of breaking the rules. This perception, whilst it differed in the way in which it was expressed and in its intensity, was held across a wide range of age groups: it was not unique to those over sixty, for example, as the following extracts show:

> *My dad was a jitty (sic) man and he went out every morning looking to get a bloody shift in..they came to bed with me at 8 'o' clock to save a penny for the gas...where there's a will...they say the bad old days, no, the good old days.My father died when he was young, my mother was left with seven of us, we never got into trouble, by God no. She took in washing for a couple of coppers.*
>
> *(Woman aged 70 years)*

> *When I was younger you had respect for teachers. These kids, it starts even younger now, most of them swear better than me at two year old (sic), they swear at the teachers, the teachers can't control them it starts that early.*
>
> *(Man in his 40s)*

> *When I was young, if you got caught swearing you got a bar of soap in your mouth for three hours.*
>
> *(Man aged 35)*

Nevertheless, it was clear that the perception of the 'golden age' was much less intense amongst people in their thirties than amongst those in their sixties and seventies, where it was almost universal. What was interesting, particularly in some of the accounts from people in their sixties and seventies, was the interlinking of themes of social change, perceptions of increasing disorder and a decreasing quality of life, and

the way in which 'youth' and 'crime' somehow sat in the centre of all such accounts. Thus if one asked a respondent about their perceptions of young people, they would almost immediately start talking of increasing crime and disorder, lack of respect, the disintegration of community, the decreasing quality of life, and the negative effects of social change. If one asked them about quality of life, then they would start talking of the same things. If asked about crime, the account would again be very similar. Either quality of life, youth or crime, could be used to begin an interview, and the account rendered would be almost identical:

Int: Do you enjoy living in this area?

R1: Oh, yes. Up to the last few years.

R2: When we first came up here you could go to the shops.

R1: Leave your door open and not worry about it. But now, you can't go round the corner without locking your door.

R2: I mean, we came here in '55, all those houses over there are different tenants than what they were. We all used to get on before. It's like they're all unmarried mothers that's in there now, that's where your problems come from, we've got nothing in common with them, we've brought our families up, they've left home. We keep ourselves to ourselves, I mean we don't bother each other you know.

R1: You see, they were all like ourselves, young families, all their families have grown up and they've moved on, we're still here you see. It's what's come into the houses after they left that's the problem....

R2: They look at you differently now, don't you think? We wouldn't have been as cheeky as children. I mean, the best part of them have no dads, how can you expect the children to behave when you get the mothers are worse than the kiddies? They're not getting taught, when do you hear anybody now when you pass, say 'excuse me' or 'thank you'?

It is this kind of opening which led inexorably towards crime, which for many adults seem to be interchangeable with 'young people'. Crime is seen *as* young people, and vice versa. Beginning an interview with the 'crime' theme, then:

Int: What do you feel about crime in the area?

R: It's getting really bad up here now. I mean, the flats, all they're doing is cutting the wires all the time over there, and they're getting in, pinching stuff...I blame the parents, me, and I blame the law, and I blame this bloody government.'

Int: Do you mean unemployment?

R: That doesn't give them the right to go and break into peoples' houses, that's no excuse at all...as soon as they leave school, if they can't get a job, they should be put in the army, doing 2 years service like we had to.

Int: To?

R: To keep them off the bloody streets, and getting into trouble, that's what I say...

Within a short space of time, this man in his 40s had turned to the decline in the quality of life and in community:

> R: ..I mean, I lived in West Terrace down there, and I lived in Louisa Street down there, and it was a good area, all the old houses, man, they've all gone. Everything is gone now, old pubs and everything, but I mean, you know if you want to go anywhere you want to go in the Newmarket and ask people in there about this area. It's getting worse. They break into the Newmarket all the time. They break into them shops over there.

> Int: Do you think these changes are linked to crime?

> R: I mean, like years ago, you had neighbours, hadn't you, but when you come to these estates, you've no neighbours, you've got to look after yourself. In the old days you had neighbours, you used to look after each other. Look after your neighbours property - not that there was much thieving in those days - but these neighbours, they don't give a monkey's toss...

> Int: What's your view of the future?

> R: I don't think there'll be any bloody future before long.

> Int: You feel it's out of your hands?

> R: Yes, it's getting out of control altogether, everywhere you go they're thieving and all this and that lark, aren't they?

Whilst unemployment and economic decline was often seen as a root cause of youth crime, for various reasons (lack of hope for the future, lack of money within a consumer society, and lack of work discipline within family culture being most predominant) it did not affect the overall punitiveness of adults towards youth: asked directly if they felt unemployment and youth crime could be linked, the usual response was to accede that young people did face problems, but that it was 'no excuse'.

There developed here a perplexity in adults' accounts, because when asked about causes, they simultaneously blamed unemployment and lack of parental control, single parenthood, poor discipline in the schools, and lack of punishment. Rarely could they work through the implications of these contradictions. Adults in fact rated economic factors (83%), peer pressure(89%) and moral decline (84%) almost equally as causes of criminal behaviour amongst 11 to 16 year-olds. Yet asked which single measure would be most likely to be effective in reducing crime amongst young people, adults chose 'more jobs'(46%) over other alternatives such as 'stricter upbringing' (16%) or 'more police' (7%). Nor do adults fail to recognise the responsibility of Government and Local Authorities towards young people: the vast majority felt that Central Government and Local Authorities were not doing enough for young people. 89% of those interviewed agreed that 'the council should provide better services for young people', and 95% agreed that 'the government should do more to help young people find proper employment'.Thus the multicausal notion of crime is supported, but if constrained to select only one of a number of options, it is jobs and economic independence, not moral, cultural, or policing solutions, which are adopted. The 'commonsense' punitive solutions were not upheld when adults were forced into a hard- edged choice.

There is something here to be said about the relationship between realism and nostalgia, fact and myth (a theme to which I shall return later). Adults could hold passionately to a 'moral crusade' version of the fight against crime, but when the problem was partialized into practical policy alternatives, they tended to choose pragmatic economic solutions. Hence the 'ultimate' economic solution of more jobs, ran alongside the near uniformity of the call for a punitive response to the perceived plague of troublesome youth and tighter control over the life of youth in general. Table 2 shows quantitative data on this:

Table 2: Adult Punitiveness Toward Young People	
% Agreeing:	
The schools should have more powers to punish young people	79
Parents should have more control over their children	95
The courts should have more powers to send young people into custody	82
The police should have more powers over young people	78

It is the qualitative data, however, which most powerfully conveys these attitudes:

All they get is a couple of hours community service, that's nothing is it, they are laughing when they come out of the courts...I'd like to see them sent away, I mean that'll stop them won't it? Tougher sentences, definitely.
(Male, age 35 years)

I'd like to see them get into one of these homes, one of these places where they give them a good doing. A remand home where they'll get a good sharp shock. It'll not help them all, but it'll help a few.
(Male, aged 45 years)

Now there's a thing - the law passed saying you can't chastise your kids. I had seven lads, and when they started, I took one to hit the other with, but I'll tell you one thing now, I've never stood in a court with any of them. The schools have a lot to answer for, they have stopped all chastisement in the schools.
(Female, in her 60s)

I remember when I was a child if I done anything wrong walking around the streets you know, a bobby used to come up and clip you around the ear'ole, but now he can't because the point is if he touches you or lays a hand on you it's assault.
(Male, 40s)

The punitiveness of adults in the study was virtually unrelenting. As a result of adults' dualistic perspectives, the Conservative government was criticised, not only for high levels of unemployment, but for an overly lax criminal justice policy. Many of those we interviewed felt that public spending cuts had adversely affected policing, community sentences were often seen as a 'cheap way out', and the closure of Secure Units (at the time of the interviews the proposed reintroduction of these institutions had not really permeated at local level) was harshly criticised. Police powers were seen as

having *declined* drastically, of which the supposed inability of the 'bobby' to administer the 'clip around the ear' became a popular symbol.

The major differentiation in punitive attitudes was between adults over 40, and those in their twenties or early thirties. Younger adults were more likely to build a critical explanation of youth 'troublesomeness' which acknowledged the importance of economic decline and minimised the role of punitive responses:

> *Well, I think everybody says it's just the kids that are not disciplined enough, but they're just used to the parents not being able to get a job and they have got nothing to look forward to, they get really down and they don't know what to do, everybody else is doing it. If there was more things for them to do it would be better. I'd like to see more things for them to do.*
>
> *(Female, late 20s)*

> *Quite honestly, if there wasn't so much unemployment, I mean, this was a steel town, what is there left? Unemployment is the biggest bugbear of the lot. I think it's got an effect on the children, an effect on the adults, I mean, let's face it, men out of work, it's only natural that they're going to be ratty with the kids so the kids are going to go out and be ratty with other people.*
>
> *(Female, mid 20s)*

Contrast this with the feelings of this seventy year-old woman:

> *Children, out of control children and out of control dogs. It could be nice around here if certain people were put under control...there's supposed to be a fence at the back of Roche Road - it separates us from the Netherfield estate, so a boundary fence to me should be a continual fence. Why have they allowed them to break that fence and open it up allowing kids and dogs to come through and invade other peoples' property?.*
>
> *(Female age 70)*

Middle aged and elderly adults were much more likely than younger adults, not only to call for tighter control and punishment, but to want young people 'tidied away' off the streets; the 'out of control children and dogs' with whom older adults entered into continual battles. Indeed, 'getting young people off the streets' could fairly be said to be a major preoccupation of middle aged and elderly adults. We listened to endless accounts of young people entering peoples' gardens, sitting on walls and fences, hanging around on street corners, congregating outside shops, 'coming up the path', kicking balls against walls, being 'out until all hours', trailing the streets at three o' clock in the morning, causing fear and nuisance, with no possibility of redress because they emanate from 'out of control families':

> *...and now if you say anything to that boy, he'll turn around and say, 'I'm backward, if you say anything to me I can have the Social Services on to you. But he is in charge of about 20 little ones, I mean, I've had windows put through because they just throw stones at your windows, he encourages all these little ones.*
>
> *(Female in 60s about an 11 year old local boy)*

When you go and complain, their children are sniggering, while their mothers are telling you to F- off, do you see?

(Female aged 66)

For me, there are such a lot of people who couldn't give a damn, what we find in this area is people who kick them out on a morning and say 'don't come back'...where are the mothers? Sat in, over there..it riles you, when you know for a fact that the kids are pinching in the shops around here.

(Female Member of Resident's Association, early 60s)

Older adult attitudes towards crime and young people, then, may fairly be summarised as one which recognises the gravity of economic decline; which sees unemployment and poverty as contributing to moral decline; which regrets a perceived deterioration of order and community; but which in the end sees young people, not as victims, but rather as perpetrators and as both symptom and cause of the collapse of the moral universe. I will now turn to young people's experiences and perceptions of crime, youth and adulthood.

Youth, Crime and the Adult World

Insofar as the Youth Survey component of the research was able to replicate Kinsey's research in Edinburgh (Anderson et. al., op. cit.), the broad similarity of the findings was little less than astounding. In particular, I wish to emphasise the extent to which young people are victims of crime and harassment - both from other young people and adults - and the lack of visibility of these experiences to the adult world. As with the Edinburgh research, we found high levels of victimisation and fear of crime amongst the young people we surveyed. Taking the whole range of definitions of victimisation, from verbal abuse , harassment, and threats, through to theft from the person and physical attacks, we found that 59% of young people aged 11-15 had been victimised by adults in the year preceding the survey; and almost all had been victimised by other young people. Consider the levels of victimisation uncovered in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Victimisiation of 11-15 year olds in 12 month period - by other young people (%)	
Shouting, calling abuse, or threats	46
Physical attack	23
Theft from the person	14

It is immediately apparent that the levels of physical attacks and threats, at least, should give cause for concern. The sceptic may wish to argue that this represents little more than boisterousness, or the taking of a few sweets outside the newsagents. In this case, consider the extent to which victims were actually frightened by their experiences. In fact, *35% of victims had been 'very' or 'quite' frightened by their last experience of victimisation.* Moreover, 42% of victims did not know the perpetrators; and 88% of the incidents had involved more than one perpetrator. Almost two thirds of the incidents occurred when the victim was not near home; and an identical proportion occurred before nine p.m. at night.

If we now turn to victimisation by *adults,* the need to take youth victimisation seriously comes into ever sharper focus. We have already stated that 59% of our sample had been victimised by adults in the preceding twelve months. Of these victims 49% were 'very' or 'quite' frightened. Table 4 shows the content of these experiences in more detail.

Table 4: Victimisation of 11-15 year old by adults in preceding 12 months: %	
Staring	47
Following - on foot	30
Following - in car	18
Asking you things	18
Calling things after you	17
Shouting abuse or threatening	17
Physical assault	7
Theft from person	5

Compare these figures with the victimisation levels for adults in the survey:

Table 5: Victimisation of adults in preceding 12 months: %	
Harassment/intimidation	10
Threatening behaviour	21
Physical assault	6
Theft from person	7

Comparing the figures in Table 5 with those in Tables 3 and 4 (we have excluded here property crime such as burglary, since it may be assumed that this affects both adults and any young people who may be in the household) we see that young people experience overall levels of victimisation which are considerably higher than for adults.

One of the most worrying things about this, which I shall relate presently to the broader question of inter-generational relationships - is that young people very often do not tell adults of their experiences. Around half of young victims would tell an adult, and this would most usually be parents. Less than one in five young people told either police or teachers about their experiences. *The most likely person to be told was another young person* - 61% of victims of other young people told another young person, as did 57% of victims of adults.

One suspects that the adult reader, in his or her desire to explain away the seriousness of such findings, will wish to invoke triviality: presumably, low levels of reporting to adults, and especially the formal agencies of school or police, suggest that only the most frightening and serious incidents were being reported, and that all is therefore as it should be. However, this is not borne out by further breakdown of the data. Surely -

as adult victim surveys have shown (Mayhew et al, 1989) - the most common reason for not reporting is the triviality of the incident. However, the situation is more complex than this. As the seriousness of the incident increases (for example, physical assault and theft from the person compared with threats) the more likely a young person is to avoid reporting it because they fear they will not be believed or because they fear they will get into trouble from adults. Hence, around one quarter (23% and 26% respectively) of young people who had experienced assault or theft from person at the hands of a young perpetrator, and had not reported it, did not report because they did not think they would be believed. Almost half - 47% - of non-reporters who had been assaulted by an adult did not report for the same reason.

Thus as the seriousness of the incident increases, the more likely a young person is to avoid reporting it because they fear they will not be believed or because they fear they will get into trouble. Moreover, if we further subdivide victims into those who were 'scared' and those who were not scared, a victim who had been scared was almost *three times more likely* not to report because of fear of reprisals from the perpetrator.

Within this context of young people as victims, let us return to the feelings of adults that they are intimidated by young people and that the quality of life is diminished by young people, 'stray' young people, hanging around on the streets. There was no doubt from either our quantitative or qualitative data that the predominant leisure activity for most young people is, indeed, hanging around. But the young see it quite differently from the adults.

Int: What about the adults? Do they hassle you?

R2: Depends, if some of us go onto Thorntree, some of them are alright to you and some people aren't, it all depends on how they treat you.

R1: But even round our end, if you just stand about, there's always grown ups who will shout at you for something, you've always done something wrong, even when you've done nothing. (14/15 year old boys)

These comments were elaborated upon later in the interview:

R1: Everybody thinks that just because we are our age, everybody our age are (sic) trouble makers, and that we are all going out stealing cars and things.

Int: Do you think they are prejudiced against young people?

R3: Yeah.

R2: Some of them are, some of them aren't.

R1: They always say 'oh, kids weren't like that in our days', they think that all kids are the same.

R2: It's mainly though, not the old people but the oldish people, say, people who are around 40 to 50.

Int: They think they were perfect when they were young?

R2: Some of them do. They think they own the street.

R1: Yeah. If you go somewhere, they always say, 'go and knock about down your own end, I don't want you round here', even if we are down our own end.

Int: It's like they're saying, 'we own it'?

R1: Yeh. We could be like, down there, up there, somebody will come out and say, 'keep away, I don't want you near us, I don't want no windows smashed', and then they say, 'go and knock about your own end', and we say, 'well, we only live *there*', and they say, 'well, I don't care, just get away'.

Int: What sort of things are you doing when they say that?

R3: Just talking.

R1: Or playing football.

Thus young people come to feel that adults both unjustly appropriate the street, and inappropriately harass them for using it. For young people, adults fail to discriminate between situations which are 'dangerous', and situations where they are exercising what they see as their right to public space. Then, what our adults may see as 'persecution' can arise as conflict develops, for young people devise their own way of dealing with perceived unfairness:

Int: So is this particular adults, who you know, or is it just in general?

R1: In general, we come across it all the time.

Int: Do they ever threaten to call the police?

All: Yeah.

R2: And then you just stand there and call their bluff. This old woman in my street, she was moaning at the kids playing football, and she made the Council - I mean, it's a *public* street, and she made the council put up signs saying 'no ball games' and all the little kids play there, and a ball hit her wall and she comes out saying she's going to call the police.

R1: Yeah, there's nowhere else for them to play though is there, they've got to play somewhere.

Int: Do you feel you've got the right to be on the street?

R1: We've got just as much right as they have.

Given the negativity of adults' attitudes towards young people's use of the street, it is hardly strange that conflict escalates. These young people were not unaware of adults' perceptions of 'kids hanging around', and the way in which adults equate that with crime. When they were told a little about adults' perceptions of young people from the interviews, and asked what they thought, they replied:

R1: All grown ups say that.

Int: But why do you think they think that?

R2: I think round our way adults are insulted because they blame us kids for nicking cars but most of the burglars are adults.

R1: It's people our age that get the blame for TWOC'ing and shoplifting and we

get the blame for burglary, when people our age just don't do that. It's actually grown people who do that, people who are in their early 20s, 18, 19 who do that, but it always seems to be us that gets the blame anyway.

Int: Why do they blame you, people your age?

R1: Because that's the way they are supposed to think, that's the way, that like, things like papers and telly and stuff, they say that all kids are the same and all kids do this and that. You read in the paper all the things that kids our age are supposed to do and you just laugh.

R2; And like there are no half measures, like to say that some kids are good and some kids are bad.

R1: No, you can't have some kids that are good and some kids that are bad, it's always that kids are bad..

R2: They're saying like there's no middle, I think that there's kids that do good and bad, it just wouldn't be the same if all kids were good, it just wouldn't be right. (14 year old boys)

Young people do not only resent adults' appropriation of public space; they see adults' perceptions of their age group as over-generalised and unfair, something which adults 'have to think' because they are adults, or because of the media. Young people are not simply 'disrespectful' and 'badly behaved' towards adults: they feel victimised and unjustly treated by them.

R1: I've got a friend that lives over Grove Hill, I've slept at her house, and we went over these flats, to see this little boy called Shane, and we were talking to them, and this woman called Rose lives next door...and so we were talking to Shane, and he said, 'come downstairs' 'cos we were talking on her front ...and we got in, like we were in at 9 o clock, cos we were only out the front, and Rose was on the phone, saying all the people were complaining about us going round there, saying 'kids aren't allowed to play round there' and round there, like, there's houses there and then there's a bit of grass, and Rose comes out saying, 'get off my grass', and it's not even her grass.

Int: How do you feel about that, when people behave like that towards you?

R1: I hate it.

R3: I don't think it's fair, because they are accusing us children of things we haven't even done, and we don't like it, and we just say we didn't even do it.

(13 year old girls)

The persistence with which young people gave accounts of adult unfairness to them over the use of space and its equation with crime (in adult eyes) was equal to adults' complaints about children. It is this perpetual, never ending conflict over space which characterises much of the relationship between the generations in public:

Int: Why do you think then, that adults have a problem with young people?

R2: Because they think you're going to do something don't they.

R3: yeah, they're probably right though aren't they, I mean, of course you're going to do something, if they're going to come out and complain, then you're going to stir them up more and more aren't you, until it does get out of hand, but people around our end, if you're just sat around the front, 'get away from our front' or if you're just sat in the fields, 'get away from the fields'.

(13/14 year old girls)

It is hardly surprising that young people do not 'tell adults' or that they feel they 'will get into trouble' or 'not be believed' : the conflict which exists between adults and young people impedes communication between them. This adds an extra dimension to the common ideology surrounding adolescence: that teenagers 'don't tell us anything', that they share a deliberately exclusive world in which they reject adult values and adult intervention. In fact, adults make it unlikely that young people will perceive them as liable to either listen or take seriously attempts at communication. Whilst the young people we interviewed were often very warm and affectionate in talking of their parents, for example, they rarely neglected to make the point that they felt they were not taken seriously by adults in general:

Int: Do you think young people have enough say in what goes on in their lives?

R2: No.

Int: Do you think anybody listens to you?

All: No.

R2: They just think we're kids and we don't know what we're going on about.

Int: Do you think that's a fair opinion?

All: No.

R1: They just look at you like, as if, they don't treat you as mature or owt like that.

Int: So do you have any adults that you can talk to ?

All: No.

(15 year old boys)

Int: If something happened, would you tell an adult?

R1: It depends..on what it was.

Int: Why might you not tell?

R1: It would just get you more hassle, like they'd make a big fuss and that.

Int: How do you mean?

R1: Like you'd probably just get into more bother.

R2: I'd tell our mam.

R1: I wouldn't.

(12 year old girls)

It is tempting to assume that there is a very simple explanation for the uneasy relationships between age groups: the nuisance value of young people, noisy and visible, on

the streets in an area where the quality of life is already difficult, makes them almost obvious scapegoats. Yet I feel that there are many other dimensions suggested by the material presented above, of which I can attempt here to introduce only a few.

Denial and Blame: The Social Context of Adult Insecurity

Firstly and most obviously, one must return to Pearson's scenario of 'respectable fears'. His mapping of the fluctuation of discourses of anxiety leads him to conclude that:

> *Although the fixed vocabulary of complaint rumbles on through British history almost without interruption, it comes into a sharp, crystallising focus at moments of general anxiety.*
>
> *(Pearson, op.cit. p230)*

For Pearson, it is the ideological function of fears of lawlessness which is of primary interest. Crime is used as a metaphorical appliance for the disintegration of social order. The 'golden age' falls apart under historical scrutiny, as era by era Pearson works his way from the 1950s back to the 'Merrie England' of the Seventeenth Century and shows them all to have their full complement of disorder, unruliness, and plain evil. The power of the metaphorical device - flying as it does in the face of (so far as Pearson or anyone else can ascertain them) the facts - is that it avoids confrontation with the discomfort and difficulty of historical realism. Certainly there can be little doubt that political interests cynically manipulate and profile 'respectable fears' as a diversion from the general decline in material standards of living and the general worsening of social inequalities. Our own research has shown the force with which the popular discourses of moral panic knit with fear and insecurity amongst the populace. It is here that I wish to return to the 'everyday': for 'respectable fears' could not be successfully peddled at the level of public discourse without having some resonance in phenomenological reality. Both Pearson's public discourse and our respondents' situated discourse may mediate experience in particular ways, but both clearly have a reference to very real problems which cannot be waved away. Indeed, the essence of myth is that it has a special relationship to 'fact'. The important point is to attempt an analysis of the kinds of 'realities' to which myth refers, of why experiences are mediated in particular ways under particular conditions.

This is a difficult task, straddling as it does the 'taking crime seriously' agenda of the Left Realists (Lea, 1992 op.cit.) and the more constructionist approach of Pearson. Nevertheless, Pearson himself acknowledges the myth/reality relationship (a point unfairly ignored by some critics). He states quite clearly,

> *To recognise the persistent nature of these respectable discontents...is neither to deny the reality of the anxieties themselves, nor the material foundations of the problems which have disfigured our history. It is certainly not my intention to suggest that criminal violence is a figment of the imagination...We must admit, however, that our understandings and our actions are constrained in a large measure within the blinding certainties of myth.*
>
> *(Pearson, op.cit.:pp237)*

And whilst his formulation that the 'real' problem is a material one, that,

> *the inescapable reality of a social underclass of the most poor and dispossessed is the material foundation to these hooligan continuities (ibid.:pp236)*

is more rhetorical than useful, it nevertheless indicates an important line of empirical enquiry. The 'reality' to which the situated discourses - indeed, the 'myths' - of the present research refers is one of increasingly felt social disadvantage and division. It is the social biographies of adults which need to be understood, as much as the actual behaviour of young people, if we are to explain at all the phenomena discussed in this paper.

Adults in Middlesbrough have experienced social changes and traumas over recent decades which have been largely outside of their control. The feeling of powerlessness which they express is real; not in relation to young people, but in relation to much of their own histories. We cannot understand feelings of powerlessness solely with reference to their object - 'youth' - for in many senses, the power of young people inheres only in the symbolic threat which they present to the old. In the material relationships between generations, as we have seen, it is young people who usually come off worst. Adult fears, therefore, need to be placed within a wider framework. Teesside as a region has experienced a scale and rapidity of economic expansion and subsequent decline almost unprecedented in the United Kingdom. Within a period of ten years, between the early 1970s and the 1980s, almost half the manufacturing jobs in Cleveland disappeared. Between 1978 and 1984 employment in the construction industry declined by two-thirds; and even the service sector, elsewhere expanding, diminished. For almost a quarter of a Century, a region which until the 1960s was a boom economy, has seen devastating levels of poverty and social difficulty. Over 40% of unemployed adults in East Middlesbrough are classified as 'long term'; and even using official statistics, the area in which our study took place has a level of unemployment almost three times the national average (Middlesbrough City Challenge, 1993). In terms of the survey sample, which was selected randomly from the electoral registers for East Middlesbrough, *71%* of those interviewed were *not* in paid employment. The impact of this situation on levels of anxiety is clear: asked about their worries, 74% of adults worried 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' about not having enough money.

Insecurity and change, of course, do not only relate to employment and economic deprivation. Over the same decades, a physical dislocation has been experienced by middle aged and older adults originating in the pressure on housing consequent upon Middlesbrough's original rapid expansion. Much of the study area consists of out of town estates to which people were moved in the 1950s when town centre residential areas were 'cleared' to allow for projected business and commercial growth, and to alleviate overcrowding as the population expanded either through birth or regional influx. The most recent of these housing developments was completed in 1970 - just as economic collapse began to transform the lives of the newly 'resettled'. Thus a sixty year old East Middlesbrough resident is likely to have known an early adult life of relative economic and spatial stability, followed by a move to out of town estates and the accompanying disruption of social networks, followed immediately by the disappearance of job and income. The heritage has been one of declining material fabric (housing stock, uncut grass verges, litter, boarded up shops) on estates suffering from savage cuts in public spending, of heightening tensions and conflicts amongst people who, in Middlesbrough, are experiencing the third generation of unemployment, and who have what is known locally as a 'health legacy' from the petrochemical and heavy industries of a standardised mortality rate around one hundred and fifty percent of the national average (Middlesborough City Challenge, op.cit.). 41% of those interviewed worried 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' about pollution.

People in mid and later life have to live with this inheritance, and to see it passed on to future generations. They have little ability to change any of this, and given the scale of the problem, it is not surprising that they are less likely to offer a political critique of their problems rather than a condemnation of other people. Thus whilst Lefebvre's more structuralist arguments about the 'quotidienne' (Lefebvre, 1971) may be rightly regarded as both elitist and somewhat crude, his general point that the everyday is both the site where power relationships are most crucially analysed and at the same time the most difficult to achieve critical distance from, is an important one. The 'quotidienne' is perhaps untranslatable, for it implies more than simply the everyday. It has connotations of mundanity, regularity, routinisation and taken-for-grantedness. The everyday seems inevitably both natural and ordinary, precisely because we live so closely to it. For Lefebvre, the most obvious categories and minutiae of everyday life must be unpeeled to reveal the power relationships which they obfuscate. Yet because we cannot separate ourselves from our everyday, it is difficult to see the fantastic, to distinguish what we 'know', from what 'is' or 'may be'. The essential point is that the everyday is both real and mystifying, both natural and surreal, both mundane and 'fantastique'. Whilst Lefebvre in his later work (op.cit.) refers principally to the 'robotization' of life under capitalism, his arguments are useful in an understanding of all the power relationships concealed by the everyday. We may explore Lefebvre's point, then, not just in regard to the class relations within the late modern world, but with regard for the sense in which biography, the experience of personal or collective histories within such a society, implies age itself as a source of conflict and division. The question is why generation becomes a stage on which an entire script of dissatisfaction, disenchantment and a sense of fragmentation, is rehearsed.

Young people seem, as I have commented elsewhere (Brown, 1991), to represent the 'witches, beetles, and spiders' of social life: they,

> Attract the fears and dislikes which other ambiguities and contradictions attract in other thought structures, and the kind of powers attributed to them symbolise their ambiguous, inarticulate status
>
> (Douglas, 1966 p. 106).

Youth may have no particular reason to 'conform' to an adult vision of social order; or at least adults feel this and are fearful of it; and yet, as with the research of Kinsey (Anderson et al, op. cit.), we found that youthful adherence to conventional adult values of social order and stability is remarkably strong (Brown, op cit, 1994a). However, adults neither know nor really believe this. Many older adults live in a world to some extent disconnected from the everyday life of other generations. In terms of the particular social composition of the estates in the study area, the majority of our adult respondents (67%) had no household members aged under 18. Often they are on the inside looking out: they experience a decline in the quality of life, they experience vandalism, burglary, noise, and litter; and they see young people on the streets. Undoubtedly things have changed in the life of the young, but many adults are in a poor position to know how. They want their (adult) world made to feel safe, and the 'tidying away' of young people off the streets appears to them one of the solutions. Thus fear and exclusion, played out so often in generational conflicts over public space, inhere in complex relationships between adult feelings of powerlessness

stemming from many facets of their lives, and adult attempts to maintain feelings of power and control over youth. The social relations of social inequality and material disadvantage are refracted through the life course, and recent research suggests that chronological age is tracked by a whole history of continual negotiations over power and powerlessness. As Hockey and James argue, the passage through life:

..allows us to explore how power is continually negotiated in the processes of domination and submission, as people assert different identities during their lives through the attribution of personhood.

(Hockey and James, op. cit. p50-51)

Conflicts over space and crime are at the same time power struggles over 'personhood', the assertion and denial of full human status, which adults both experience as being eroded for them, and wish to deny for youth. Hence whereas young people see themselves as worthy of, and deserving, consultation and consideration, adult conceptions assume that 'youth', in its proper form, entails obedience, respect and a central concern with the comfort and wishes of adults. Adults place 'adulthood' at the centre of life, a condition which youth, if properly behaved and properly disciplined, will attain successfully. This relates partly of course, to the fact that adults have a much longer past than young people: a past which must constantly be justified, since to accept the rights and voices of young people would be to challenge the importance of their own social identities in which they have invested so much. In the relationships between adults and young people, the very 'naturalness' of age, the most everyday of everyday categories, may be unpeeled to reveal power claimed as a right by adults (however much clothed in a genuinely felt layer of protectiveness), defended by adults against the perceived erosion of it by young people, and continually challenged by young people themselves in the conflict over crime and space. The adult perception of young people as a 'threat', the denial of young people's voices, and their exclusion from personhood (they are like 'stray dogs') has to be connected with an analysis of age and power.

The lack of recognition by adults of youthful victimisation is just one example of the sleight of hand on the issue of power which is enacted between adults and young people. Young people are accorded an imaginary power which in practice they tend to hold only symbolically; which further acts to disguise their powerlessness. Thus there is a lack of legitimacy accorded to young people's experiences of victimisation in the public sphere. Children should be 'seen and not heard'; young people should not be in public space as citizens with voices and demands; and the adult attitude towards the youthful use of public space enables adults to imply that when young people are victimised there, then they are probably 'up to no good'. Moreover, this reinforces a language of victimisation which has become familiar in the debates over women's safety. Those, whether women or young people, who wander out of place, into areas where only the disreputable rather than the innocent would venture, are 'inviting trouble'. Only recently has this vocabulary of victim blame been challenged in relation to women. The question has barely been raised in regard to young people.

Children can legitimately be 'victims' of sudden and random violence from adult strangers, as with the case of Hall Garth School in Middlesbrough when the region

was rocked as an adult man walked into the classroom off the street and began shooting the pupils. Such events have the appearance of random and senseless attacks upon the passive and the ultimately innocent. Children can also be 'victims' of child abusers in the home. But because the idea of the 'victim' itself carries connotations of innocence and vulnerability, and lack of blame, it becomes very difficult for adults to accept that the victimisation of young people in public space is 'genuine' victimisation. For after all, child sexual abuse is a crime against childhood (Kitzinger, 1990) whereas young people on the street are by definition, perhaps, not innocent, and not children, but 'youths' - and therefore, threatening.

Recall that it was the 11-16 year olds whom adults found most threatening and held responsible for most of the neighbourhood problems (along with dogs). Those 'children' who were seen to contravene the rules of childhood (claims that local children 'as young as eight are burgling houses' for example) were 'moved' by adults away from childhood ('they're growing up faster these days', or 'they're not children at eight any more' being typical comments).

The sleight of hand is that young people are *not,* by and large, powerful. They are the victims of crime, of material deprivation, of political disenfranchisement. Their futures will be affected just as much as present adults' pasts have been by the conditions of life in late modernism. Yet adults, locked in the mystification of everyday life, and having a vested interest in excluding the young from personhood in order to maintain their own fragile authority, cannot see this. They cannot speak of the exclusion of the young from personhood in terms otherwise than its naturalness or necessity. Stray youth, and stray dogs:the symbolic threat of youth to the social fabric which is embedded in the 'respectable fear' provides a convenient cloak for much more complex and irresolvable adult insecurities.

Conclusion
All of this renders the relationships between research and policy frighteningly complex. One of the main tasks facing the research is to inform the development of 'Community Safety' policies and strategies. The beauty of the notion of community is that it is notoriously difficult to define; in its plasticity and its warm assumption of consensus it does, like crime, 'bring together upright consciences and concentrate them' (Durkheim, 1964). The commanding height in any moral conflict is to represent 'the community', and it is a definitional battle ground with real political and practical consequences, as Bankowski and Mungham noted:

> ...Standing for different ways of organising social life...its connotations of oneness and togetherness are often used to obfuscate the real divisions in society.
>
> (Bankowski and Mungham, 1981:86)

Community ostensibly implies commonality; a common direction, a common interest, a common space. Yet, the institutions, committees and agencies controlling funding and decisions on youth policy are either responding to, or representing, the discourse of 'respectable fears'; and those with power in 'community' organisations represent adults such as those interviewed in the research. Committees of the Local Authority, Community Liaison Groups, Residents' Associations, and the like, are the political gateways into local policy. But who populates these bodies? In practice they are dom-

inated by residents over forty and more commonly in their 50s and 60s. As we observed at meetings of such groups, it became clear that here were the bastions of the 'respectable fear'. So much for partnership with 'the community'. Whose is the 'community' which is to be made safe? Clearly where something becomes a definitional battleground, then it is peculiarly open to domination by interest groups who have the power to represent themselves as 'the community' at the same time as defining others as a threat to - and therefore outside - the community. Officers and professionals in Local Authority Departments and statutory agencies are reacting to problems defined by constituencies of adults. The ideological functions of youth policy in terms of class interests is well recognised within existing research (Griffin, 1993). Here, I am further suggesting that Community Safety, as with most policy, is potentially yet another site for the oppression of youth per se, albeit shaped by a complex series of ideological responses to the deepening economic crisis . Young people in local - communities? - become successively defined as the 'criminal other', and these definitions find their way into policies and practices to the point where many such policies bear little or no relationship to the everyday lives of young people or to crime. The definitions of 'community safety' and 'crime prevention' which are implicit in many of the new programmes and projects in fact ignore crucial problems surrounding crime and young people. 'Community' becomes defined as middle aged and elderly residents of a locality. 'Safety' becomes defined as the protection of the interests of these groups against threatening youth. Where are the policies which take the victimisation of youth in public space seriously, or which recognise the right of young people to be in public space and to have a voice about the design and use of public space? It seems almost inconceivable, in fact, that these will emerge until youth enfranchisement is recognised as a priority: not just the 'consultation' of young people through surveys and consultation exercises, but vigorous attempts to involve young people at all levels of decision making. We live in a culture where the political participation at any level of social life of young people is minimal (Hollands, 1990), and the avenues open to them and arrangements made for them to participate, let alone the incentives to encourage them to participate, are virtually absent. For young people in areas of general economic disadvantage this situation is compounded. They, like adults, experience all the anxieties induced by deepening inequalities, but have no-one to exclude, since they are the excluded.

Policy continues to be about resolving the problems young people pose for adults, 'about' youth, rather than 'with', or 'for', youth. Funding continues to support short term adult led palliatives to the 'respectable fear' - wheels projects, outward bound programmes, detached youth workers and anti-crime projects (over 20 such schemes are currently being evaluated by the present research within Middlesbrough alone). Projects directed at encouraging and training young people to take control of, and articulate, their own demands, are relatively rare. The common response to proposals for youth participation projects is that young people 'would not be interested', or would abuse any power vested in them, or would not have the skills and articulacy to make them work. In fact it is often adult opposition which is the problem. Where small beginnings have been made (Brown, 1994b), the signs are encouraging. Given direct access to power and resources (buildings, funds, local political structures, know-how - or more academically, cultural capital) young people show willingness and vigour. Young people in East Middlesbrough have a clear conviction that they

should be listened to and noticed, but no concept of how to effect this. It is to adults that this responsibility falls; otherwise, as adults, we continue to shadow-box with our own fears and insecurities recast in the image of 'threatening youth'. The only outcome of such futile exercising can be the escalation of fear and punitiveness.

Acknowledgements

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GRASPING AT STRAWS:

the Idealisation of the Material in Liberal Conceptions of Youth Crime.

STEVE HALL

Introduction

There is much talk about the causes of youth crime and the ineffectiveness of conservative and left/liberal control strategies. I don't want to get involved here in those interminable pedantic arguments about the problems of youth crime statistics which produce meaningless averages that suggest the 'overall level' may or may not be going up or down or whatever (see Lea & Young, 1993). This is the material from which crude political footballs are manufactured. Let us instead embrace the findings of recent victim surveys, self-report studies and ethnographies (Walklate, 1989) that seem to suggest that, particularly in run-down former industrial areas and inner-cities, there is enough violence, serious crime, petty crime and marginally sub-legal anti-social activity to further erode a quality of life that for many people is already substantially eroded by a configuration of factors ranging from unemployment to the malaise of post-modern cultural uncertainty (Harvey, 1989).

Over the last 150 years, the constant see-sawing of reform and regression in the criminal justice system has left the public confused and disillusioned and directly threatens the credibility of mainstream political discourses. In crude terms, practically inclined people doubt whether any of these discourses know what they are talking about or what they are doing when it comes to youth crime. General credibility is threatened if too many people, already disposed to doubting the social managerial claims of mainstream politics because of the visible practical failure of postwar socio-economic engineering, begin to regard this failure as a possible indication that none of the political discourses operating in the west - conservative, liberal or social democratic - understand anything about the post-production capitalist world at all. The once proud conservative /liberal /social democratic nexus which defined the axes of 20th century political argument and convinced a large enough proportion of the public that it holds hope has seen its dialectic grind to a halt, nowhere more manifestly than in the current struggle over the theory and practice of youth crime administration. Ever since the attention of the State and the emerging social scientific establishment became focused upon youth crime in the mid 19th century, the constant oscillation between the justice/punishment/discipline perspective and the alternative perspective espousing welfare/treatment/rights began to give the impression, as the 20th century wore on, of a drunk walking up and down a dark narrow alley, bouncing uncontrollably from one wall to another. Recent developments in the form and intensity of youth crime and the persistent failure of policy and practice have occasioned the action of our sluggishly oscillating drunk to accelerate rapidly, moving through a Chaplinesque stage in the eighties justice/welfare juggling to the current imperceptible blur which uses as its alibi the vague notion of interactive eclecticism.

The possibility of growing bodies of nihilistic, uncontrollable and potentially violent young people strongly committed to unsociable practice is the shadowy figure

that appears on the horizon of the liberal landscape; a figure that must, at all costs, be explained, excused, dealt with or denied. The most disturbing possibility for both right and left variants of Western liberalism is a consistent failure to allay the fears of the practically incorporated majority. If more traditional attempts to explain and treat this high-profile phenomenon (incarceration, discipline, treatment, policing, justice and punishment) continue to produce high failure rates (Currie, 1985) and, worse still, if progressive alternatives (education, training, care, community development) continue to prove far less effective than envisaged (Martinson, 1974; Scull, 1977), then the cracks in the overall liberal project may become too wide to paper over.

What, I suspect, may be behind these fears and denials is the decline in power of the Nation-State and a systematic attempt to disguise the inability of current politics and social management to manage a disorganised global Capitalism. There is a growing feeling that, in some specific areas of the Western world, there is a perceptible growth of persistent, serious criminal and anti-social practice, whose pockets of incorrigibility are indicated by their unresponsiveness to either authoritarian or humanitarian measures. There is a great deal of truth behind the left/liberal battle-cry that most youth crime is petty (Morris & Giller, 1987), that most kids eventually grow out of it, (Rutherford, 1992) and that some professional or community forms of low-key intervention can help persuade some of them to grow out of it a little sooner by preventing unnecessary engagement with the criminal justice and care systems (Morris & Giller, 1987; Pitts, 1991a; Rutherford, 1992). I don't deny this and it would be foolish to do so. However, shadowing this orthodoxy is a growing awareness of the increasing involvement of a specific minority of young people in a developing global criminal economy and changes in the form and intensity of that involvement. This involvement is combining with, or in some instances replacing, traditional petty criminal activity. The implication of youth in the more violent aspects of drug distribution and car crime are probably the most high-profile examples, and in some areas of the old industrial world this 'career' form of involvement is becoming increasingly apparent (Taylor, 1990; Wilson, 1987). One suspects that the exasperating tendency of the 'authoritarian' liberal right to play up the level of involvement and the 'humanitarian' liberal left to play it down in support of their respective socio-political explanations and social management strategies has less to do with the reflection of reality and more to do with the maintenance of public credibility and the avoidance of private intellectual despair. The wraith that haunts any political grouping who bid for the helm of Leviathan and the governance of Capital is the possibility of unmanageability.

We begin with the assumption, then, that youth involvement in crime and violence is a genuine, substantive and disturbing problem and that strategies designed to engage with it have experienced much failure and frustration. What I want to explore is something which, it could be argued, has contributed strongly towards this failure and frustration, that is the Idealist philosophical underpinning of those prevailing radical theories and practices which deal with the concept of 'youth', its involvement in crime and its role as social agent. Conservatism's fundamental philosophical tenet of an evil or 'fallen' human nature in need of constant disciplinary attention has aroused suspicions of untenability simply because of the amount of evidence and analysis indicating the failure of practices and policies predicated upon it. A cursory glance at the consistent historical failure of the use of brutality and overt authoritarianism to

enforce civility needs no further exposition here (see Cohen, 1985; Rusche & Kirchheimer, 1939; Ignatieff, 1978). More disturbing and more interesting, however, is the constant failure of its putative opposition to theorise the problematic and the dawning realisation that a major player in the radical left/liberal emancipatory project - the independent and creatively rebellious human spirit extant in youth and intersubjectively manifest in sub-culture under the weakening grasp of a fast eroding traditional authority - has not quite lived up to expectations. This ailing belief, although not entirely reducible to it, is strongly rooted in the symbiotic relationship between left/liberal sociology and Idealist philosophy.

Youth, Crime and Idealism

The Idealist belief system, although rooted in Platonism and present in the development of Medieval Christian philosophy, emerged in a form more accessible to contemporary understanding in the tracks of the Cartesian revolution. Descartes' seminal contribution to the question of ontology was his emphasis on mind/object dualism, positing the body as a mere repository for the mind and matter as the object of the mind's experience, and this sort of thinking heavily influenced the development of a tradition of Western belief in the subject/mind as prior, autonomous, rational and self regulating. Although, as we shall see, much Western radical thought acknowledges the role of the 'social', the innate 'rational ego' pervades as the basic building-block of human action. The English traditions of socialism and liberal democracy retain deep faith in the singularity and autonomous existence of the rational ego as the source-point of meaning and action, and it is these traditions which have most strongly influenced the social movements concentrating on 'problem youth'.

Idealism, as a philosophy, is quite distinct from the everyday meaning of the word which denotes the 'holding of lofty ideals'. It's basic precept - that nothing exists in the universe apart from a spirit or 'mind' which possesses some internal, independent means of being conscious of its own mental creations - has not survived in its pure form, but its genealogical development has had a pervasive influence on Western thought and social practice. Locke's dictum that we 'can have knowledge no farther than we have ideas' was a reflectionist extension of Descartes' principles, and Rousseau's romanticism imputed a 'natural tendency' in each young individual towards the development of benign, revelatory ideas and feelings if reflective experience could circumnavigate the corruption and repression of civilised (particularly urban) life. The Kantian subject is one who possesses the innate ability to mentally impose form and structure on the world, and all human knowledge is grounded in the 'appearances' of an impenetrable reality which consists of unknowable 'things-in-themselves'. Although the later philosophical doctrines of phenomenology were less purely Idealist in that they did not deny the existence of objects, these objects remained the property of the 'inner experience' of the prior subject. The forms and meanings of the social world later became, in the social constructionist formulation of culture, 'intersubjective', a sort of negotiated sharing of subjective mental constructs based on diverse personal experiences. Twentieth century radical liberalism, in the tracks of Max Weber, the phenomenologists and the symbolic interactionists, holds as its most sacred belief the same ineradicable creative power of the independent rational subject and its ability to freely negotiate meaning in intersubjective groups.

In the Idealist intellectual myth, the simple denotative term 'criminality' triggers off a host of inter-related connotative meanings and attendant causal explanations based upon the independent subject. It has been passed off as either an idea temporarily lodged in the heads of prior rational beings who slip below the threshold of rationality under conditions of stress or abuse, or the perhaps more durable product of the corrosive experiences of individual lives in a disempowered and poverty-ridden structural location forced upon them through the injustices of present social arrangements. Although the role of the social and the material is acknowledged here, criminality is usually considered a 'behavioural' condition forced upon a pre-existing, autonomous and benign subject; inherently good people temporarily behaving badly. The social - with its history, its structure, its economic imperative, its cultural meaning-systems - does not really produce anything human but merely interacts with a subject that pre-exists it. Thus the individual can be 'saved' from a state of irrationality by releasing repressive external pressure, allowing recovery of the natural rational ego. Wherever lip-service is paid to sub-cultural variations in form and meaning the sub-cultural space has, with the exception of structuralist accounts, usually been posited as 'intersubjective', the negotiated product of the 'shared experience' of groups of independent rational egos occupying similar structural locations.

To Idealism, the subject is always prior, independent and, unless 'damaged' or 'repressed', inherently rational. Those individuals who fail to make their way in the social world or fail to acknowledge its basic contractual rules are assumed to be oppressed, impaired or lacking in individual skills, education or opportunity. The left/liberal humanist orthodoxy pervading those sectors of public administration which target the individual-in-need are based inalienably upon innate potential expressed in terms of an individual orientation towards some sort of benign way of life. The task social administration invented for itself, particularly those sectors concerned with youth, was to get those who erred from destiny 'back on the track' by tinkering with those social factors which somehow diverted them from a natural state of committed participation - abusive families, criminal peer groups, poor quality care systems, a loaded education system, poor quality training, a shrinking job market, disappearing transitional rites, an unfair system of rights and justice etc. Too much exposure to these distressing forms would, according to Matza (1964, 1969), force young people into intersubjective groups which rely increasingly for their meaning upon a set of universal 'subterranean values', common to all but held in check by most. Removal of young people from the situation of abuse, inequality, injustice or criminalising reaction (or at least the development of awareness of it) would allow the naturally rational subject to reject these ideas and embrace sociability.

According to labourite or social democratic variants of left/liberalism these negative social factors are the direct product of an iniquitous system of social arrangements that continually fail the rational individual, and all this is exacerbated by the oppressive social policing of a vindictive middle class who mercilessly pick on anyone who heroically 'resists' the demands of the dominant culture. They not only pick on them but also call them names; Idealism's nominalist, symbolic ontology is invoked to construct new iniquities as, for instance, the interactionists utilise the Meadian notion of the 'dualistic subject' which, in conversation with itself, is forced to define itself

with the intrusive negative labels of the establishment. This oppressive displacement of the autonomous defining power of the 'I' produces powerless wretches who don't like themselves very much and act to their own type by doing things that not very nice people like them would tend to do. Thus sociological attention is drawn to the criminalisation process as an essentially symbolic activity carried out by the agencies of a repressive State in reaction to any activity that it construes as subversive (Pearson, 1983, 1985). In these formulations the causes of youth crime lie in the intrusion of the dominant group's idea of criminality into the subordinate group's conversation with itself, and the subsequent adoption of an imposed identity - the much-vaunted 'label'. Thus the young criminal was the product of someone else's idea, a temporary symbolic entity that could be allowed to define itself as something else if only the tap of negative symbols could be turned off.

The inclusion of the concepts of intersubjectivity and social inequality into the leftist equation precipitated the social constructionist school, whose formulations, less individualistic and more conscious of the social, posit the power of interest groups or classes within the social hierarchy to define others in their own symbolic terms. Thus the duly labelled exist in the less tractable form of the intersubjective group rather than the putatively more accessible individual consciousness, and social engineering, in this formulation, needs to be politicised and focused upon unequal representation in the essentially political processes of symbolic interchange.

The further importation, largely through the work of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, of the 'superstructural' Marxist notions of ideology, hegemony and resistance operating in civil society produced more sophisticated theory and informed practice. Put crudely, the central formulation here is one of a systematically produced ideological mystification and hegemonic control of cultural form and institution that seeks to divide and therefore suppress a potentially unitary working class consciousness. Here is a group of subjects, the left hopes, that are not only inherently rational but capable of generating a unified conscious appraisal of their own condition of oppression and rising up against it. To support this desire, the Idealist notion of the 'relative autonomy of culture' (Hall & Jefferson, 1976) was invented. This conception permeated the more radical elements of the Western post-war labour and feminist movements, who subsequently traversed the fragmenting terrain of Late Capitalism with their sociological divining rods searching for signs of developing working-class consciousness and resistance in cultural form. Thus the criminal activities of the young are still posited as confused, imaginary cultural solutions to real problems (Hall & Jefferson, 1976), produced by an ideologically and hegemonically induced distortion of youth's emergent consciousness of its own situation and interests. Youth crime is not only the product of poverty and marginalisation but also at the same time a repressed, distorted form of proto-revolutionary political resistance to class oppression which is passed off as criminality by the Capitalist media.

In all these formulations, despite the inclusion of social class as the connection to political economy and the material world, it is still mainly in the rationalist interchange of symbols and ideas that social reality is constructed. Claims to materiality and unconscious symbolic structure in culture, language and discourse were invoked to address this problem, but eventually floundered in a pool of post-structuralist excess which ascribed all sorts of symbolic and political significance (see

Willis, 1990) to the everyday activities of young people, who, according to Allison James (1979), subvert the metaphors of Capital every time they go to the sweet shop and buy sweets shaped like traffic lights or submarines or whatever. The political significance of youth crime as a similar sub-cultural 'inversion-as-subversion' of the principal form of Capitalist exchange was the inevitable logical extension of this sort of discourse.

Despite valiant and sophisticated attempts by the New Criminologists (Taylor, Walton and Young, 1971, 1975), the Birmingham School (Hall et al, 1978), the Post-Structuralists (Worral, 1990; Stenson, 1991), and the Left Realists (Lea and Young, 1984; Young and Matthews, 1992) to introduce material and structural elements into the discourse, the common notion which remains ascendant in the left/liberal theoretical conception and practical administration of youth crime is that both categories are essentially symbolic constructions, the product of discursive interaction which somehow floats in a realm of autonomy, or at least relative autonomy, above the material world. 'Youth' and 'crime' as categories are in fact chiefly representations or 'mediated abstractions' (Bessant, 1994), and their immaterial ontology can be altered by corresponding alterations in the symbolic world. Thus racism, and racist criminal attacks, can be addressed by manipulating representations of black people through education and media. This assumes that the cultural logics which underpin racism have a base in a historical and cultural tradition which itself was primarily the product of symbolic activity. For instance, in historical criminology much is made of the symbolic aspect of the conflict in the 19th century between young urban migrants and the emergent police forces who represented the 'respectable fears' of a middle-class obsessed with law and order (Pearson, 1983; Humphries, 1987). In those formulations, heavily influenced by Idealism, the persistent criminality of some young people is the product of representational activities - labelling, criminalisation etc. - and only indirectly connected to the material world. The brutality of enforced competition between groups in Capital's historical process is relegated to a secondary role; social dissonance and violent action become primarily *effects* of symbolic ordering. Thus, youth activity in the Elswick 'disturbances' in Newcastle in 1991 becomes for Jeffs and Smith (1992) yet another product of a bourgeois symbolic device, in this case a convenient metaphorical scapegoat for deeper structural problems. The possibility that this very real violent eruption of emotions indicates a durable, ontological form directly predicated upon those 'deeper structural problems' and *pre-existing bourgeois symbolic construction* is disallowed in the Pearsonite orthodoxy which Jeffs and Smith (and too many others) habitually follow. To the social constructionist, Capital's historical process has not produced it's own uniquely structured ontological forms, only the representations of the oppressors constructed specifically to serve their own political interests. Youth merely occupy a place in the material order which reflects the place they have been allocated in the symbolic order.

Towards a Materialist Conception of Youth Crime

For there has been a movement ever since the beginning of the 19th century to eliminate substance from the view of the world.

George Lukacs. (1978,p.71)

If the Western establishment is ever to abandon its fundamental Idealist precepts and reflexively reconstruct its own intellectual foundations in order to engage with the

material forces, mutating structures and objective logic of Late capitalism, then it must start by at least acknowledging the materialist dimension of human life. Of course those more inclined towards materialist philosophy have been forced to acknowledge the abject failure of revolutionary movements concerned with rapid, swingeing socio-economic change and their degeneration into oppressive, corrupt totalitarian regimes. But, on the other hand, if problems like youth crime reach levels in democratic liberal States which provoke retributionist calls for similarly oppressive practices in the welfare and criminal justice systems (Wilson, 1991; Morrison, 1994), then liberal triumphalism would seem to lack real foundation. In America, the democratic 'left' now acknowledges the fact that crime levels are 'staggering' and violent crime is rising (Hagan, 1994) and that the level of youth involvement in serious violent crime is also high (Wilson, 1987; Shannon, 1991). If public tolerance dips below an as yet unknown threshold, authoritarian reactions could displace the fragile forms constructed by the liberalisation of criminal justice; two hundred years of reform is in danger of erosion or even effacement.

If we were to embark upon a rejection of Idealist conceptions of mind, attention would need to be focused upon the relationship between the material structure of Capitalist society and the ontological formation of social being through the adaptation or generation of those primarily unconscious and amoral cultural habits, practices and dispositions appropriate to the imperative of engagement with the social organisation of material life. Individual consciousness, cultural meaning and human action are dialectical products of evolutionary interaction with this imperative and do not in any way pre-exist it. The world of symbolic mediation so beloved of bourgeois emancipatory philosophers (understandably, for it is their own traditional skill and passion) must be relegated to the role of ministering for what is essentially a *material incorporation* into the social order driven by economic compulsion and material insecurity.

There is a distinct marginalisation in left/liberal debate of the processes, by which those acts 'correct' and appropriate to immediate survival and *pre-existing symbolic mediation*, become established as both emotional desires and conscious intentions, constituting a diversity of enclosed practical 'rationalities' which, in turn, define the broader ethico-rational system. And here lies one of the principal failures of Idealist thinking in criminology; apart, perhaps, from a small number of extreme cases, criminal, violent or unsociable dispositions may not be primarily the products of ethico-rational choice, symbolic construction, identity formation or whatever but of a direct and durable emotional attachment to ways of life that, during specific intense phases of the structuring of Capitalist social organisation, were the only available means of immediate survival. The processes of symbolic interchange, in this formulation, play only a lubricating and formalising role in the reproduction of social order, because these ways of life generate power internally and independently of bourgeois symbolic mediation, particularly through the efforts of core activists devoted to what is to them an historical institution established by its proven function as a rewarding articulation with the objective material world.

A materialist criminology needs to focus upon *primary motivations* as they emerge anterior to bourgeois symbolic manipulation in its principal forms of media mystification and State criminalisation. To explain the persistent involvement of young

males in crime and violence as a socio-cultural phenomenon without reverting to subjectivism, psychologism and rationalism, we must further explore the processes which generate these primary motivations. One of the most sophisticated attempts to theorise this aspect of the problematic is the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1984). There is no space here for a synopsis of his work (see Harker et al, 1990; Dimaggio, 1979), but important to this argument is his conception of 'habitus', by which he means the instilling in people of a 'cultural unconscious' in the form of durable dispositions towards particular choices of action which generates habitual practice. For Bourdieu, habitus is produced in various social fields loosely corresponding to the hierarchal social organisation of society. We must remember that social organisation and cultural form must have a *material objective*. In Capitalist society the overarching abstract logic which predetermines all substantial human practice (that which most of are forced to spend a large part of our lives actually doing, not talking or dreaming about) and around which social organisation is centred is the production of surplus value as a combination of use value and exchange value; in other words profit. If this constitutes the fundamental, objective ontological grounding for social being '... for all those social relations that we refer to as values; and thus also for all those modes of behaviour of social relevance that we call value-judgements...' (Lukacs, 1978, p.76), then the hierarchal ordering of field and habitus must be contingent on this value-system. It could be that culture, meaning and action are not free-floating to any substantial extent in that they are not amenable to symbolic manipulation but inextricably tethered to the central objective of the production of material life and the crucial human activity of securing a place within the attendant reticulation of Capitalist cultural forms.

Formation of Social Being in the Modernisation Process.
Materialism does not deny human agency. In the theorisation of structure and agency, not enough attention is paid to the dynamic historical relationship between the two; that is the possibility that one can gain ascendancy over the other during specific historical phases in the social organisation of production. It could be suggested that in modern history there have been 'times of structural domination', (e.g. the rapid urbanisation process in the 19th century and the current restructuring of Capital), and 'times of agentic possibility' (e.g. the relative stasis and opportunity of post-war reconstruction). This is implicit in formulations such as Giddens 'structuration' argument (1994), but in a forthcoming article (Horne and Hall, 1995), Rob Horne and I attempt to make this more explicit and central by demonstrating how dispositions and practices - habitus - which allowed workers to accept and perhaps even glory in the intolerably brutal conditions which characterised semi-mechanised manufacture during Capitalist expansion throughout the 19th century were not 'socially constructed' (and certainly not chosen) but enforced and unconsciously adopted as durable 'ways of life'. This, combined with the complementary habitus emerging from the amoral competitive struggle forced upon them in the casual labour market (Stedman-Jones, 1971; Hobbs, 1994) necessitated the generation and adoption of the sort of brutal, egocentric dispositions which, partly suppressed by a developing economy still offering pockets of status and reward for these 'skills' until very recently, now begin to re-surface as unconscious forms of resistance to the efforts of a re-structuring and re-ordering world to permanently discard them. What also emerges from the

ethnographic work (Horne & Hall, 1995) is the strong link between this ontological form and a tendency toward violent criminality in younger males, the depth of devotion to this durable habitus by more emotionally committed members, and the impenetrable strength of the defence strategies unconsciously invoked to fend off the incorporationist persuasions of youth and criminal justice professionals.

The Capitalisation and commodification of the world (Wallerstein, 1993; Braudel, 1985), manifest in the industrialisation and urbanisation processes, was an uneven and difficult development, spawning diverse ways of life. The production process remained only patchily mechanised throughout the 19th and 20th centuries up to the second world war, and practical adaptive activity was forced to ensue in occupations often characterised by notably harsh and brutal conditions. Predominant among the sort of 'skills' required were those predicated upon traits of fortitude, persistence and endurance collectively known as 'hardness' (Willis, 1977), a rigidity of thought and sedulous restriction of mental activity (Willis, 1977; Marcuse, 1964) which can best be described as 'stupidity', and the sort of unbridled egocentrism necessary to negotiate the intense competition of the casual labour market. The possibility exists that, in response to the immediacy of these conditions, durable cultural forms emerged, developed internally coherent logics founded upon physical 'hardness', mental sclerosis and egocentrism which opposed all political variants of civilised practice and produced fiercely devoted subjects. There is no doubt that it was in the immediate interests of these groups, who were forced to compete at the bottom end of the labour hierarchy, to actively collude in the establishment and maintenance of both the myth and the reality of their `hardness`. A cluster of cultural meanings and practices was unconsciously constructed in order that a claim on this brutal articulation with available sectors of the industrial division of labour was staked. The naturalisation of this form of being and the dispositions necessary to compete in the intense struggle at the lower end of the labour market were to their immediate practical advantage; it was not the product of ideology or labelling but of the emergence of an enforced practical logic which quickly established itself as cultural practice.

The development of technology, bureaucracy and administration along with the growing importance of the 'style-wars' of commodity circulation allowed new possibilities of culturo-economic articulation, and the `culture of hardness` slowly began to lose its utility almost as soon as it became firmly established as a form of life. Some rejected it and moved on, but others maintained or intensified their devotion. In this formulation, brutality in the practices of male child-rearing and peer-group organisation can not be posited as the product of individual or gender trait, 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell, 1987), pathology or anything similar, but simply as part of the logic of practice of a very specific way of life within Capitalist social organisation. For sure, identity formation through symbolic mediation can help maintain the form, but this is not its primary generative source and certainly not the site of political dismantling. Power is generated and reproduced *internally* within the culture itself via the maintenance of the habitus; it was a particularly important element of practice for parents, particularly but not exclusively fathers (Hobbs, 1994), to force young men through those initial fears and doubts about their 'hardness' which could hamper money-earning capacity in the brutal worlds of semi-mechanised primary produc-

tion, casual labour and military expansion. Thus, inter-generational reproduction of the habitus of 'hardness', with its integral violent dispositions, was assured. Even though the expansion of circulation and administration in the twentieth century presented new opportunities, and the more 'respectable' organized working classes accepted them, the durable habitus of the lumpen groups continued to resist the persuasions of the educationalists (see Willis, 1977; Parker, 1974).

Mutation and Excision of Social Being in the Neo-Capitalist Phase.

History is an irreversible process. Recent technological developments based on robotics and the microchip combined with a transnationalisation of commodity production and the emergence of alternative cheap labour markets have caused a decline of traditional industry in the West and an irreversible shift away from primary production to service production and circulation/consumption. These developments, acting as they do in the service of the objective logic of Capital, constitute the major historical material forces of the moment within Western economies. They have generated socio-economic changes so rapid and sweeping as to be considered epochal, and there is a growing recognition amongst more candid social theorists that right now the stirring of these material forces constitutes a rare historical occurrence; one in which a force of such magnitude is generated that it tears away from the subjective/agentic powers of politics and cultural institutions, bursting out of the delicate framework of codes and relationships that have evolved over consecutive decades to harness the developing techno-economic and social forces of their age. Although the symptoms are confusingly familiar (uncertainty, depression, melancholy, unemployment, social disorder, crime), what we face now is much more than simply another cyclical economic slump; it is the beginning of a genuine break with a production-based past. This means the same for the social scientist as it does for the historian or cultural critic; that there is materialising a radically new context for the analysis of all forms of culture and social being in the West, whether emergent or evanescent, and all concomitant phenomena.

Implicated in this reformative process is the excision of habitus based on those forms of 'hardness' and 'sclerosis' no longer essential to capitalist expansion. An irresistible historical force meets a notably tough and durable cultural object and, finding it unusable and unincorporable, cuts off its resources, decapitalises it and leaves it behind. The exasperated head-scratching of peeved Leftists like Bea Campbell at 'marauding men' and the decline in the ability of working class women to carry out their traditional civilising role (Campbell,1993) exemplifies the theoretical paucity of the traditional British left. Current intense and unpredictable forms of male brutality and nihilism well observed and documented by Campbell can perhaps be more adequately explained as an unconscious reaction of the habitus to the pressure of excisionary forces, not the product of gender trait, symbolically constructed masculinity or political marginalisation. It is also possible that many women trapped in this dying way of life unconsciously collude in this reaction, encouraging males to intensify their dispositions towards 'hardness' and mental sclerosis.

What this discourse suggests is the presence of a number of untheorised and unresearched possibilities. Despite the decline (perhaps moving rapidly towards a complete disvaluation) in the utility of arduous physical labour and its attendant habitus, traditional practices continue to be reproduced in a form of life that can not

consciously discern or accept its own excision. Because of the sedulous restriction of thought and practice which initially ensured its survival it is tragically denied the sort of reflexivity necessary to engage with the intense struggle for power and existence within the mutating social order. It will meet the forces of historical change the only way it knows how: head-on. It colludes in its own oppression with an unthinking masochism, distancing itself further and further from the style-conscious and physically rather timid, arty social being emerging from the present confusion and finding its place in the altered circuits of capital. It postures ever more wildly and desperately, pumping itself full of steroids, drugs and alcohol, fighting more viciously, swearing more profanely, trying to prove itself even harder than it was before. But the hard, unskilled graft is all but gone, as are the fundamental conditions of its initial establishment, leaving the hard lad howling in a desperate wilderness where one of the few places of acceptance and comfort to be found is within the criminal economy.

In times of recession, `hard lads` are the perfect `oily rags` for criminal organisations; the 'nutters' who will do almost anything, disregarding physical safety and glorying in their abilities to withstand physical pain and ignore danger. Organized car ringers seeking stolen cars need to look no further than the local young 'hard lads' to find someone willing to risk arrest, imprisonment, injury or death for a small remuneration, and there are many willing to undertake the dangerous task of 'policing' drug distribution operations in pubs and night-clubs or collecting 'debts' on behalf of professional criminals. Even within this particular `alternative` criminalised social hierarchy the hard lads usually enjoy low status, doing the work that leaders in the world of organized crime have the sense to avoid. Over the last fifteen years the excision of hard lads (and those, even less respected, who aspire to be hard men and fail to make the grade; 'toerags', in north-eastern vernacular) from the mainstream commodity cycle has become almost complete, and those that can not give up the configuration of meanings and practices which constitute that particular way of life now drift around the periphery picking up what they can; much of it violent and criminal. Opportunity for positive engagement with the flows and forces of contemporary capitalism in the West has rapidly shrunk, and social being is now invested within circulation, consumption and bureaucratic administration as production recedes. The 'hard lads' have no acceptable cultural capital to invest in this project and the animated recapitalisation activities of the post-proletarian interest groups accelerate the excisionary process. The attempts of the liberal/left to promote a reflexive recivilization intended to 'emancipate' this masculine form and help it along the historical road produces resistance and intensification of form more often than compliance and change, decreasing chances of social acceptance and economic articulation and thus unwittingly adding fuel to the excisionary fire. The 'hard lads', within the terms laid down by the remorseless logic of capital, are in the process of being left behind by history.

Conclusions.
There is a growing feeling amongst all but the most committed functionaries (see Pitts,1991b) that the agencies of liberal social administration are failing to cope theoretically or practically with the current mutation of intensive forms of youth crime and violence. I am suggesting here that central to this failure is the continued subscription to Idealist assumptions of an independent mind and an innate,

rational ego orientated towards some sort of 'good'. This implies denial of the diversity of social being and its formation within the social organisation of material life. The pervasive presence of these assumptions in those Western radical discourses concerned with youth crime replaces this diversity and uncertainty with a constant and tractable certainty, something which is always there to be worked upon no matter what the historical and social circumstances. Even those discourses which acknowledge the presence of material, structural and historical factors tend to retain the rational ego as a pre-existing singularity operating in tension with them, providing for Capital's social managers an object of manipulation, belief and ultimately hope. Nowhere is all this more manifest than in the standard 'diagnosis' of youth criminality used in social inquiry and pre-sentence reports over the last twenty years or so (see McGuire and Priestley, 1985): 'lack of self-esteem leading to a susceptibility to peer-group pressure' exquisitely captures the archetypal liberal assumption of the temporarily weakened ego of the pre-existing individual wilting under the pressure of the repressive social group.

A materialist conception of youth crime would replace the independent rational being with social being in the sense of an individual capable of subscription to any number of a diverse range of 'practical logics', but in no way existing independently of them and forced by historical process into a subject relationship with a specific combination of them. These logics are constructed through cultural articulation with the material structure, social organisation and historical processes of a specific epoch. It is possible that their existence is not primarily maintained and reproduced by the production and interchange of symbols and ideas but by the internal generation of a fierce devotion to the habitus and practical logic of specific forms of social being. The 'hard lad' form is possibly the result of an enforced articulation with material life, the practical establishment of which required a particularly stringent and unreflexive devotion. It is currently undergoing cultural disvaluation and brutal excision from the network of mutating forms which constitute a restructuring Capitalist social organisation. At the heart of this predominantly masculine form, the imperatives of cultural adaptation and recapitalisation are cursorily dismissed by the 'hard lads', the zealots of a cult characterised by the sort of deep unreflexivity that has been essential to survival in specific brutal locations of Capital's structure and process. As the inexorable pressure of a restructuring Capital grinds away at the socio-cultural order, reactionary intensification of a practically pointless way of life is generated, producing the persistent, active, committed and *emotionally driven* involvement of a growing minority of young people in crime and violence which stretches way beyond the ability of liberal administrative discourse to understand or manage it. Because the survival strategies of the 'hard lads' are entirely based on a cultural logic of practice (Bourdieu, 1977) which exists below the level of consciousness, language and rationality, they are not amenable to those pedagogical techniques of leftist education or youth service which rely on a conception of the learning process as the primarily cognitive manipulation of symbolic interchange between inherently rational subjects.[1] We have little idea of the morphology of those meanings and practices currently eliciting the devotion of subjects, and continued subscription to an Idealist tradition in criminology which either denies their existence or establishes them as representational categories will prolong that nescience.

Current thinking on youth crime still continues to marginalise those materialist conceptions which promise alternative explanations. The left/liberal strategy is prepared to risk nihilism, fragmentation, resentment, the growing emergence of energetically anelpic micro-communities[2] and the possible return of 'the terror of repressive intervention' (Morrison, 1994) to gain little but self-satisfaction in its own acts of tolerance. Underlying this is a metaphysic which seems to claim that the possibilities of intervention in material structure and historical process - possibly the only way to solve at least part of the crime problem - are essentially 'totalising', 'fascistic', or just too risky. Perhaps this is true; the terrors accompanying structural revolutions in France, Russia, Germany and China along with the failure of communism seem to confirm that and lend credence to the role of massive structural intervention as a kind of Medusa in Western liberal myth. Yet, on the other hand, the more violent, intense and intractable forms of youth crime which are the product of material historical process remain obdurately resistant to the symbolic flower-arranging of the 'radical' wing of Western social policy. The permutations of counselling, groupwork, alternative to custody programmes, health education, self-esteem building, empowerment exercises etc. which constitute the 'something works' doctrine (Pitts, 1991b) is powerless in the vast flow of an exfoliatory historical process which in specific locations is producing nihilistic, violent criminality amongst young people faster than most justice systems can process it, let alone ameliorate it. I offer no solutions myself, only a plea for serious debate about the materialist perspective, and I take no comfort in the probability that explanations of youth crime based upon traditional Idealist conceptions may be fundamentally wrong and actively counter-productive.

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Notes.

1. Contemporary youth work, youth justice and education have been informed primarily by the behaviourist and cognitive traditions in psychology. These traditions are slowly being displaced by the 'discursive revolution', which is attempting to dissolve the Cartesian distinction between mind and body and introduce the relationship between social/material context, the normative rules of signification in discourse, and emotional commitment to meaning and action as 'inculcated patterns of bodily reaction' into the understanding of self and personality. See Harre and Gillett (1994) for an intelligible digest.

2. 'Anelpic micro-communities' exist in what Rob Horne and I (1995) claim to be conditions of genuine, pragmatic disaster amounting to complete system-collapse at a micro-communal level, where there are small but growing bodies of people existing in industrially depressed areas (amongst but not characteristic of the economically poor) who have quite literally been overstepped and left behind by the new configuration of Capitalist forces. Here, the dominant mode and form of life is one postulated upon a generalised excision from any positive or constructive engagement with the flows and forces of contemporary global Capitalism. It is objectively criminal and increasingly characterised by non-rational, unpredictable forms of violence. This practical condition is categorised only by an interlocking set of negatives: it is without expectation, without opinion; without hope; and without fear. We have adopted a term used (once only) by Sophocles - the word 'Anelpis' (ανελπισ), which signifies precisely that condition. By extension, the as yet particularised locuses in which it is becoming a generalised state of being we have named 'anelpic micro-communities'

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YOUNG PEOPLE, BAD NEWS, ENDURING PRINCIPLES

BRYAN GIBSON

In the past two years, the question of how we treat young offenders has graduated into a major political issue. The reasons behind this are complex and multi-faceted - but it is clear to many informed practitioners that the popular debate concerning youth crime is simplistic, poorly-informed and wide of the mark. The emergent solutions - such as the secure training order in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and a general strengthening of court sentencing mechanisms post-Criminal Justice Act 1991 - offer little in terms of long-term prospects. It may be some years before events verify that the criminal justice policies of the 1990s were misguided, by which time it is likely that many young people will have received inappropriate sentences as a result of the 'quick fix' mentality that now pervades criminal justice policy-making.

There *are* problems about the extent of offending by young people it must be accepted. Whether they are fundamentally different to what they were in the past is less clear. It might be wondered what kind of a country it is that choses to focus on young people in this way, to pretend that their activities justify increasingly harsh approaches generally. Whatever the true position, the present mood serves to obscure more pressing social issues. Little is said of diminishing opportunities for young people (jobs, money, accommodation, a stake in things) and their prospects. The high profile currently enjoyed by crime - a deliberate political ploy it would seem, which regularly involves casting blame on the young - makes it easier to evade responsibility and to deceive the public into believing that the answer is for the courts to 'get tough' if faced with bad behaviour.

Lessons from another era

It was not always like this. Yet recent events make it seem like a lifetime ago that the emphasis was completely the other way around. It is actually about four years. The momentum began about five years before that.

Tolerance was the order of the day, with imagination and understanding running alongside. I can recall that in the mid 1980s I wrote an article for the magazine *Childright* under the title 'Custody-free Zones', setting out the main arguments for keeping young offenders out of institutions. I was spurred to do this because the Basingstoke juvenile court (as those courts were then known) had managed, without any discernible ill-effects, to avoid using detention centre orders (as they then were) for a period approaching three years. If Basingstoke was the first 'custody free zone' (there were several contenders) it was not long before there were many areas of the country where custody was hardly being used - or only sparingly, in extreme situations. Gradually, it became possible to apply the approach to increasingly more serious offences. Detention centres were starved of customers and were eventually abandoned, the age for custody rising from 14 to 15 in the process. Hand in hand with these events went an understanding that, generally speaking, it was more productive to keep sentences down-tariff, to resist any escalation in sentencing and to avoid court proceedings altogether whenever possible.

The approach never became universal. Some juvenile courts were wholly dismissive of these ideas. But with the aid of what became known as the 'LAC/83 initiative' (ie. the injection of £15 million of government monies - 'seed corn investment' - into local schemes by the then DHSS) the number of young offenders going into custody was reduced from around 8,000 a year in 1981 to well below 2,000 by 1990. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the use of cautions by the police in place of prosecution increased until some forces were operating this disposal in up to 80 per cent of cases.

The ability to forget
People move on, change posts, get promoted into management jobs, cease to experience up-front involvement. Travelling around, I now seem to meet fewer and fewer practitioners, magistrates and others who took part in these dramatic events and who remember just what an important, innovative time it was. It was a highly significant period during which attitudes to young offenders underwent a complete transformation. There was great pride in what was being achieved, strong morale and a massive network of communications such that if an excessive sentence was imposed in one part of the country this fact became known rapidly elsewhere. There were well-developed appeal strategies, support systems and access to advice.

Although there are remnants of the earlier thinking, the original ethos is now at risk from all manner of pressures and incentives - many of these having little to do with justice, sentencing philosophy or tested methods, as opposed to speedy despatch, clinical efficiency or the delivery of firm policies.

Commitment and values
Increasingly, in the 1980s there was a strong commitment to underlying values. This was not just the province of youth justice practitioners but gradually of magistrates (the creation of the youth court, changes in age limits for magistrates and departures for the family court since 1989 having altered the make up of that tribunal), lawyers, prosecutors, police, court clerks and even judges. There was no lack of people to defend what was happening. Newspapers ran features on local schemes. There were influential Radio Four programmes and TV documentaries - well researched, balanced, informative, devoid of politics and generally supportive. It was 'good news', if not headline news (many an editor has since shifted his or her stance). There was an attitude of open-mindedness. Condemnation was not then on anyone's agenda.

The advances of this era led to a real belief in community alternatives, not just for juveniles but for older offenders, even adults. They were no less effective than custody in preventing offences, probably more so, and in any event they tended to slow down the rate of offending and prevented future offences becoming more serious. They were also significantly cheaper. There was much talk of extending comparable strategies to the under 25s. All this laid the foundations for the Criminal Justice Act 1991 with its comprehensive framework, its underlying philosophy and its imperative towards a proper information-based and structured approach to sentencing decisions. The giving of reasons for custody decisions, which began in the juvenile court with the Criminal Justice Act 1982 was also extended to all age groups. Looking back, it is now difficult to conclude other than that just four years ago the government - and Parliament - were equally committed.

The original version of the 1991 Act (which came into force in October 1992) still represents the only true attempt in this country to devise a comprehensive sentencing strategy. It was based on a discernible philosophy, that of 'just deserts', which was meant that an offender should be punished in proportion to the seriousness of the *present* offence (not on the basis of his or her record) with more severe penalties restricted by the need to consider information - including a pre-sentence report - and to surmount legal hurdles. The model developed out of work with young offenders and the sentencing restrictions introduced for them in the 1982 Act.

Multi-agency working

it was also in this era that the seeds were sown for multi-agency (or cross-agency) working, which until then was frowned upon in some quarters, especially by the courts. It is now *de rigeur* as a result of local policy groups and panels for young offenders and at the highest level the Woolf committees. This, it seems, was also the basis of 'partnership', which now plays such an important role in relation to the provision of services overall. The voluntary sector was to the fore in many areas of the country long before 'contracting out' became the by-word it now is.

The underlying values

It is worth summarising the main underlying values in the face of the current impetus to treat young people in a mechanistic, antiseptic, depersonalised way - such that sooner or later people may begin to wonder whether the events of the 1980s really happened at all:

- there was widescale recognition that young people, particularly adolescents, are at a transitional, possibly vulnerable stage in their lives. The challenge was to guide or 'manage' them through this period of their lives, during which they might well be expected to get up to all manner of things. In this offenders were, largely speaking, no different to anyone else. That they were involved in the criminal justice process at all was possibly fortuitous, more to do with the fact that they were already disadvantaged or came from a background devoid of supportive networks.

- there was a recognition of the damaging effects of custody, of 'labelling' young people as offenders such that the tag became a self-fulfilling prophecy. This was accompanied by a recognition that many crimes committed by young people are trivial, transient and irrelevant in the full timescale of their lives, part of maturing and growing up (see particularly, Rutherford, 1992). There were constant efforts to prevent escalation in sentencing.

- programmes for offenders tended to be individualised (in the personal sense), targeted on particular types of offender where the offences in question were, for example, prevalent in an area and, generally speaking, they were aimed at what became known as 'the heavy end' of offenders. If the community can cater, by prioritising its efforts towards its most troublesome youngsters, then the remainder of youth crime will look after itself, it was argued.

- progress rested largely on local, practitioner led initiatives and the preparedness of courts to take a longer term view of crime prevention and crime reduction. If

there is a key lesson for criminal justice policy it is that, in the last resort, sentencing outcomes must correspond to the beliefs of those who must deliver them because they are the people who are best placed to say what is likely to work in a given situation. The position in the 1980s was that central government took a back seat - though it might have played a co-ordinating role - in favour of truly, unfettered local decision - making and local initiatives.

- work with young offenders should involve challenging (or 'confronting') their behaviour in a constructive fashion designed to bring about acceptance of responsibility and accountability. Custody was seen as the very negation of this, a rejection of the offender as irredeemable, unfit to be part of the community, divisive and exclusionary rather than uniting and inclusionary. Exclusion from any group represents a recipe for future problems, possibly of a more serious nature.

With the introduction of the youth court, the generally forward looking provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and a strong commitment from many sources to make the 1991 Act work, all looked set for the gains of the 1980s in relation to young people to continue apace. But within months the 1991 Act was being rejected by the public. Criminal justice had become a media issue, whereas in the past the press had tended only to involve itself in the constructive way already mentioned. The analysis of why this happened cannot be dealt with here. Little had changed on the crime front, but there was now political capital to be made. Young offenders became a ready-made target.

The U-turn

If there is a single event which signalled the change of thinking, it was the spontaneous announcement in May 1992 by Kenneth Clarke MP, the then Home Secretary, that key aspects of the 1991 Act were to be repealed. Then and afterwards criminal justice practitioners faced new pressures, including:

- Media campaigns which served to increase fear of crime and to associate crime with the young in the public's mind, for example, the murder of Jamie Bulger (however tragic and untypical), incidents of joy-riding, ram-raiding, talk of 'bail bandits' and claims that tough policies are actually reducing crime (quite unsupportable given that only a tiny proportion of offences actually reach court).

- The shifts brought about by the Criminal Justice Act 1993, ie previous convictions and responses to earlier sentences are now admissible, if relevant, in relation to the assessment of the seriousness of an offence. The 1993 Act also altered the 'two offence rule' in relation to the seriousness of offences (so that any number of offences can now be taken into account for this purpose) and made the fact that an offence has been committed whilst on bail a compulsory aggravating factor.

- The specific young offender based changes brought about by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, ie. the secure training order (importing a 'three strikes and you're out' mentality from the USA), the increase in the maximum sentence for detention in a young offender institution from one year to two years and the stretching of the ambit of section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (long periods of detention for 'grave crimes'). The 1994 Act has also made pre-sen-

tence reports (one of the main information bases for sentencing) discretionary and although this applies in a much diluted form to people under 18 years of age this official downgrading of the worth of reports cannot be discounted in its potential effect on magistrates and judges dealing with the younger age group.

- Other changes, including a new power for courts to bind over parents to ensure compliance with a community sentence by their child even though present parental binding over powers are unpopular with youth court magistrates as being divisive between parent and child, and the extension of secure remand powers to 10 to 14 year olds.

- Extensive work to revise (for revise read 'toughen') National Standards for community sentences and throughcare.

- A Home Office Circular on 'The Cautioning of Offenders' (HOC 18/94) the import of which was summed up by The Home Secretary as 'Your first chance is your last chance'.

- Tough new *sentencing Guidelines* from the Magistrates' Association precipitated by the 1993 Act. The stance will be reflected in the youth court, notably because the 1991 Act had already opened the way for older magistrates to serve on youth panels (not to be confused with youth panels which now operate in some areas for the purpose of out of court decision-making in relation to younger people).

- Another feature of these reversals of policy has been a handing back of discretion to courts. In the charged atmosphere created by dubious tags such as 'prison works' and 'young thugs' many courts could see this as a licence to 'get tough', even if the facts about crime fall short of the media hype.

Thus, forward looking and mature policies and a well considered philosophy - arrived at following wide consultation and leading to The Criminal Justice Act 1991 - were eroded without proper consultation or scrutiny. Every government has the right to legislate, but criminal justice issues - and *a fortiori* youth justice issues - are far too important to be rushed or forced through Parliament in the way that the above changes were. Not only has criminal justice become heavily politicised - but there has also been a denial of true democracy. No-one has really articulated the change of thinking, which would appear to have been driven by the determination of Ministers to make political pronouncements in a 'knee-jerk' fashion in response to those who shout loudest. The potential effect on the minds of people working at all stages of the criminal justice process cannot be ignored.

The risk of escalation
All these changes are 'escalatory' in nature and run counter to the philosophy behind the original 1991 legislation as promulgated in specific and unequivocal terms in the government's white paper *Crime, Justice and Protecting the Public* (1990, Cmd 965) and the Home Office *General Guide to the Criminal Justice Act 1991* (HMSO, 1990). They are the very antithesis of the values and underlying premises understood by those who forged the youth justice revolution of the 1980s.

A politically convenient target has been the 'persistent young offender' - even though a report by the Policy Studies Institute, commissioned by the Home Office itself, defeats this main plank of current strategy by showing that even if all such offenders were locked up this would have only a marginal effect on the crime rate (Newburn and Hagell, 1994). Again, there is a danger of escalation, spanning out well beyond the sentencing of repeat offenders - given the prevailing atmosphere. If government arguments can be distorted on such a high profile issue, what then of the integrity of other, less visible or emotive, ones?

What hope for the future?
It is futile to suggest that some 'Golden Era' once existed and to argue for its return. Things were never perfect and life has moved on. Within another ten years we shall live in a multi-media age in which everything will happen at lightening speed and it will be possible for young people to enjoy all manner of experiences or sensations at the touch of a button - and what real advances there might be in criminal justice if these developments were to be fully capitalised on. Neither should it be ignored that there are, right now, many highly successful schemes for young people in trouble or that many people will fully appreciate the points made in this article.

But it is also clear that many practitioners now feel vulnerable, caught between shifts of law and policy, changes in funding arrangements, the power of information (increasingly controlled by central government), the lack of clear policy strategy which feeds through in a practical sense in inconsistent outcomes, the 'get tough' sentiments of politicians, media and public and the consequent risk of random, gung-ho reactions by some people in their dealings with young people.

The chief purpose of this article is to emphasise that the values which surfaced in the 1980s are critically important; fundamental to the decent treatment of offenders in a civilised society. But where can concerned practitioners and magistrates look now for inspiration if, as a result of these pressures, they are doubting their beliefs?

First, they can look to the lessons and values of the past already outlined - but also to the future. Thus, for example, a high degree of interest appears to be being shown in the idea of the 'family group conference' (or FGC), something which exists in New Zealand, Australia and other parts of the world. The values which underpin conferencing are akin to those which underlay the youth justice revolution of the 1980s. They were summarised recently by Judge Fred McElrea (New Zealand) in his contribution to a new work, *Relational Justice* (Burnside and Baker, 1994), which challenges the whole basis of criminal justice policy in this country:

> ...there is another way of doing justice, one which can promote the acceptance of responsibility and by a consensual process seek to heal the wounds caused by crime. It is already at work in the youth court in New Zealand...It has the potential to transform adult courts as well (p.94).

Judge McElrea goes on to describe a method of 'doing justice' enacted in his own country, which brings together officials and those people who have some significant relationship with the offender, together with the victim and his or her family in many instances, to seek a solution which can then be placed before a court for

its endorsement - something which usually follows automatically. Later in his contribution he continues:

> ...*Only in the context of relationships meaningful to the offender can there be effective shaming and a change of attitude. We may think that the traditional court system holds offenders accountable but it has become too depersonalised to succeed in many cases...What is significant in this process is that the acceptance of responsibility is done without the ritual of plea taking in court, but at an FGC in the presence of the young offender's lawyer, family, the victim, and other community representatives...[The statutory provisions] emphasise accountability and membership of a wider community (p.97).*

In the same work, John Harding, Chief Probation Officer for Inner London makes the following points:

> ... *The best hope of reducing persistent offending behaviour among the young is to carefully identify which type of approach works with which type of offender. This perspective suggests that the responsible agencies should always seek to develop a wide range of options for young people which are adequately funded and staffed by committed professionals with a clear sense of purpose and common standards of practice. In recognition of the multiple needs of troubled young people, staff will be required to make broad based coalitions not only with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies (which can provide key services such as accommodation, job finding and further education) but also with the communities that are local to the offender... Breaking the chain of anti-social behaviour is possible (p.111)*

But it is only possible in the context of community measures, backed and supported by the community. In this, there is a need to re-educate the community about the values of the 1980s and to constantly challenge the view that quick fixes offer any solution.

A new wave

It is time for a new wave, so to speak. Before the messages of the past become forgotten, or are re-written in a way that changes their meaning, the power that brought about the vast improvements of the1980s should be re-harnessed. Values must be kept alive in a real sense, not just one in which they are acknowledged by discreet references to 'the welfare principle'. It is not a time for the faint-hearted.

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THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER ACT 1994 AND YOUNG OFFENDERS

PAUL CAVADINO

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 makes extensive changes to the law of relevance to young offenders. The first part of this paper describes and comments on the provisions of the Act which affect sentencing and remand decisions concerning young offenders and defendants. The second part suggests pointers for good practice by youth justice practitioners following implementation of the Act's provisions.

1. Provisions of the Act
The secure training order
Sections 1 to 15 of the Act provide for the introduction of a new 'secure training order' for 12 to 14 year old offenders. Those eligible for the order will be young offenders who have been convicted of three or more imprisonable offences and who have reoffended during, or been in breach of, a supervision order. The order is a 'custodial sentence' for the purposes of sections 1 to 4 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, which means that the statutory criteria for passing a custodial sentence must be satisfied.

Juveniles sentenced to a secure training order will be detained in a new system of secure training centres. There will be five centres, each with 40 places. The minimum sentence will be six months the maximum will be two years, and sentences will be determinate, with half spent in custody and half in the community under supervision. Failure to comply with the requirements of supervision is punishable with up to three months further detention or a fine. The centres will be built on Prison Service land, managed by private sector contractors and subject to statutory rules to be made by the Home Secretary under the Prisons Act 1952. The overall costs of the order including supervision in the community are expected to be in excess of £30 million a year.

Sections 5 to 15 and Schedule 1 and 2 of the Act, which are concerned with arrangements for setting up and providing secure training centres, came into force on Royal Assent. Sections 1 to 4, which will empower courts to make secure training orders, will come into force when secure training centres are available.

Comment: Organisations working with young offenders are unanimously of the view that the secure training order is a retrograde and damaging measure which will increase rather than reduce offending by juveniles. They have argued that most young offenders are best dealt with by community supervision programmes, which have a better record in preventing reoffending than secure institutions; that the minority of young people for whom secure detention *is* necessary should be held in local authority secure units, not in 'mini-prisons' run by organisations with no experience of work with difficult children; that there is no reason to believe that secure training centres will be any more successful than young offender institu-

tions or the former approved schools, with their reconviction rates of around 80%; and that the likelihood of failure will be even higher because most young people in the centres will be held many miles from their home areas, making it difficult to maintain the family links so important for successful resettlement.

Long term detention
Section 16 extends the powers of courts to order young people aged 10 to 13 to be detained for long periods. At present children of this age who commit murder are sentenced to detention at Her Majesty's Pleasure (the juvenile equivalent of a life sentence) under section 53(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933; and those who commit manslaughter can be sentenced either to detention at Her Majesty's Pleasure or to detention for a fixed number of years under section 53(2) of the same Act. Section 16 when implemented will permit courts to impose long term detention for any offence carrying a maximum sentence of 14 years imprisonment for an adult. This will bring the position for 10 to 13 year olds into line with that for 14 to 17 year olds.

The section also provides for section 53 sentences to be available for 10 to 17 year olds for the offence of indecent assault on a woman; and retains the present position whereby they are available for 14 to 17 years olds convicted of causing death by dangerous driving or causing death by careless driving while under the influence of drink or drugs. This section comes into force early in 1995.

Comment: These changes have also disturbed those who consider that, where long term detention of 10 to 13 year olds is necessary, it should be done through civil court proceedings concerned with the welfare of the child. In most other West European countries, and in most states of the USA, young offenders of this age would not appear before criminal courts but would be dealt with through proceedings akin to those of our family proceedings court. This would be a more appropriate way of dealing with young people of this age who need compulsory measures of care rather than passing long custodial sentences in criminal proceedings.

Maximum length of detention in a young offender institution
Section 17 increases the maximum length of detention in a young offender institution for 15 to 17 year olds from 12 months to two years. This section comes into force early in 1995.

Comment: It is ironic that this change follows a decade in which the ill effects of prison service custody for young people - including criminal contamination, the weakening of family and community ties, and the risk of self-harm and suicide attempts - have been increasingly recognised.

The latest figures indicate that 82% of offenders aged under 17 when sentenced are reconvicted within two years of discharge; the large catchment areas of young offender institutions mean that young people are often held at a long distance from their home areas, creating great difficulties for visits by families, social workers and probation officers; and Prisons Inspectorate reports have repeatedly drawn attention to the growing problems of bullying and intimidation and their effect on younger and weaker inmates.

These ill effects are likely to be greater the longer the period spent in custody. For this reason periods of detention for young people should be no longer than is genuinely necessary to protect the public. This is a powerful argument for maintaining the previous position whereby the normal maximum period of detention for those under 18 was twelve months, but courts could exceed this for serious offences against the person under section 53 of the 1933 Act.

Demonopolisation of local authority secure accommodation

Sections 19 and 22 enable local authorities to make arrangements for secure accommodation to be provided by voluntary organisations or the private sector instead of being run by local authorities direct. (These particular sections do not refer to the new secure training centres: they refer to local authority secure units which are used to accommodate young people who are in care or who have been remanded to local authority accommodation). These sections come into force in early 1995.

Comment: In practice, this is likely to mean private sector organisations as the principal child care charities have indicated that they have no wish to manage such accommodation. As noted above, the private sector has no experience of or expertise in dealing with disturbed or vulnerable young people. Moreover, young people in care who are placed in local authority secure accommodation are regularly reviewed to see whether they can be moved to other non-secure provision; but if secure units are run by private sector organisations with a direct financial interest in maintaining a high level of occupancy, this will reduce the incentive to move children to other types of provision when this becomes appropriate.

Secure remands

Section 20 extends the age range of children on whom courts are empowered to impose a 'security requirement' when remanding them to local authority accommodation. The Criminal Justice Act 1991 empowered courts to do this when remanding 15 and 16 year olds (though this provision has not yet been implemented): the new Act empowers courts also to impose security requirements on children aged 12 to 14. It provides for this to be brought into force progressively for children aged 14, 13 and 12. Section 21 provides for the costs incurred by local authorities in complying with court-ordered remands to be defrayed by central government. These sections will be brought into force when additional secure accommodation is available.

Comment: The new powers in section 20 are unnecessary and bear little relevance to the problems facing courts and social services departments. When problems arise at the remand stage in making a secure placement, the problem is not normally lack of powers but an inadequate geographical spread of secure facilities. When children awaiting trial in non-secure homes keep running away and offending, it is rarely if ever because court, police or social services disagree over the need for security. Frequently, when everyone agrees that secure accommodation is needed, there are lengthy delays while attempts are made to find a secure place. While the new funding powers contained in section 21 are welcome, it is regrettable that no similar central government funding system is being established for bail support programmes, remand fostering schemes or other community-based programmes which can avoid the need for a secure remand place.

Arrest for breach of remand conditions

Section 23 gives the police a power to arrest a child or young person who has breached a condition of his or her remand to local authority accommodation. This section comes into force early in 1995.

Comment: The new power of arrest for breach of a condition of remand to local authority accommodation is similar to the power which already exists in relation to breach of a condition of court bail.

Police detention

Section 24 alters the rules governing the detention of arrested juveniles after charge before they are brought to court. Previously the law provided that juveniles cannot be held overnight in police detention unless a custody order certifies (a) that it is 'impracticable' to transfer the juvenile to local authority accommodation, or (b) where the juvenile is aged 15 or over, that no secure accommodation is available and that 'keeping him in other local authority accommodation would not be adequate to protect the public from serious harm from him'. The Act changes the minimum age in criterion (b) from 15 to 12. This section comes into force early in 1995.

Comment: This change is also disturbing: it is undesirable that children of 12 to 14 should be held overnight in police cells when they could instead be held overnight in local authority accommodation. Before the rules were changed by the Criminal Justice Act 1991, young people of this age were not infrequently held in police custody in circumstances where local authority accommodation was available; and in many such cases bail or a remand to non-secure local authority accommodation was the most likely course when the child appeared in court. There is a real danger that the new change will mean a return to a similar position.

Binding over parents

Schedule 9 of the Act empowers courts, when they are binding over a parent or guardian to take care of and exercise control over a young offender, to include in the bind-over a requirement that the parent or guardian should ensure that the child complies with the requirements of a community sentence. A court could require parents whose child did not comply with the sentence to forfeit up to £1,000. This section comes into force early in 1995.

Comment: Magistrates did not want the current powers to bind over parents which they were given by the Criminal Justice Act 1991: the Magistrates' Association referred at the time to 'the harmful effect these proposals could have in hastening a breakdown in family relationships'. The new power is subject to the same objections as the original. First, it could unfairly punish parents who have genuinely but unsuccessfully tried to improve their children's behaviour. Secondly, when parents are penalised for something their child has done, this is likely to increase their resentment and aggravate relationships between them and their children still further. Third, financial penalties are likely to increase the degree of pressure and hardship on families which are already struggling to survive against great odds. Fourth, penalising parents rather than children does not help to reinforce the vital need for young offenders to face up to responsibility for their own actions.

Pre-sentence reports

Schedule 9 removes the mandatory requirement for courts to obtain a pre-sentence report before passing a custodial sentence or certain community sentences. It provides instead

that, before passing such a sentence, the court must obtain a pre-sentence report unless 'the court is of the opinion that it is unnecessary to obtain a pre-sentence report'. Where the offender is under 18, the court cannot decide that it is unnecessary to obtain a report unless the offence is triable only on indictment or the court has considered a previous pre-sentence report on the offender. This change will be implemented early in 1995.

Comment: The principal reason for requiring courts to consider a pre-sentence report before passing a custodial sentence was identified in 1990 by the White Paper, *Crime, Justice and Protecting the Public,* as 'to provide the court with detailed information about how the offender could be punished in the community, so that option can be fully considered'. This reasoning remains just as valid, and means that the change contained in the Act is a retrograde one. The requirement for courts sentencing those under 18 to consider a previous report is a wholly inadequate safeguard: an old report cannot contain up to date information about the young person's possibly rapidly changing life, about the precipitating circumstances of the current offence, or about an appropriate community sentence tailored to the requirements of the present case.

Automatic refusal of bail in serious cases

Section 25 provides that a defendant charged with actual or attempted murder, manslaughter or rape who has a previous conviction for any of these offences or for culpable homicide must automatically be refused bail. Where the previous conviction was for manslaughter or culpable homicide, this section will apply only when the defendant was sentenced to imprisonment (including detention in a young offender institution) or to long term detention under section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. This section will come into force in Spring 1995.

Comment: This section is unlikely to apply to many, if any, young offenders. However, it could apply in adult life to someone who was convicted of a serious offence as a young person. It would be very unusual for a defendant to be granted bail in the circumstances covered by the section, but there are exceptional cases in which it could be reasonable to consider granting bail. Consider, for example, the case of a boy of 14 or 15 convicted of manslaughter or attempted rape and sentenced to long term detention under section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. During his period of detention successful work is done to challenge, confront and change the attitudes which were bound up with his offending. He subsequently becomes a stable, law-abiding member of society with a job, home and family. When in his fifties he is charged with an unrelated serious offence - for example, a 'mercy killing' in which it is claimed that he administered an overdose at the request of an elderly relative who was in great pain. The court should have discretion to grant him bail, rather than be required automatically to refuse bail on the strength of a completely unrelated conviction many years before.

Removal of presumption of bail in certain circumstances

Section 26 removes the statutory presumption in favour of bail, contained in the Bail Act 1976, when the defendant is charged with an indictable or either-way offence which was allegedly committed while on bail. In these cases the court has discretion as to whether to grant bail. This section will come into force in Spring 1995.

Comment: The removal of the presumption in favour of bail in these cases means in effect that the burden of proving why bail should be granted is on the defendant. Yet at this stage the defendant is still presumed in law to be innocent of the

charges. The presumption in favour of bail is linked with the presumption of inno-
cence: it is based on the premise that, if the court is to take the serious step of
depriving an unconvicted person of his or her liberty, it must be satisfied that there
is a substantial likelihood of absconding, offending or interference with the course
of justice if bail were granted. It is of course easier for the prosecution to persuade
the court that such a likelihood exists if the defendant is accused of an offence
allegedly committed on bail; but it should still have to produce reasons showing
that such an outcome is likely if he or she is to be refused bail.

Conditional police bail

Section 27 empowers police custody officers to grant conditional bail to people
who have been charged, on the same basis and criteria as courts can impose con-
ditions of bail, but with certain exceptions. The main exceptions are that the police
may not require the person to live in a bail hostel, to make himself available for
inquiries or reports or to undergo medical tests. When conditional police bail has
been granted, the defendant may subsequently apply to the same or another cus-
tody officer and ask them to vary the conditions.

Schedule 3 of the Act provides that a custody officer imposing or varying condi-
tions must give reasons for his or her decision, include a note of the reasons in the
custody record and give a copy of the note to the person charged. The Schedule
also enables a person subject to conditional police bail to apply to magistrates'
court for the conditions to be varied or rescinded. These provisions will come into
force in Spring 1995.

Comment: There are some sensible arguments in favour of giving the police the
power to attach conditions to police bail. There are many cases where the police
currently detain defendants even though they do not object to bail, so that bail
conditions can be imposed by a court the next day. If the police were able to
impose conditions themselves, many of these overnight detentions would not be
necessary. However, the range of conditions which can be attached to bail is very
wide and some of them - such as a requirement to obey a curfew, attend at a spec-
ified place each day, refrain from travelling outside a certain area or refrain from
going to specified places - can impose considerable restrictions on personal lib-
erty. It will therefore be important to monitor the use of these conditions to try to
ensure that they are not being used unreasonably, unnecessarily or oppressively.

Criteria for refusing police bail

Section 28 alters the criteria for refusing police bail. Police bail may now be
refused to persons charged with imprisonable offences if there are reasonable
grounds for believing that, if bailed, the person would fail to appear in court, com-
mit an offence on bail, or interfere with the administration of justice or the investi-
gation of offences; or for believing that detention in necessary for the accused per-
son's own protection (or 'his own interests' in the case of a juvenile). When the
offence is non-imprisonable, instead of reasonable grounds for believing that the
person would commit an offence on bail, detention must be necessary to prevent
the person from causing physical injury or loss or damage to property. This section
will come into force in Spring 1995.

Comment: This charge reformulates and widens the criterion for refusing police
bail on the grounds of likely offending when someone is charged with an impris-

onable offence. The criterion is no longer limited to cases where detention is necessary to prevent physical injury or causing loss or damage to property, but applies whenever there are reasonable grounds for believing that the person would commit an offence on bail. This brings the criteria for refusing police bail more into line with the criteria for refusing court bail.

Power of arrest for failure to answer police bail
Section 29 gives the police a power to arrest a person who fails to report to a police station to answer police bail. This will apply whether bail was granted before or after the section comes into force. This section will come into force in Spring 1995.

Comment: At present, although a person released on police bail who fails to answer to bail commits an offence under the Bail Act 1976, the police do not have a general power to arrest that person and so enforce his or her attendance at the police station. This section gives them such a power: they will therefore no longer need to apply for a warrant to arrest the bailed person in these circumstances.

Reconsideration of decision to grant bail
Section 30 empowers the CPS to apply to a court if new information has come to light or there has been a change of circumstances since bail was granted to someone charged with an indictable or either-way offence and to ask for bail to be withdrawn or for additional bail conditions to be imposed. This applies to people on both court bail and police bail. The defendant must be given notice of the CPS's application and of the grounds for the application, and the court must consider any representations by the defendant before making its decision. This section will come into force in Spring 1995.

Comment: If there has been abuse of bail, a defendant can be returned to court and have his or her bail withdrawn in any event without the need for this provision. This section empowers courts to detain unconvicted persons who have previously been granted bail and have not abused it if there is new information or a change of circumstances. Although the defendant must be given notice of the application, the court is empowered to refuse bail in his or her absence: this is a disturbing departure from the normal standards of natural justice.

2. Pointers for Good Practice
The Act contains a wide range of powers enabling young people to be locked up at younger ages, in a wider set of circumstances both before and after trial, for longer periods and in a more extensive range of secure and custodial settings. There is a danger that, as a result, we will see a large increase in the number of young people entering various forms of custody.

What are the practice implications for youth justice workers? First, these changes reinforce the need for well organised 'gatekeeping' procedures to identify cases where a child or young person may be at risk of custody and to devise and propose to courts credible community sentences or bail support packages as an alternative. Pre-sentence reports should clearly describe the purposes and desired outcomes of the proposed supervision programme, the methods to be used, the frequency of contact, the likely or intended impact on offending, the degree of restriction on liberty involved and the steps to be taken if the offender does not comply.

Where possible the report writer should be in court to go through the report beforehand with the solicitor and/or barrister, to answer questions about the report from the court and to back up the proposal. If this is not possible, the report writer should ensure that the agency's court officer is fully briefed and has the report at least two days before the court appearance so that he or she can make any necessary supplementary enquiries.

Secondly, it is important to be aware of the statutory criteria which govern the making of custodial sentences and the use of custodial remands and security requirements. Practitioners should keep abreast of judicial guidance on the interpretation of these criteria.

Third, where custodial orders are made, youth justice workers should be ready to play their part in facilitating appeals. This involves explaining the possibility of an appeal to the young person and his or her parents; liaising with the young person's solicitor to ensure that an appeal is pursued; and ensuring that there is an application for bail pending appeal to the court and, if refused, to a judge in chambers (even if bail is refused, this can help to expedite the hearing of the appeal). The sentence proposed in the pre-sentence report should be reviewed to see what can be done to meet the reasons advanced by the court for requiring custody, and where appropriate a different or altered proposal should be prepared.

An addendum to the report should be prepared for the appeal hearing, dealing with any new proposal and referring to any new developments such as the impact and adverse effects of the period spent so far in custody. This should be made available to lawyers involved at the earliest opportunity, together with a briefing paper on the key salient points to be brought out. It is important for the report writer to be present for the appeal; to ask to be called in support of the proposal; and, if appropriate, to suggest questions which the young person's lawyer could ask. Judges are often inexperienced in youth matters and will give weight to a well presented, professional argument from a youth justice practitioner.

Secure training orders
In some cases where a child appears to be at risk of a secure training order, or an appeal is being mounted against such an order, a proposal for a specified activities programme, certified as an alternative to custody, may be appropriate; in other cases a supervision order with a residence requirement could be considered. In those rare cases where the young person is a very persistent offender, consideration should be given to seeking a care order in the family proceedings court, but only if this appears to be justified on its own merits. If secure accommodation is needed, it makes more sense for this to take the form of detention in local authority secure accommodation, either via a supervision order with a residence requirement and a secure accommodation requirement, or via a care order where this is justified.

The usual statutory criteria for custodial sentences apply to secure training orders. In addition, a child must also have been convicted of at least three imprisonable offences. This means that programmes which divert young people from the courts, as well as increasing the chances of steering them away from offending, will also prevent the accumulation of the convictions which are a precondition for a secure training order. Recent Home Office guidance on cautioning has restricted the scope for diversion: some police

forces have interpreted this very rigidly while others have taken a more flexible approach. It is important to continue to argue that all cases in which prosecution is being considered should be referred first to an inter-agency panel for consideration before a decision is made. Social services departments should also seek to build up effective working relationships with the Crown Prosecution Service, in particular with the CPS juvenile co-ordinators appointed in each area, so that in appropriate cases they can make representations to the CPS if there is a good reason to discontinue a prosecution.

To be eligible for a secure training order, a child must also have breached, or offended during, a supervision order. It is therefore even more important than ever to avoid unnecessary early supervision orders. Where neither a straight conditional discharge nor a financial penalty is appropriate, an appropriate option could be a voluntary package of help to the youngster alongside a conditional discharge. Attendance centre orders may sometimes be appropriate where the case is 'serious enough' to warrant a community sentence. Appeals against inappropriate supervision orders should be considered.

Social services departments, in consultation with the probation service, should take steps to ensure that effective through-care is provided for young people held in secure training centres and their families. However, the main thrust of good practice should be aimed at preventing secure training orders being made in the first place. We should remember that in the 1980s, despite all the publicity surrounding the introduction of 'short sharp shock' regimes in detention centres, the detention centre order was finally scrapped because courts used it less and less and increasingly used constructive alternative sentences instead. Similarly, the aim of youth justice workers should be to bring about by good practice a non-use of secure training centres, so that this new sentence meets a well-deserved early demise.

Section 53
Where a child or young person is committed for trial to the Crown Court, credible alternatives to section 53 should be explored. An intensive specified activities programme certified as an alternative to custody, or a residence requirement, could be considered where appropriate. At the same time, if use of section 53 seems likely, steps should be taken to ensure that any such sentence does not result in prison service custody. This requires making early contact with the Department of Health to identify a secure placement within the child care system which can be used if a sentence under section 53 is passed.

If section 53 is used, an appeal should be considered: even if the Court of Appeal upholds the use of section 53, an appeal may result in a shorter sentence.

Pre-sentence reports
Youth justice workers should try to reach an understanding with courts on the circumstances in which they will adjourn for pre-sentence reports on young offenders. Ideally, this should be in all cases where custodial or community sentences are being considered, even though this will no longer be a statutory requirement. In discussions on this issue, the following points may be of use:

- The law still contains a presumption in favour of obtaining a pre-sentence report. Courts may dispense with a report if they consider it 'unnecessary'. Strictly speaking a court cannot logically regard a report as unnecessary unless it

is sure that it would impose the same sentence (including the length of any custodial sentence) *whatever the content of the pre-sentence report.* The circumstances in which this could be stated with certainty must be very rare.

- During the passage of the legislation through Parliament, the Magistrates' Association opposed the removal of the mandatory requirement for pre-sentence reports in relation to offenders under 21. Youth court magistrates should therefore always obtain reports as a matter of good practice when considering custodial or community sentences.

- Reliance on previous pre-sentence reports can be misleading because events can change rapidly in the often chaotic lives of young offenders. Only an up to date report can contain a reliable picture of the child's current circumstances; describe the factors contributing and leading up to the current offence; assess the child's current attitudes to offending and towards the victim of the latest offence; describe the child's response, or failure to respond, to the sentence passed on the occasion for which the previous report was prepared; and provide the court with a proposal for a community sentence appropriate to the current situation and which is commensurate with the seriousness of the new offence.

- It is important to assure courts, especially Crown Courts, that pre-sentence reports will be prepared as expeditiously as is consistent with the preparation of a report of good quality.

Parental responsibility

Pre-sentence report writers should consider including any information in their reports which is relevant to courts' decisions on whether to bind over parents or require them to pay fines. For example:

- if the parents have genuinely tried to discipline, control, supervise and care for the child.

- if the imposition of financial penalties will undesirably increase the degree of hardship suffered by a family which is already under severe pressure

- if it would aggravate already strained relationships between parents and child, thereby placing the child even more at risk

- if it is desirable for the court to emphasise the need for the *young offender* to face up to responsibility for his or her own actions, rather than slough them off on the parents.

It may also be appropriate to draw attention to more sensible ways of reinforcing parental responsibility than imposing financial penalties on them - for example, work with parents to involve them in taking more effective responsibility for their children's behaviour may form part of a supervision programme for the young offender.

Conditional police bail

Youth justice workers should discuss with the police the types of condition which both agencies would consider appropriate in a range of different situations and ensure that members of both agencies are briefed on this. If conditions are

imposed which are oppressive, unreasonable or inappropriate, steps should be taken to go back to the police to ask for them to be altered and, if an successful, to apply to a court for variation or lifting of the conditions.

Transfers from police custody to local authority accommodation
Arrangements should be negotiated whereby, when a social worker is not involved as an 'appropriate adult', the police will inform social services at the earliest opportunity if the police may wish to detain the child after charge and/or want bail to be opposed at court. Criteria should be agreed with the police narrowing the range of situations in which they will request secure accommodation. Local authority arrangements should aim to ensure that juveniles can always be taken from police stations into local authority accommodation, and that agreement can be reached with the police on an appropriate placement which will ensure that the child is transferred to the local authority and will be adequate to protect the public from 'serious harm" from him or her.

The Social Services Inspectorate report *Young People Detained and Remanded: a study of local authority remand services* (1993) observed that the three social services departments inspected had different approaches in their practice arrangements towards police detention and appropriate adult duties, as did different parts of the same department. Whereas in some departments intervention at this stage was targeted only at young people who were already subject to court orders or accommodated by the local authority, in contrast:

> *One department had developed a much more pro-active approach in its policy towards police detentions and PACE. Interventions focused specifically on the reasons why police bail was denied and remand status... SSD responses included the provision of bail information, negotiation with parents about attendance at the police station, facilitating a return home, providing transport to parents who were unable to reach police stations, use of short term retained foster parents, other accommodation etc.*

The Inspectorate concluded that 'vigorous intervention' at the point of arrest could reduce the need for remand of juveniles. It is important that monitoring should be undertaken - where possible joint monitoring by police and social services - of decisions in relation to conditional bail for juveniles, detention after charge and transfer to local authority accommodation to provide an informed basis for reviewing these arrangements subsequently.

Court decisions on bail
In identifying cases where bail may be opposed at court, youth justice workers should pay particular attention to whether the current alleged offence was committed while on bail. They should collect together information relevant to the bail decision and supply it to the Crown Prosecution Service and the court. Formal arrangements should be established between local authorities and the Crown Prosecution Service with regard to the type of information to be provided, how it should be produced and the use to which it should be put. They should identify bail support, remand fostering or other arrangements which could act as an alternative to a custodial or residential remand; or, where a remand to a residential establishment is appropriate, identify any open placement and arrangements which can provide a suitable alternative to a secure remand. If bail is inappropriately refused, a speedy application for bail should be made to a judge in chambers.

Agencies should review, and take any necessary action to increase, the availability of remand fostering, sheltered lodgings and specialist PACE/remand accommodation. The Social Services Inspectorate report *Responding to Youth Crime: Findings from Inspections of Youth Justice Services in Five Local Authority Social Services Departments* (HMSO, 1994), commented:

> At the time of the inspection none of the sample SSDs had in place the necessary range of provision to meet the different ages and needs of young people detained, remanded or subject to residence orders. The absence of remand foster placements, supported lodgings or hostel accommodation was considered by both specialist and fieldwork managers greatly to reduce the effectiveness of the service they could provide. In four of the five authorities steps were being taken to improve the choices available.

The Inspectorate recommended 'that efforts continue to increase the range of accommodation options available to young offenders, particularly at the detention and remand stage'. Particular attention should be paid to facilities for 17 year olds who often fall between the 'two stools' of adult and juvenile remand accommodation managed by or available to the probation service and social services respectively.

Remand management panels should be established with the task of promoting, monitoring and gatekeeping the use of the above resources. Steps should also be taken to ensure that adult courts are aware of bail and remand arrangements and facilities for those of youth court age (monitoring has shown that approximately half of all juvenile remands in custody are remanded from courts other than specialist youth courts).

Power of arrest for breach of remand conditions

Social services departments should adopt clear procedures to be followed before a child is reported to the police for a breach of the conditions of remand to local authority accommodation. These should clarify whether the decision is to be made by the worker with overall case accountability, by residential staff or other carers and/or in consultation with a senior staff member of the social services department.

Practice guidance and training

The Social Services Inspectorate report cited earlier commented that 'in some SSDs the intentions of policy were not always translated into practice, in part due to an absence of clear practice guidance'. It recommended that more detailed practice guidance should be issued to staff on the PACE Code of Practice and social services departments' policy in providing PACE services; on decision making at the remand stage; on the preparation of pre-sentence reports, 'in particular the importance of congruence between information presented in the body of reports and proposals outlined for consideration by sentencers'; and on the targeting and management of individual orders, especially for persistent offenders. The Probation Inspectorate report, *Young Offenders and the Probation Service* (Home Office, 1994) commented that staff would benefit from further training in drawing up supervision plans and making constructive use of them in their work with offenders.

In addition to practice guidance, youth justice workers should have the opportunity of regular updated training on policy and practice in relation to all aspects of

their work. Social workers appearing in courts should receive specific training to enable them to discharge this role confidently and effectively.

Inter-agency work and liaison with courts
The changes made by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 reinforce the need for effective inter-agency co-operation in planning and operating services dealing with young people involved in the youth justice system. Joint monitoring should be undertaken where possible, and the results of monitoring carried out by individual agencies should be shared with other agencies in inter-agency forums.

The Social Services Inspectorate report recommended that 'improvements are made in the quality of information, in plain language, made available to sentencers and service users, about the purpose and content of supervision programmes, including enhanced programmes for persistent offenders'. Similarly, the Probation Inspectorate report observed:

> *Most magistrates were eager for more information about the content and impact of community sentences. There was a dearth of feedback to sentencers about the impact of sentencing, either in general or in relation to particular offenders. It was important that steps should be taken to address these issues, in order to assist magistrates when sentencing and to highlight the effectiveness of much of the work undertaken with young offenders.*

Youth court magistrates should be given regular reports (by means of both written material and presentations) on the aims, operation and development of youth justice services, including the outcomes of supervision programmes. They should also receive regular invitations to visit, in order to nurture a sense of 'ownership' of the youth justice service. There should be similar liaison with Crown Court resident judges.

Conclusion
The Act's provisions on young offenders reflect a policy stance that locking up more young people at younger ages, for longer periods and in a wider range of custodial settings, will help to reduce youth crime. It was because of experience and evidence showing this to be the reverse of the truth that policies designed to reduce the unnecessary institutionalisation of young people have been developed over the last twelve years. The actions of youth justice practitioners will be crucial in determining how far the Act achieves its misguided aim of reversing the enlightened approach developed during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Paul Cavadino is Chair of the Penal Affairs Consortium (an alliance of 24 organisations concerned with the penal system) and Secretary of New Approaches to Juvenile Crime. He is also co-author of The Youth Court: One Year Onwards,. (1994, Waterside Press).

WORKING SPACE

PERSISTENT YOUNG OFFENDERS

FRED ROBINSON

Faced with the problem of rising crime and the real difficulties of trying to maintain 'law and order', both politicians and the media find it convenient to set up stereotypes which they can attack with slogans. One of the most common stereotypes is the 'persistent young offender', that high achiever of the 'yob culture' held to be responsible for a large share of local criminal activity. These pariahs deserve harsh punishments - hence government proposals to lock up notorious media monsters like 'Ratboy' in secure training centres and ensure that magistrates have the powers to 'frighten' these 'young hooligans' (Howard, 1993).

Stereotypes and slogans may be comforting, giving the impression that a problem has been identified, understood and that something effective is being done about it. But knee-jerk reactions rarely make good policy. The fact is that it is very difficult to identify persistent young offenders (Hagell and Newburn, 1994); there is little understanding of the reasons why some young people are more frequent offenders and continue to offend: and there is considerable evidence that custody doesn't work and is often counterproductive (Cavadino, 1994). Home Office research also indicates that even taking a considerable number of persistent young offenders 'out of circulation' would not have much impact on the total amount of crime and is evidently not cost effective (Tarling, 1993).

Of course, there *are* young people who are frequent offenders and persist with their offending. And there is certainly 'an urgent need to improve the way in which the criminal justice system currently deals with this group, in the interests both of the young people themselves and of the communities in which they live' (New Approaches to Juvenile Crime, 1994). But stereotyping this group and implementing inappropriate 'solutions' is not helpful. Instead, one useful way forward is to look at some real individual cases and see what lessons may be learned about the nature of these young offenders and how 'the system' deals with them. Slogans effectively close down debate; case studies have the effect of stimulating it.

In this paper, I briefly report four case studies of individuals who might be labelled 'persistent young offenders'. This work was undertaken for Newcastle City Challenge, an urban policy initiative which covers the West End of Newcastle. The West End suffers high levels of crime and a high degree of fear of crime. City Challenge, in seeking to tackle this issue, felt there was a need to understand more fully the characteristics of the perpetrators and the existing responses to them.

A small project group representing the police, social services, probation and the education department was set up and each of them gave access to their records on a sample of four offenders. While recognising that the concept of 'persistent young offender' is problematic, a working definition was needed. Newcastle's Juvenile Justice Centre used their records to identify 16 and 17 year olds in the City

Challenge area who had been in court between April and September 1993 and had three or more previous convictions. Four of these were randomly selected. All four are young white men. They are not representative of young men in the West End, nor are they representative of young offenders, but they do shed some interesting light on *part* of the picture. At one level, there is a good deal of similarity between them but, as information about each of them was built up, assumptions and stereotypes faded away; there is no *typical* 'persistent young offender'.

Case 1: Billy

Billy was born and bred in Newcastle and comes from a relatively 'good home', as his probation officer puts it, but the family name is well known to the police and the community as having criminal associations. Both his parents are unemployed. His father is now in prison and his mother has tried hard to dissuade Billy from pursuing a criminal 'career', with little success.

In 1981, aged 5, Billy was reported 'missing from home for long periods' on several occasions. At 8, he committed criminal damage; at 10 he was cautioned for shop-lifting and then received two more cautions for shop-lifting and handling stolen goods. In 1989, aged 12, Billy was fined for theft and by 15 was very criminally active and had been excluded from school.

In 1992, just after his sixteenth birthday, Billy was put on a 12 month Supervision Order for theft, but only 7 months later received another Supervision Order for theft, burglary, criminal damage and handling. But he committed further offences, including taking cars, and was put on probation. Apparently unaffected by this, he has continued to add to a formidable record of offences and is due in court once again but is thought unlikely to receive a custodial sentence this time.

Billy is small and thin and, on those occasions when he turns up, his probation officer finds him 'pleasant' and 'amiable'. He fits into a street culture, often committing offences with others. He gets no social security benefit; thieving provides him with an income. No one seems to expect that Billy will 'grow out' of offending and, in a sense, it is hard to see why he should; there is no prospect of a job and he comes from a culture unfamiliar with conventional employment and in which offending can become a 'career'. Sooner or later Billy will get a custodial sentence, which may well confirm his career 'choice'.

Case 2: Terry

Billy may well remain a small time criminal but Terry could go far: his probation officer predicts that he'll become 'a really sophisticated offender, a leading criminal in the West End'. If so, Terry will be following in his father's footsteps - his father is a major drug dealer, currently in prison.

Terry got his first caution, for burglary, at 11 and was cautioned again at 13 for shop-lifting. He truanted from school, got into more trouble, and at the age of 15 was ordered to go to an Attendance Centre for 24 hours. A few days after that he was arrested for house burglary and put into local authority accommodation under curfew. A Supervision Order followed, then more offences, then another Supervision Order, then yet more burglary and theft. Terry refused to be 'diverted'

into a Community Service Order: he said he was 'sick of seeing social workers' and wanted to go to prison to 'get everything over and done with'. His mother, who he still lives with and who struggles to control her son, thought this might do him some good.

Four months at a Young Offenders Institution was followed by another conviction for burglary and an Attendance Centre Order and Supervision Orders. Ignoring these, he was given a 100 hours Community Service Order; he's breached that, is again up for theft and may well go to prison.

Terry's convictions are thought to represent only a small part of his total offending. He is becoming more adept and his thieving is becoming more lucrative. Again, it is hard to see why he might give up offending and it is evident that none of the sanctions of the criminal justice system have had much impact on him.

Case 3: Keith
Keith's parents split up when he was 2 and right through his childhood he moved between his mother and father until he was eventually taken in by his grandparents. His education was disrupted by his disturbed home life but he turned instead to working: at 14 he got a Saturday job with a local engineering firm and then was taken on full-time, which enabled Keith to leave school early.

Unlike the others, Keith was not in trouble with the police as a young child, nor was he truanting from school. But when he was 14 he got into trouble allowing himself to be carried in a stolen car and was cautioned. Similar car related offences followed, leading to two further cautions and a conditional discharge.

At the age of 16, Keith was arrested for being drunk and disorderly and received a 12 months probation order for burglary, then a Supervision Order for theft from a car. Subsequently, he was convicted for threatening behaviour. Having made little effort to attend meetings with his probation officer, Keith has twice been breached and is now likely to receive a custodial sentence: unlike Billy, he has failed to keep the system at bay by occasional attendances.

Probation notes that Keith's recent problems have been affected by his becoming homeless - his grandparents felt they could no longer cope with him living there - as well as stemming from him losing his job and drinking heavily. Ironically, even though his record is very modest in comparison with the others he is thought more likely to be given a custodial sentence than Billy when he next goes to court. His Education Social Worker points out that Keith is 'very presentable, quite articulate and reasonably intelligent and could have achieved at school if he hadn't been drawn into the street culture'. As it is, if he goes to prison he may well become a more effective offender and will find it even harder to get a job and break out of the pattern he now seems increasingly trapped in.

Case 4: Phil
Phil lives with his mother; his parents separated when he was 4 and his earliest recorded offence was committed at the age of 8 when he stole a car and also attempted arson. He was cautioned first at 10, then again at 11 for theft, and at the age of 12 for burglary.

Phil has a long history of violence and has directed much of his violence at his mother who was unable to control him. At the age of 10 he became subject to voluntary care and social workers attempted to help both Phil and his mother. But this proved very difficult: he would abscond when sent to a residential home and return to his mother - who wanted him back but suffered his violence. He was expelled from Junior School due to his behavioural problems and has hardly attended Secondary School.

Since the age of 15 Phil has been very criminally active. 10 offences, centred on stealing cars, led to an Attendance Centre Order and further offences, including burglary, resulted in a Supervision Order at the age of 16. Only a month after receiving a further Supervision Order, again for burglary, he was arrested and charged with aggravated burglary - he drew a knife on a householder when he was disturbed during a burglary. At this time he became more violent at home, breaking up the house and attacking his mother. Eventually he was sectioned under the Mental Health Act, albeit briefly, contributing to a long delay in the aggravated burglary charge reaching Crown Court.

Phil's case is complex. A social worker commented that he is a victim, though dangerous and volatile: 'totally screwed up by his mum and the system'. It is thought that there may have been abuse at an early age, and regret that social workers acted weakly and inconsistently. He is not deeply involved with the street culture and has had work, at which he's been susccessful. Like the others, Phil seems to have been largely unmoved by the criminal justice system and non attendance at probation meant that he was breached as well as awaiting Crown Court proceedings. Like the others, a custodial sentence, sooner or later, seems likely.

Some concluding points
This was a small scale study of a very particular sample of 'persistent young offenders', but it has served as a reminder of some important issues and reveals a number of aspects deserving greater consideration.

First, while there are clear similarities between the four, they are different. They are individuals, not stereotypical demons. There is Billy, incorrigible small-time offender; Terry, a serious career criminal in the making; Keith, not a 'natural' but drifting into deeper trouble; and Phil, a volatile, disturbed and dangerous character. Two are from traditional 'nuclear' families, two aren't. Terry and Keith are quite bright, the other two are below average intelligence. Billy sniffs glue, Terry wouldn't touch it. It is obvious that no blanket approach to these young men is going to work; each needs specific and tailored intervention.

Second, none of the agencies involved can claim much success in dealing with these four young men. Community-based sentences work well with many young offenders but have had little or no impact on this group, while a custodial sentence does not look to be the answer. In some cases, prison is even welcomed as a rite of passage, the end of an apprenticeship (Little, 1990). It is more honest to admit that we sometimes don't know what to do than to pretend that we have all the answers.

Third, preventative work with young children and families seems to be crucial (Tarling, 1993). Three of the four started offending as young children and this

seems to underline the need to work with the under 10s. Later on it may be too late. In addition, given that fathers are often shadowy or absent figures, mothers are left to cope with their sons and could use real help and support to do so (Campbell, 1993). This requires an inter-agency approach, with a strong emphasis on work with schools as well as work within families.

Finally, there is evidently a need to be tough on the *causes* of crime. Poor job prospects and a denial of the right even to minimal income support are factors which encourage offending (Kirby and Cooper, 1994) and which foster the development, even local legitimacy, of criminal activity as an alternative 'career'.

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WORKING SPACE

WINGS - WOMEN IN NEWCASTLE GROUP SUPPORT

Probation Groupwork with Women in Newcastle upon Tyne

SUE GOW and LINSEY MENHENNET

Introduction
The following article is an account of the development of groupwork provision for women in contact with the Probation Service in Newcastle upon Tyne in the North of England.

Initially the project was set up to meet the needs of the 17 plus age group which predominated within females on probation caseloads at the time that it was being developed. Many writers who have considered work with young women have advocated the use of groupwork because in contrast to individual work it offers a potentially empowering environment in which service users can offer each other (often more 'appropriate') support than that provided by professionals.

In setting up the WINGS Group we adopted what Annie Hudson (1989) has called a 'separatist strategy'. It was important to establish a women only project managed and staffed by female workers for a number of reasons which are discussed further under the section entitled aims.

Empowerment and participation were two of the key principles underlying the development of the WINGS group. We were however aware of the constraints of realising them in practice within a statutory agency with specific aims and objectives, and statutory roles which can inhibit a sense of safety and confidentiality for participants.

In acknowledgement of the limitations arising out of the statutory base of our work we defined empowerment and participation within the context of achieving certain objectives.

Empowerment
We felt that a certain degree of empowerment could be achieved:

1 Because the WINGS group was set up to work with women in a context which acknowledged that female crime is linked to gender based inequalities and economic deprivation.

2 Because its brief was to encourage the participants to develop confidence through shared experience and support.

Participation
One way of devolving some, albeit very basic, power to the young women in the group was to involve them in defining their needs.

They were consulted at the implementation stage regarding the time, day, venue and type of group that would best meet their needs, and consultation about the programme content and development has been an integral part of the project from the outset.

Creche provision was regarded as an essential pre-requisite provided as a fundamental part of the service on offer. Most of the young women we consulted said they preferred creche provision to childminders.

The Limitations of the WINGS Provision

Women only groups offer a focus for working with all age groups and are a relevant milieu in which to meet the needs of many different women. What emerged however soon after the successful implementation of WINGS was a gap in terms of service delivery in meeting the needs of young women under 17. Primarily the 14 to 17 year olds.

Problems arose when some women younger than 17 were referred to WINGS. It quickly became apparent that the focus of the programme was not particularly relevant to their issues and concerns.

In addition to the inappropriateness of the programme those under 16 were unable to attend because the WINGS Group met during school hours. This highlighted the need to develop provision for this age group. Whilst the 17 plus group continued to expand and develop it become a priority to explore possibilities for working with the younger age group.

Our rationale was that the philosophy and underlying aims of WINGS were relevant to the younger age group, but what was required was a different time slot, programme and method of working.

It was recognised that the successful growth and expansion of WINGS combined with the lack of a similar project to meet the needs of younger women could be used as a basis from which to argue for its extension so that younger women's provision could take place.

Background

Young women who come into contact with the criminal justice system are dealt with very differently from their male counterparts both in terms of how their behaviour is interpreted and dealt with and in terms of service delivery.

Official ideas about girls delinquency in particular and female crime in general have been shown to be quite different from ideas about male crime.

Delinquency and crime because it is an overwhelmingly male activity is somehow held to be 'normal' for males.

Conversely the comparatively small numbers of female criminals has meant that their involvement in offending has been pathologised and regarded as abnormal. These females who do commit offences are regarded as violating not only the laws of the land but also the requirements of the female role.

There is a considerable volume of research evidence which shows that female criminals because of this 'double offence' against morality and against femininity, are punished more harshly for their 'transgressions' than males.

Because of its comparative rarity female crime has not been regarded as socially threatening, therefore resources have been directed into working with males, in

particular young males. A consequence of this has been the marginalisation of women's needs, and their resultant slotting into a system designed to work with men. This context highlights the importance of developing probation work with women and encouraging criminal justice responses which do not discriminate against women by operating on the basis of stereotypes.

A number of policy developments at both national and local levels provided a context within which the WINGS project could be developed.

All of this highlighted deficiencies in existing practice, confirmed research findings in relation to the differential and discriminatory treatment of female offenders and highlighted points of discrimination. They also advocated that policy and practice be developed to challenge and improve the position.

Key issues raised in terms of policy development were:

- The lack of probation projects which have been set up to meet the needs of women.

- The under use of alternatives to custody such as Probation Centre Orders and Community Service in probation reports on women, particularly where the sentencing result was imprisonment.

- The stereotypical explanations and concepts which the criminal justice system utilises in its management of female crime.

- The double standard in sentencing decisions which prevails for females and results in them being dealt with not only for a breach of the law but because of a perceived transgression against the 'typical female role'.

Local Developments
At a grass roots level a major step forward was the setting aside of one day of the statutory programme at the Probation Centre to enable women's provision to be developed. In addition the development of a Northumbria Service Women Offenders Policy acknowledged the importance of developing appropriate provision for women. This policy specified that the key to implementing appropriate services for women offenders was the achievement of substantive equality in provision, that is a service for women which acknowledges their specific needs and social context.

As workers we regard the WINGS provision as innovative in two key respects:-

a It was set up to meet the needs of women and from an awareness of the problems faced by women offenders.

b It has used a voluntary women's programme as a base from which to divert women at risk of custody into community based sentences.

There is a need to provide appropriate services which have been designed with women in mind and which can meet the requirements of sentencers who might otherwise continue to inappropriately sentence women to prison.

Aims of WINGS

1 To ensure that provision of suitable and appropriate services for female clients became part of mainstream provision, properly funded and recognised by the Service.

2 To provide a safe environment within which work with women offenders in a context which does not marginalise their needs. Traditionally, women have been slotted into a system of structures and practices designed to work with men.

3 To allow the issues relevant to women's offending to be explored and strategies for effective change (where appropriate), to be developed by the women themselves.

4 To use the WINGS group as a base from which to develop a specific Day Centre condition for women.

The Project

The WINGS group is now running on a weekly basis and provides a mixture of issue-based work and activities. From the outset, a creche was made available, both to encourage women to attend and to create space for them to fully participate in the group. This is staffed by workers from a local mobile community creche. Partnerships have also been developed with various other community based organisations who either provide practical advice or access to various resources. Workers from Women's Aid and the Citizens Advice Bureau attend on a regular basis. Sessions have included:-

Stress/Relaxation, Jewellery making, Assertiveness, Glass painting. Understanding the Criminal Justice Act, Pottery, Women's Health, Child care and Employment, Arabian dancing, Aromatherapy, Social Skills, Body Image, Dependency awareness, Parenting and Graphic design.

These have been co-run by a mixture of in-service staff and outside agencies, including Onward Learning Community Project, Social Services, Newcastle College, Mobex Outdoor Activities Project, Tyneside Tec, Gateshead Health Project and the NACRO SCOPE Project.

The group has provided a forum for exploring interests and increasing knowledge. The women who attend have been able to explore the reasons for their involvement in the Criminal Justice system in a supportive environment. The programme has allowed members to consider specific problems, such as sexual harassment, domestic violence, social-economic factors, powerlessness, sexism and racism - factors which are all relevant to women's offending.

As well as offering both formal and informal support systems and networks, WINGS has provided women with opportunities to develop self confidence and increase self esteem.

On average, we have had 10 women and five children attending the project each week. They are made up of a mixture of women on statutory probation orders, partners of prisoners, voluntary participants (often at risk of offending), ex-prisoners

and, more recently, women who have been made subject to Probation Centre Orders. The resource has been fully supported with referrals from all probation teams in the Newcastle Division.

The programme is regularly reviewed and evaluated by a staff group including female representatives from all teams. The women who attend are also involved in evaluation and planning. They fill in a weekly evaluation form to rate the activity/session and give suggestions for other things they would like to be included in the programme.

The following comments from attenders demonstrate the positives they get from the group:-

> "The atmosphere was brilliant."
> "I found the business talk very useful."
> "As always, I found the group very useful."
> "It always ends too soon."
> "It was great to have the chance to do pottery."
> "It was great to see some new faces as well as the regulars."
> "It has helped me to gain confidence and mix with others."
> "The group gives me support, a break and a chance to share my problems."
> "It has helped my self confidence and mixing with others."

One of the most exciting aspects of the development of WINGS has been the chance to use it as a base from which to develop a Probation Centre Order for women clients. Since this was given approval in October 1994, six women who would probably otherwise have gone to prison, have been diverted by being subject to a Probation Centre Order and we continue to get referrals with a number currently in the pipeline.

Conclusion

The WINGS initiative is an example of innovative practice because it provides the opportunity to meet the needs of a range of different women. Need is matched to the appropriate resource in a context which acknowledges individual circumstances. We hope to be able to divert an increasing number of women away from prison sentences and work with them effectively and in a way which meets their needs in the community.

Plans for future development include:-

• Making links with prisons so that WINGS can be used as an aftercare resource on release.

• Publicising the provision widely to staff, solicitors and sentencers.

• Establishing a centre of excellence for practice with women, encompassing court work, accommodation, education, training, groupwork, staffed by a women's probation team who would work exclusively with female clients.

• Extending WINGS provision to include a project for young women 14-17 years. We hope to develop a joint project with NACRO focusing on drama as a means

to develop issue based work with this age group. The recent implementation of a Northumbria Service policy on working with women offenders acknowledges the importance of developing service provision which meets the needs of different groups of women, including those who enter the youth court. Consultation with probation teams suggests that some favour the use of a centralised young womens group to carry forward their work with 14-17 year olds and the response so far from other agencies consulted has been extremely positive. We hope therefore to implement work with this age group some time in the near future.

Sue Gow *Probation officer*

Lindsey Menhennet *Probation Officer, Probation Programmes, Newcastle.*

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Short Cuts

MARION LEIGH

Understanding and Using Groups is a clearly-organised book, both readable and succinct. The author's experience and understanding of group work show at every turn. It is a useful and practical book, well-signposted to give both a theoretical framework and insight on practice and would be of interest to group workers in any field.

Understanding and Using Groups provides a valuable perspective on the development of group work in this country over the last forty years. A glance through Cartwright and Zander, or Bion or most of the early books on groups, immediately reveals one significant change. Early writing on group work was based almost exclusively on experimental and research work. Valuable as these classics were and are, it is heartening to read a book about current group work which assumes that it is part of common practice.

Skillfully Vernelle does not bog us down in the tendentious detail which was the only real option in earlier writing about group process. The author uses apt analogy and example to illustrate theory with the sure touch of one who is an experienced practitioner as well as a theorist. The book is written from a mainly transactional analysis and gestalt psychological viewpoint. Each chapter ends with a brief summary. There is a useful appendix on relevant organisations and another on the literature, and a concluding reference section.

One of the early problems in the development of group work was that there just was not a readily available language in which to discuss it. Group phenomena described in terms of personality, of individual abnormality or illness or social group characterisation deriving from competitive and hierarchical concepts of authority and organisation often clouded the view. This book is written from the confident viewpoint at the centre of a field rather than from that of work on the edges of a number of other fields. As such it is a clear indication of the progress made.

The landscape of groups is illuminated in the opening chapters which outline the framework of group dynamics, dealing clearly with group structure and membership, and with group process. The third chapter explores group process in greater detail and outlines the basic constituents of the work of the group. The author illustrates the application of group work from the fields of social work and health care. Her writing on both practice and on placing and running groups with agencies had me nodding agreement at every point. I enjoyed the light touch in deal-

ing with such issues as agency choice of group work for the wrong reasons, its cheapness, for example, or assumption that it does not need skilled workers, or on the crucial achievement of group homogeniety.

There are helpful descriptions of the use of transactional analysis, gestalt psychology and social skills and assertion training in the chapters on methodology, there is a chapter on training for group work, on inter-group dynamics and on groupwork in work settings. The book concludes with discussion of the various means for personal development of the group worker, including the pros and cons of T group training.

A belief in the importance of groups and a fascination with groups and group behaviour was perhaps inevitable to one lucky enough to grow up in a cluster of small villages in the thirties. So I was especially pleased to see a chapter devoted to inter-group dynamics as a sometimes neglected aspect of group work. Group work received its impetus in reaction to the horrors of nazi-ism and genocide. The values implicit in group work are touched on throughout the book.

Vernelle skilfully packs a great deal into a short space, concentrating on group work practice in the field of social work and health care, with a predominantly therapeutic and healing focus. A book of 232 pages cannot hope to cover all aspects and this book's sharp focus is its strength. Having said that, what does it not cover?

For example, it does not deal with the application of group work as an educational process concerned with learning. I came to group work through work on language and meaning with groups of young people. Despite an increasingly hostile environment there are still some encouraging examples of group work in educational settings. The values of autonomy are surely no less relevant now? There are gender issues, which in my experience produce some very different work priorities for groups of women and groups of men. There is its application in public life.

An awareness of the current political and socio-economic environment might be taken for granted in readers of *Youth and Policy*. Competition, scapegoating, hierarchy and authority have a high profile in the political re-working of the cultural climate. They are acute issues on the political agenda and are the backdrop to current group work. This makes Understanding and Using Groups a most timely publication, which deserves to be widely read.

Marion Leigh *lives in a village and specialises in group supervision.*

MAXINE GREEN

This is another book produced by Rank and the YMCA to make available some of the learning from their project work. It is aimed primarily at contributing to the debates within existing projects funded by Rank. It will also be excellent reading for anyone who wishes to apply for funding as the principles and practice behind the Rank initiative are evident in each of the contributions. The potential market is much wider as it gives a guided tour of the issues and key questions that need to be addressed when thinking of starting and running any project.

There are eight contributors and they tackle setting up and managing projects from quite different perspectives. Rogers looks at what constitutes a project and how it differs from day to day work in an organisation. He highlights some of the potential tensions and advantages of setting up a project within an existing organisation. He looks at the initial plan and rationale and takes the reader through the stages in the life of the project. He emphasises the importance of the project leader to the success of a project and this theme is echoed by other contributors.

Cox writes about a project she was involved in, she gives an honest appraisal of the agonies involved in starting a very new initiative and goes on to show how these are overcome. She summarises the key considerations in a table at the end of her article and this provides a good checklist when setting up a new piece of work.

'Preparing a business plan' by Lloyd is clear and well written but although I acknowledge the need for clarity, planning and evaluation I was disappointed that the wider more qualitative outcomes hoped for in a project were not part of his plan.

Harris opened his chapter 'Where there's muck there's money' with the sort of argument and debate that we need to keep alive in the market driven, function based atmosphere that youth work is now experiencing. I found this chapter the best in the book. He works from a position acknowledging the pressure of short-termism in preventive youth work but he moves on to outline the real opportunities for youth workers if they concentrate on being *CLEATED*, that is taking Community, Leadership, Enterprise and Employment, Action, Training, Education and Development seriously. Harris gives four key factors which form part of the evaluation of a project:- management, integrated work, the youth worker, and youth work delivery. He manages to give very practical and sound advice while retaining the vision and the more esoteric aims of youth work.

'Managing workers' by Coates gives a very practical approach to management and offers draft outlines for supervision. He suggests time scales and how evaluation and monitoring can be built into the management structure. This provides a good starting point for a scheme as he highlights issues that definitely need to be addressed. However not all projects will 'fit'' into his proposed plan and local negotiation will be necessary.

Schlichting writes about developing workers and how she has learnt to operate a 'participative management style'. She says this has developed out of her youth and community skills. She highlights four points which are important to a project:- the first year is crucial to a project's development; communication is key; the trainee receives adequate support for study and practical work; and the manager is aware and responds to their training needs.

'Handling the impact of the organisation', by Stewart is comfortingly honest for those of us who have had to handle projects that are in the doldrums or on the road to self destruction. He shows what happens when two organisations jointly launch a project with insufficient planning and negotiation. He then describes how this was challenged and worked through and how the project recovered, lessons were learnt and new structures were put in place that recognised and addressed the unique dynamics.

Finally, Dunning pulls the threads together to summarise the realistic expectations that Rank have of each stage in the development of a project.

To summarise, I found some of the chapters woolly and wanted to distil them to make the key points sharper as some good ideas were occasionally obscured. Overall however, the book offers an excellent guide to key issues and practice in project work.

Maxine Green *is one of two National Youth Officers for the Church of England.*

Mark K. Smith
Local Education: Community, conversation, praxis
Open University Press 1994
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£37.50 (hbk)
£12.00 (pbk)
pp 192

MALCOLM PAYNE

Mark Smith's Local Education: community, conversation, praxis is a complex, and at times, challenging book. It sets out to be an exploration of educational practice from which to develop what he refers to as

'grounded theory'. In the introduction Smith informs us of the philosophical basis which guides the work:

> *Running through all this is a vision of what makes for human flourishing, and of the social and political struggles involved. I argue that we need to foster those forms of life that nurture community, conversation and praxis. Solidarity and mutuality, engaging with others in a search for understanding, and acting in ways that embody these are, I believe, central to well-being....*

Set against current UK educational ideologies, 'human flourishing' and 'understanding' might appear, at best benign, and at worst somewhat feeble and ill-defined educational goals. And, where Smith does begin to discuss purpose (in Chapter 4) he takes us not much further, with such themes as 'new experiences and opportunities', 'mutual respect and fairness', 'wholeness', ' collective action and mutual aid'. Practitioners, he says, may lack a '...fully worked through understanding of their role and purpose.' Indeed. But this is misleading. By the final chapter, in which he brings together many of the ideas presented earlier, he has managed to establish a coherent framework of educational principles and techniques.

But Smith's focus is not primarily upon purpose in the philosophical sense, although ancient themes: the good life, the pursuit of truth, run throughout. The book examines the practice of what Smith refers to as local education: that area of activity in which community workers, youth workers and community-based adult educators are engaged. Its research-base is to be found in the conversations Smith held with more than thirty workers and within a series of workshops. More importantly perhaps, it is 'an interrogation of (his) own practice'.

Why *local* education? Being local, the focus of Chapter 1, means, for the most part '...working with or within local institutions, networks and practices'. It refers to proximity, identity, a sense of place; responding to shared conditions, cultures and relationships: and for Smith it captures the activities of the educator within an arena of 'everyday routines and locales'. It is intended to be a way of establishing the locus of the educator's task. These are useful ideas but I am unconvinced that localness marks out distinct territory upon which to build an educational identity. And, as a frame of reference, it runs the risk of appearing parochial, despite the parallels with *sozialpädagogik* and animation in the introduction, and the links made with Aristotle in the final chapter.

Community, conversation and praxis are the dimensions which Smith uses to explore the nature, and test the genuineness of the educational task in which 'local educators' are engaged. *Community* emphasises the promotion of 'associational life and democracy; on working with people to identify common interests, to co-operate and to organise'; *conversation* is the business of 'talking, listening, thinking, respecting... (it is) fundamental activity...' which includes 'unmasking the taken-for-granted', 'encouraging people to see and treat themselves, and others, as acting,

thinking, feeling people...'. *Praxis* is the 'informed, committed action' which emphasises the processes of judgement and meaning-making towards emancipation.

It is not so much a rejection of his previous thinking and writing about informal education as an attempt to locate the process of informal education within a more developed framework in order that 'we can look at this work in a fresh way'. Part of his task therefore, is to place it within the mainstream of educational practice and philosophy, drawing upon the work of Dewey, Gadamer, Geertz, Schon and others (many others!) to draw attention to its contribution to human growth and well-being. At the same time Smith is closely concerned with detail: how such ideas may be expressed in the day-to-day practice - and the words - of practitioners. Its preoccupation, it seems to me, is with process. Part of the 'unmasking the taken-for-granted' is to subject the vocabulary of informal education itself to, at times, quite rigorous examination.

How then is the reader to test the product of Smith's labours? Should it be to focus upon the ideas he presents: their usefulness or truthfulness? Or upon their transmission: their accessibility or their attractiveness? On the veracity of the research? All are potential criteria (although the research methods are not themselves a feature of the book).

'Writing, when properly managed' said Lawrence Stern 'is but a different name for conversation.' *(Tristram Shandy)*

Conversation is at the heart of Mark Smith's *Local Education*. It is the focus of his third chapter and, he suggests, provides the ground upon which the practice of local educators is built. It seem right then that some consideration should be given to how Smith's ideas are presented. This leads me to ask the questions: with whom is the conversation that is *Local Education* being held? And to what purpose? Has he succeeded in building a conversation with his readers?

These might be interpreted as anti-intellectual questions, but they are not intended to be. Complex ideas are often difficult to transmit. The reader may expect to have to work hard to understand them. But conversation depends upon the preparedness of both - or all - parties to engage in it. There were times in reading and re-reading this book when I felt that it was offering me the opportunity to engage. Chapter 4 for example, entitled *Thinking about direction* led me, despite the limitations mentioned above, to think hard about aims, purposes, roles and agendas: it encouraged me to see the legitimacy of what can sometimes appear as ad hoc or accidental; it allowed me to locate much of the everyday language of informal education (issues, target groups, approaches, strategies and so on) within a more coherent framework. The final chapter too, in which the three dimensions of community, conversation and praxis are further examined, is engaging and refreshingly clear.

At other times, Smith's tendency to over-elaborate, to establish the *bona fides* of what are often relatively simple ideas by continual referencing

and quotation, becomes a frustration to the reader. Chapter 2, on *Being an educator* falls into this trap. Smith attempts to explore, in seventeen pages, some central ideas about education. These are listed as choice, voice, convivial settings, reflection on experience, conversation and interaction, and education as a fully human activity. There is nothing either mystical or difficult about such content. Indeed, Smith is able to locate within it some useful ideas; about the denial of a voice to many groups for example; or the difference between the acts of educating and facilitating.

But a real editing job was needed to free us from his arduous use of the largely symbolic reference. Turn to page 28 for example where you will find twenty of them in four fairly short paragraphs! It is ironic that within this glut of references lie the words:

> *In all this it is helpful for educators to have a certain humility ...much of the strength of local education lies in the ability of educators to be participants, to involve themselves in the action without becoming an overwhelming* ***point of reference****. (My emphasis)*

As Marshall McLuhan (nearly) said, 'The Medium really is the Message.' (1967!) And too often in *Local Education*, the medium and message are uncomfortably discordant:

> *Conversation is also a deeply political activity. (Words) are a double edged sword. They allow the possibility of knowing more, and of being controlled or misled. (p.43)*

There is, for me, a sense that, in his desire to explain and illuminate, he has at times achieved the very opposite effect. There is the sense of the *guru* speaking to us - despite the theory emanating from conversations with practitioners; that he has not entirely heard his own messages. But perhaps I have misread his intentions.

The book also - perhaps inevitably, given its concern with process - leaves important questions unasked. For example, what are the socio-political contexts within which the work of local educators takes place? Does it matter that the work is often closely managed or controlled - by organisations or the local state for example? Where does accountability fit into the picture? Is the activity which is local education an essentially individual act by the *individual* educator? How important is its social policy context? Who will pay for it? And why? Are the orthodoxies which have become its stock-in-trade (emancipation, participation, self-determination) sufficient to sustain it?

Local Education has enormous strengths: it invites more thinking about the notion of curriculum within informal education; it does build a coherent theory of educational process and structure around, and gives meaning to, the practitioner's lexicon of engagement and intervention, strategy and agenda, work with groups and individuals, task and process. It is a major contribution to education practice. And at the very least I

can now confront my German, French and Italian colleagues with it: a book about Pädagogik directly relevant to youth and community work does exist in the English language!

Malcolm Payne is a senior lecturer in Youth and Community Work at De Montfort University, Leicester

Angela McRobbie
Postmodernism and Popular Culture
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£10.99

JEAN SPENCE

Like Susan Sontag, the American modernist critic whose work is admired and critically reviewed in one of the chapters of this book, Angela McRobbie prefers the essay format for her writing and, as in her previous books, 'Postmodernism and Popular Culture' is a collection of essays and papers, produced for a variety of contexts and purposes, many of which have been published individually elsewhere. Unlike Susan Sontag, McRobbie is not a formalist. The essay format for her provides the freedom for exploration; it is a means of changing focus, of using a particular subject or issue to explore what, ultimately, are fairly consistent theoretical questions and concerns which she encounters as a 'cultural studies intellectual'.

At a superficial level, this collection can be characterised as a postmodern text exploring a series of disconnected moments in McRobbie's theoretical journey, a series of snapshots provoked by the external demands of teaching and giving talks as much as by self motivated reflection. Each chapter in the book is in this sense a self-contained 'essay' with no necessary connection to the others in the book, and can be read as such. Thus, the three parts of the book, sequentially entitled, 'Postmodernity and cultural studies', 'Key figures in cultural theory', and 'Youth, media, postmodernity', seem to be only tenuously linked on first reading.

However, the collection repays more concentrated attention in order to identify a number of key themes, which are repeatedly addressed as an aspect of McRobbie's theoretical struggles. These include the linked questions of how cultural theory articulates with lived reality; of how the cultural studies intellectual can sustain a political position in the face of the critique of essentialism and the decentering of class; of how the prac-

tices of cultural studies and of sociology can usefully work together; and, overarching all this, how we can use the insights and questions posed by both the postmodern world and postmodern theoretical endeavour to create a new radical and optimistic politics of the left.

For McRobbie, whether or not we like or agree with postmodernism, there is no going back to a pre-postmodern understanding. In terms of reality and lived relations, the rapid and massive expansion of the mass media has resulted in a situation where images and texts can no longer be separated from social existence. The production and consumption of cultures and subcultures, the economic and social relations involved in this and the seamlessness of imagination, desire and lived experience mean that the previous cultural studies project of exploring ideology is no longer satisfactory. Ideology and its relationship with the old marxist, reductionist base-superstructure model as an explanation of the reproduction of exclusion and power is simply no longer adequate to the reality.

At the theoretical level, the foundations of modernist thought have been so shaken by postmodernist questioning, that even if postmodernism is rejected as a philosophy of despair and conservativism, as it has been by thinkers such as Frederic Jameson and David Harvey, new thinking would inevitability have to, and indeed does, respond to the critique. Within postmodern thought some of the most sacrosanct ideas of the left have been opened to scrutiny. There has been, for example, a fragmentation of the unified subject of history, a refusal of the meta-narrative, of the idea of the inevitability of progress and of linear historical development, an assertion that all apparently closed concepts can be opened to exploration and question. In such a climate even rationality itself is problematic.

McRobbie has clearly been intellectually excited and invigorated by the openness of postmodern thinking and is at pains to argue its potential for reintegrating cultural studies and sociology which she suggests have been separated by the overattention of cultural studies to semiology and textual analysis and by the unwillingness of sociology to address questions which seem to lie outside the well-born vocabulary of marxist-feminism. I'm not sure that McRobbie's assertion that the two disciplines are so separate is correct, particularly in relation to sociology as it is developing in response to the critiques of subaltern groups. She herself is keen to acknowledge the contributions of feminism and postcolonialism, and indeed to use them as evidence of the possibility of developing a postmodern left wing politics. These contributions are increasingly influential in sociological theory as well as within cultural studies theory.

The work of subaltern thinkers is a key to McRobbie's optimism in relation to postmodernism, culture and politics. Whereas the modern world and modernist theories excluded and marginalised different peoples, representing them as 'other', in the postmodern world these peoples emerge into focus, asserting the positive aspects of their difference and exploring the significance of differences, centering themselves and in the process contributing a dynamic, creative and open-ended critique of

established 'truths' which threatens the dominance of white, colonial masculinity of whatever political hue. This for McRobbie is indicative of the positive potential of theories which are aspects of a postmodern reality to capture the significance of change, to produce new meanings and to develop a political vocabulary for the future.

In keeping with her exploration of her grounds for optimism about the postmodern world, McRobbie's style is open ended and fluid. Occasionally it is difficult to locate a key point. Often there are a number of interrelated points around which her arguments are woven. Seldom is there a full resolution of the arguments. This is what makes the work so stimulating. The reader is encouraged to think with the author and I found myself applying a number of her theoretical insights to particular concrete concerns in my own life and work.

Although the articles assume a familiarity with some of the concepts and some would be difficult to read without a grounding in either cultural studies or social theory, McRobbie's writing is nevertheless engaging and repays some effort in reading. I read the book twice, and each time discovered new information, was challenged in terms of some of my most dearly held views and was stimulated to pursue my own thinking further.

Generally, I found that this was particularly the case in reading the articles which constitute Part I of the book. McRobbie's outlines and summaries of the main debates and questions around postmodernism and cultural studies, and of the relating developments within feminism and postcolonialism were for me both informative and relevant. The work of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in the 1970s, of Stuart Hall and Dick Hebdige in particular since then, remains a recognisable and acknowledged influence in McRobbie's own thinking, but she is widely read and represents some important theoretical developments, updating and educating the consumer of her work in the process. Part I definitely repaid re-reading.

Part III I experienced as a 'good read'. The subject matter of young people in relation to cultural production, subculture, style, gender, race, sexuality and the question of moral panics, reveal McRobbie at her most comfortable. She enjoys culture and subculture. She is enthusiastic about young people and she remains committed to feminism. This part of the book is written in an accessible style about issues which must be of relevance to anyone concerned with young people in the 1990s.

The middle section of the book, Part II, though relevant to her larger theoretical project, I found to be mainly of esoteric interest. In exploring the significance of Susan Sontag and Walter Benjamin, McRobbie is reviewing and reclaiming thinkers who are meaningful in terms of the links and breaks between modernism and postmodernism and she situates them as operating within their own contexts at the limits of modernity. On the other hand, the 1985 interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak reveals some interesting moments of difference and discontinuity between

McRobbie, the western urban intellectual and Spivak, the intellectual whose home town is in West Bengal. Both feminist intellectuals might engage with postmodern ideas, but their emphases are different. The gap between McRobbie's pleasure in the playfulness of the postmodern styles of young women and Spivak's response which contextualises this, echoes the concerns of other left thinkers about the distractions of and dangers of postmodernism:

> *GCS:...And when you talk of this writing on the body, and I'm not being pathetic, this is not a tear-jerking remark, but I can tell it in terms of my home town where more than 300,000 people live on the streets. The little kids have to shit in the gutter because there is no other place. And when you look at the colour of the shit you know whether they are going to last or not. This is a political bodily inscription which makes the inside-outside indeterminate. This kind of stuff is a lot different. (p 128)*

Ultimately, no matter what postmodernism offers us, no matter how stimulating and provocative its thought and no matter how energising for subaltern groups the decentering of the category of class, the significance of class in a global as well as localised context is that the disempowerment which it embraces is one of material denial, of poverty, disease, and criminalisation, cutting across other identities and structures of social division. Global mass media, texts and images are undeniably an aspect of the real experience of poverty, but the struggle for survival in some contexts seems somehow to have been reduced to a sideshow in the rush for the postmodern future. At an early stage, McRobbie expresses her surprise that Dick Hebdige should be rejecting the 'playful' elements of postmodern culture and 'insist on a return to the world of hunger, exploitation and oppression'. For her this signals 'a resurrection of unfragmented, recognisable subjectivity' (p15). Yet there is surely a case to be made, of emphasis if not of principle, for revisiting class as a possible feature of the postmodern as well as the modern world, to develop perhaps a new theoretical understanding of class. Moreover, the modern world has not yet fully departed. Its relationships and cultural processes still exist in many ways. There is little indication within this book that McRobbie is interested in pursuing these questions in any depth.

McRobbie would like to see sociology undertake new ethnographic studies of young people in order that the relevance of theoretical development can be assessed and grounded. I would agree this is both crucial and necessary and indeed it is probable that many of the issues which she raises particularly in relation to gender, race, sexuality and style, subculture and identity would be vindicated in such studies. However, the experience of those who work with young people outside the large metropolitan areas, would suggest that such studies might also stimulate a re-insertion of class within the debates. A truly dynamic, left wing politics emerging in a new postmodern era must surely engage with this concern.

Whilst there remains some distance to travel for researchers and theoreticians if we are to create a politics which speaks directly to all disempowered groups in a postmodern society, the stimulation of our fascination and pleasure in theoretical dynamism is important. McRobbie's optimism in pursuit of this dynamism for the left is infectious. This book will not disappoint anyone interested in these issues. I was glad that the various essays in this collection had been brought together, despite the availability of some of them elsewhere. To read the book as a whole is a challenge and a pleasure.

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David Marsland
UnderstandingYouth: Issues and methods in social education
St. Albans: Claridge Press
ISBN 1 870626 73 7
£8.50
pp 252

MARK K SMITH

This is a sad book bearing many of the marks of vanity publishing. Had it appeared a decade ago, when much of the material appears to have been written, then it may have been of some limited interest. Now, however, it looks rather dated, out of touch with practice and flawed theoretically and historically.

What Marsland has basically done is to bring together some talks and pieces written for journals and edited collections. The opening chapter examines the concept of social education - which Marsland sees as central to youth work. He presents it as being concerned fundamentally with assisting in the development in individual young people of optimal identity, self-esteem, confidence and social competence (p.32). It is active adult participation in helping young people to 'face the normal developmental tasks of adolescence and youth, and to adjust positively and creatively to adulthood' (p.190).

From here he moves on to discussing young people's problems and the youth problem. His conclusion is that there is:

> ... a generalised, singular youth problem which requires attention
> as one problem; second, the development of a policy for youth
> presupposes a theory of youth and youth work, and a strong basis
> of reliable knowledge about youth as such; and third, that no pol-
> icy for youth development will have any chance of success unless

it is both positive, dealing with social education and growth, rather than problems and negative symptoms, and universal, dealing with young people as a general category, rather than concentrating on those young people who are apparently in difficulties or causing problems. (1993: 61)

Further chapters focus on youth unemployment, 'a way forward for Afro-Caribbean youth', and creative leisure. He then examines the case for developing nationwide voluntary opportunities for community action by youth; and the question of practical methods for social education. The key methods of youth work are seen as counselling, group work, community work and activity programming. Threats to the value of youth work are then discussed. Here Marsland identifies three key tasks: a weakness for novelty and fashion; the influence of ideologues; and the impact of continual re-organization. He is particularly worried about the colonisation of youth work within community education; the 'totalitarian notion of youth affairs' and those that present youth work as the radical cutting edge of revolutionary transformation.

Understanding Youth is rounded off by a chapter which goes back over his concern with the sociology of youth (see his *Sociological Explorations in the Service of Youth,* 1978) and a piece which argues that young people have been betrayed and that what is needed is a programme for youth development. Here, he suggests we need to see:

- substantial withdrawal by the state from its power over young people's lives.

- reform of the system of incentives and rewards for young people's various activities.

- restoration of families' financial and moral responsibility for their own children.

One of the most annoying features of this book is the paucity of discussion concerning social education. Marsland's lack of attention to the literature of the area is telling. He focuses on a particular, individualistic, notion of social education which was current in the 1960s. There is no appreciation here of the history of the idea, its links with the German tradition of social pedagogy and French ideas around associationalism in the 1860s. Nor does he attend to the understandings of the social and the group that informed discussion of social education at the turn of the century by American writers such as Scott. He doesn't really look to the way the notion has developed with the schooling tradition. The fact that much of the book was written in the first half of the 1980s - and then not properly updated - also means that Marsland does not attend to subsequent critiques of social education and the general move to notions such as informal education. The result is a one-sided picture of social education, inadequately theorized and lacking a proper appreciation of its limits. For someone who constantly bangs on about bias in sociology this is extraordinary - perhaps he doesn't read his own books.

Unfortunately, and secondly, we can also develop a parallel line of argument concerning his discussion of 'youth' and 'adolescence'. Again, there is a singular lack of attention to the now very substantial literature concerning changing appreciations of the notions historically and across cultures. He remains fixated on the way sociologists have supposedly sabotaged the concept of adolescence. Here he has in mind the work of researchers associated with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham in the 1970s. Since then there has been a very substantial swing by researchers back to the discussion of youth and of transitions. My bookshelves groan with the weight of their accumulated labours. Titles such as *Youth in Transition; Young People's Leisure and Lifestyles; The Adolescent in the Family; Young, Female and Black;* and *Careers and Identities* attest to the continued concern with youth and adolescence.

Third, there is a very real problem with this book in that the institutional and political context is the first half of the 1980s. Since then there have been some very significant changes. The attack on local democracy by the Tories; the impact of privatization and marketization on schooling, further education and adult education; developments around the Children Act; a massive increase in the numbers in full-time education; shifts in leisure patterns; restraints on expenditure - the list goes on. The Department for Education has recently described the changes in the context of youth work as 'radical' (in the Interim Report on their review of the National Youth Agency). Such shifts have been apparent to commentators for a decade or more. They have contributed to the withering away of the Youth Service in a number of authorities and the development of rather different institutional bases for work with young people - but of all this there is little mention.

Fourth, Marsland seems caught up in discussion of what people say youth workers ought to be doing - rather than what they are actually doing. This is a general problem of the field - rather too little attention has been paid to interrogating practice, to exploring the theory-in-use of workers, and to examining the experiences of young participants. The result in terms of this book is that discussion remains rather rhetorical, there is no real feel of practice here

There can be no doubting Marsland's commitment to individual young people and to the idea of youth work. But things have moved on. The rationale for a separate youth service within education looks decidedly shaky. The focus around informal education is opening up interesting directions. Really, this is a classic example of 'a book too far'. It should not have been published.

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KAREN HAGAN

Chasing Rainbows is a thoughtful and emotive account of the authors personal experiences. It is validated in part by a fair theoretical basis and comparisons with similar analyses. The comprehensive structure of the book and the fluent easy style is impressively unpretentious and clear to read : an informative introduction is followed by a breakdown of possible outcomes for children in the divorce process, the position of involved social workers and a range of strategies for therapeutic intervention. It is useful reading, especially for social work students or those entering, for the first time, this area of practice.

The Introduction provides clarification of the issues surrounding children whose parents are divorcing and includes the legislative background. The political atmosphere could have been highlighted however along with the clear ageist discrimination that exists against children. The summary of adaptive responses, though apparently accurate, is inadequate and simplistic. It belies the complexity of interactions and multiplicity of responses, although as this seems to be developed as an introductory text the brevity is justified. It would still have been beneficial to review the positive adaptions, for comparative purposes, with the more maladaptive responses focused on by the author.

Chapter One helps to tune in to the process of divorce. Reference to Wallerstein's work clarified the chain of events which are so common. This chapter covers many variables, such as conflicts, age, gender and reconstituted families which can have a major impact on children's responses to divorce and deserve greater attention. Due to their scant attention here it would suggest this is most appropriate as an introduction to the influencing factors. A discussion could also have been included of parental influences as a variable factor and may be useful to explore with parents as part of a family therapy approach.

Chapter Two deals with workers emotions, roles and practice. This is pertinent and is an area too often overlooked by academics and theorists. Again, however, this section is brief and is probably best accepted as an introduction to the difficulties - it provides no solid methods of combating problems identified.

Chapter Three provides the main theoretical basis for the writer's interpretation and classification of children's responses - though links here and in later case studies could have been clearer. This is an extremely helpful synopsis of the relevant theory covering child development and

how it relates to explanations of children's coping strategies from Piaget and Erikson to pure Freudian interpretation. Bowlby's attachment theory could have been enhanced further by applying some of the points from Piaget's stages of development. 'Mourning' theory was well employed but this term is restrictive. My own preference is to broaden the concept to loss and transition to encourage a closer look at the process of change where multiple losses and gains may occur.

Chapter Four begins to enter the author's personal world of work to a greater extent. The observations are useful and interesting and it is these which provide a real feel, not just for what the author has experienced, but, for the children and their plight. It lack objectivity and research strength however and does not demonstrate theoretical links. The techniques for communication are informative (though most are in everyday use in field offices, family centres etc.) and the collection of games for practice provides a new worker with a resource kit. The section on 'Courtspeak' is too personally reflective and vague to provide guidelines for others.

Chapters Five to Eight progress through 'The Parental Child', 'The Despairing Child', 'The Retreating Child' and 'The Angry Child', all aspects of children's responses the author has found in the course of her work in the field. In each chapter a brief condition is outlined and then illustrated and expanded on by using case study samples which add much interest to the discussion. There is scant qualitative evidence offered however making Kroll's categorizations subjective reflections on personal observations and not definitive models of adaptive behaviour of children to parental divorce. Better application of the earlier theoretical discussion would have proved valuable both for the purpose of providing direct explanatory frameworks and to demonstrate a range of therapeutic approaches.

Although there is a lack of objective substance Kroll's exploration into children, divorce and loss is a book I would recommend to newcomers to the field as it covers a vast array of issues in an interesting and thought provoking way. It is an enjoyable introduction to the relevant theory and issues and enables the reader to tune into the tumultuous world of families in transition. It also develops awareness of possible issues for children and considerations for social work practice. Further reading is required by workers in the field to gain a more specialized and in-depth analysis of the points made in 'Chasing Rainbows'.

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SUE MORGAN

I enjoyed this book and considered it really useful; it is a collection of twelve articles written by academics and practitioners which addresses relevant problems currently facing community workers. The book is dedicated to the memory of Phil Bashford, a community worker and teacher who passionately believed in the ability of the exploited and oppressed everywhere to organise themselves under their own leadership against injustice. It is this theme which runs throughout the chapters. The book gives some succinct analysis of existing community work situations, makes a call for our practice to recapture its radical traditions and provides guidelines for the development of liberatory theory and practice.

Hydae White writes of the pressure upon black community workers from agencies who seem unable to move beyond empty equal opportunities rhetoric, from white managers who offload their management responsibility, and from organizations that expect that the problems facing black communities will be solved solely by the employment of black workers. Her article describes how black workers have gained strength and set agendas working within support groups, consultancy and training. Giarchi argues the case for rural community work, smashing romantic notions of country life by giving an accurate picture of rural deprivation and identifying important points for attention and community work involvement. Jeffries adds a perspective which considers experiences of community organising in the United States which has a wide diversity of both groups and discourse, she argues that it is important not to be locked into rigid ideology, and that the community work process must embrace complexities and contradictions rather than search for certainty before action.

Waddington writes that the urgent task for community workers is to reflect upon, reassess, and re-affirm some of the fundamental values that underpin the practice. He looks at the context in which community work discourse has moved away from the sphere of morality. He shows how Tory success has been partly rooted in their assumption of the 'high moral ground' around the notion of citizenship and cites this as a key area for community worker's attention. Arguing that this is a period of reshaping of modern industrial societies, during which the realities of constant change have been established he sees the need for community workers to develop the ability to re-invent their discourse and practice based on constant values of fairness and social justice as part of the wider reconstruction of socialism.

Holman articulates his view that socialist community workers should practice what they preach. In his article entitled 'Socialism as Living' he

gives three guidelines for this. These he labels sufficiency, vacating and sharing. Under the principle of sufficiency he argues that a socialist should decline a high salary as a statement of determination to work towards a more equal society and of refusal to be a part of the processes which maintain poverty. Socialists should cede their posts, in order for positions of leadership to be open in reality, not just theory, to those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. He further advocates that advantaged socialists live alongside the more disadvantaged, placing themselves in a position to share their wealth, homes and possessions. Fine principles to aspire to, but I found his arguments lack an adequate critique of gender, heterosexuality and race and fail to take into account some basic realities of community worker's lives. Many community workers are low paid and the structure within which they work makes the notion of ceding impossible.

I found Popple's article informative and very useful. He identifies two distinct historical roots of community work and two major approaches that have influenced the development of community work since the late 1960s. The historical roots are those of collective community action and Benevolent Paternalism. Since the 1970s the latter has been emphasized less and state policy makers have encouraged a practice that 'cares for' communities, rather than empowering them into action, this practice is mostly politically neutral, often connected with schemes with private sector links (i.e. Development Corporations, City Challenge etc) and with an emphasis on self and voluntary help. The two approaches to community work have been The Pluralist and the Socialist Radical. Popple argues that the pluralist approach is more prolific, and although it sometimes recognises the political dimensions of community work and the structural nature of deprivation; yet it aims only for micro change. Popple argues that this kind of community work is placatory rather than liberatory, it is 'done to' communities, concerned with social stability, seeing and arguing that the social problems caused by capitalism can be somehow 'treated'. Popple writes 'If progressive community work is to be a credible force it will require a concerted, creative effort against regressive attempts to use the activity to further subordinate the very people who pay our wages' (p.34). In order to develop a Progressive Community Work Praxis, Popple uses the work of Gramsci for an analysis of the context in which we work and our role within that and he draws on Friere to demonstrate a liberatory practice.

The maintenance of power and control necessitates that most social groups consent to the dominant ideology, a step to liberation is the knowledge of how the dominant ideology serves to oppress. Gramsci argues that the subordinate classes have been denied the ability to understand this or the knowledge of ways to change it. Popple identifies this as the role for community workers. He then carefully articulates the web of difficulties and contradictions involved in this.

He looks to the work of Friere to illustrate a liberatory community work practice. This is not in the worker's mediation between the poor and the

state, because such mediation is defined and framed by the powerful. Neither is it in the solving of problems, but rather in the problematizing, and the development of the critical consciousness of the communities in which we work. Community workers as educators must work on the experiences of the oppressed, then engage in a cycle of critical reflection and action, this will firmly root the ensuing theory and collective action in historical and cultural reality.

In Jacobs' chapter, he examines the role of community work after the failure of communism. He argues that the community worker's most important role is organising within the poorest sections of society. It is these people that the Communist Manifesto had dismissed as 'scum'. Jacobs writes that nothing can be salvaged for the socialist community work project from the ruins of collapsed Soviet communism, instead community work must address the great political issues of the 1990s, even if only on a small local scale, as it reaffirms its belief in itself as an expression of class struggle.

Other articles in the book consider the issues of forming alliances, feminist theory and practice, the struggles of council house tenants, the implications for Britain's black communities of the European Single Market and women only community education. 'Community Work in the 1990s', coming when it does, in a period when much current community work is either unwilling or unable to articulate the wider political implications of its practice, contains some timely clear thinking. It makes a very useful contribution to the debate.

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SUE BLOXHAM

This particular report couldn't have more relevance for a journal entitled *Youth and Policy* if it tried. It is a TEC commissioned research study with a brief to 'estimate the numbers of 16 and 17 year olds in South Glamorgan not in education, training, or a job; to build up a detailed profile of who they area; to elicit the reactions among some of this group

concerning their lives and circumstances; and hence to arrive at conclusions and recommendations' (p2). Whilst the brief seems strongly focused on young people and their experiences, the report clearly shows how the multiplicity of youth policies, or lack of policies, is the main cause of both the existence of, and the problems of this group.

The writers argue that non-participation in work, education or training, creates a form of 'status' for the young people concerned. It is also a lengthy phrase to repeat many times in a report and therefore they refer throughout to 'Status A' as a global term for 16- and 17-year olds in this group.

The book is divided into several sections which together form a comprehensive and useful report. 'National concerns and local factors' identifies the broader context of the study including both national and international developments in youth labour markets. They highlight the increasingly difficult and protracted transition to adulthood faced by young people particularly the poorly qualified who are most badly hit by depressed labour markets. A second chapter provides a useful outline of the local context. It is of particular significance that the size of the status A group may have been held down (although still more than 10%) by lower numbers leaving school over the five years prior to the study (1993), but there is a predicted 16% increase in the age group by 1996. It is also significant that the research team had to compile information from a range of sources to built up anything like an accurate picture of the numbers of young people involved, particularly those who constitute a 'missing' group. This hidden group are not in work, education or training, and, are not registered with the Career's Service so are less likely to gain support and advice in order to remedy their exclusion.

Status A young people do not form an homogenous group in any sense. The report reveals that whilst for some it is one or more brief encounters with Status A, for many it forms a long term experience or even a permanent state of exclusion. The following chapters indicate how various groups of young people are more likely to fall into Status A. This evidence holds no surprises for those involved in youth & community work and youth affairs. The gender issue is not entirely clear with greater female participation in education and therefore less in *registered* Status A category. However, the evidence suggests that the gender balance of the 'missing' group is evenly balanced and a large group of officially 'economically inactive' young women may be regarded as a low priority in relation to training because of their situation as mothers or expectant mothers. As the writers state: 'Their education has often been truncated and thus qualification levels are low...The likelihood is that they will be seeking a return to the job market at some stage out of economic necessity, with little or no capital of work experience to show in seeking employment. Their needs should thus be included in the analysis of the youth labour and training markets' (p58).

In relation to the ethnicity of the Status A group, the research is hampered by the unsatisfactory nature of the classification of clients used by

the Careers Service. The picture appears to suggest lower representation by minority groups in the registered Status A group but higher proportions in the 'missing' group. The authors draw particular attention to the needs of such missing elements as Asian young women, refugees and recent arrivals, and gypsies and other travellers.

The final section of evidence presents some interesting and depressing qualitative material gathered from a sample of Status A young people and various related professions and agencies. It indicates starkly the growing exclusion faced by young people cut off from the mainstream by Status A.

At £40, this book is clearly not designed for a mass readership which is a pity because it is a useful and timely report. I frequently discuss with youth & community students whether we receive a skewed and negative impression of the state of British youth from media articles and agency reports about newsworthy young people. Such public information regularly highlights the difficulties faced by disadvantaged 16 and 17 year olds. This report, although only based on one county, does provide the broader picture by allowing readers to assess the size of the policy problem. In that sense, Status A young people should be a major cause for concern amongst policy makers.

The researchers show that whilst on the one hand young people have become extremely newsworthy in relation to poverty, crime, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and homelessness, they are also in a sense hidden both from the public eye and from public services. The report indicates that those young people who are probably most in need of support mechanisms and guidance, are not only deprived of work, training and education, but also marginalised from the mainstream systems of advice and support for young people.

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Patrick C. L. Heaven
Contemporary Adolescence: A Social Psychological Approach
Macmillan 1994
ISBN 0 333 61874 2
£12.99 (pbk)
pp 265

KEITH POPPLE

Patrick Heaven's book is a useful addition to the growing literature on the social psychology of contemporary young people. Written in a straightforward easy to access style this book will prove helpful to those who wish to

understand the world in which young people are entering and the issues and problems they are facing. Presenting evidence from a range of recent research each chapter examines a different aspect of young people's lives, and although far from being comprehensive, it does offer interesting insights into the social and emotional development of adolescents.

The book commences with an introduction to the dilemmas young people frequently have to address before reviewing the different social psychological theoretical perspectives that are considered helpful for the study of young people. This is followed by a discussion on how young people search for their own identity and the problems and challenges inherent in what is a period of transition. The author then examines the influence that parents, friendships and peer groups bring to young people during this period of adolescence. The significant point that Heaven makes about families is that it is not the family structure that is the all important vehicle in assisting young people make the often difficult transition to adulthood. He argues it is the nature and quality of family life that is of greater importance and concludes by quoting Demo (1992) from the *Journal of Marriage and Family* who states 'Children's well-being depends much more on enduring parental support and satisfying family relationships than it does on a particular family structure. What does appear to be beyond dispute is the fact that divorce or parental separation is a complex event. Not only is there the splintering of delicate inter-relationships, but also the challenges of forming new ones'.

The book then moves on to consider the educational process on adolescent judgement before a potentially important chapter titled 'Sexuality'. This chapter provides evidence that young people are engaging in sexual intercourse at an increasingly young age and the author argues that adolescents 'must come to terms with their sexuality and incorporate it into their self-identity with as little disruption as possible'. Most youth workers, teachers, social workers would comment that while this is a laudable aim it does not always happen in practice. As Sue Lees (1993) has described in her book *Sugar and Spice* the whole area of sexuality is a complex one for boys and girls and what is needed is a more adaptive approach to masculinity and femininity. Heaven's chapter on sexuality fails to consider Lees work and that of other writers who are attempting to make sense of the radically changing arena of men/women relationships. This omission makes the chapter a disappointing one.

Heaven then discusses the problems facing young people who are parents. Drawing on research in this area he is able to present the attitudes and beliefs of adolescent parents. Although this proves to be an interesting chapter the fact that it is written from a social psychological position means it does not address the way in which the New Right has targeted teenage pregnancies and parenthood as a social problem. The New Right has argued that the 'normal' heterosexual family should be the template for society and any deviation from this is the result of previous state intervention. This has been such an influential New Right concept in recent years that it should have been included.

The next chapter examines work and money which includes a discussion on the impact of unemployment on adolescents. The author also raises the question of whether poor quality work is a suitable substitute for unemployment. The evidence presented indicates that young unemployed males 'exhibited higher negative mood and depressive affect than did males who were dissatisfied with their employment'. The reverse is true in the case of young women. Heaven speculates that this may be due to the different societal pressures placed upon boys and girls.

The following chapter discusses authority and delinquency while the final chapter considers the issue of adolescent suicide which shows marked differences between the sexes.

Although this is an interesting, topical and useful book I have certain criticisms, some of which I have already noted. One concern is that the book does not have a concluding chapter. Although the chapters stand by themselves, and I suspect flowed from the authors notes written in his employment as a lecturer, there is a real need to pull all the arguments and various major points together to provide an over-arching comment on contemporary young people. There may be cogent reasons why this didn't happen including considerations of length and whether it would have only reproduced arguments made earlier. Nevertheless I am sure readers would value an informed conclusion that speculated on future directions in the social psychology of adolescence. The other major criticism I have concerns the selection of topics for discussion. There is no rationale for the areas chosen. Although they do provide us with a view of young people, it is only partial.

Overall however, Heaven's book will be of interest and value to those studying and working with young people, and will provide helpful data and arguments for further discussion.

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Kevin Fisher and John Collins (eds)
Homelessness: Health Care and Welfare Provision
Routledge 1993
ISBN 0 415 05000 6 (pbk)
£12.99

MOYRA RISEBOROUGH

This is a collection of contributions by different authors on themes which variously inform current understanding of policy and practice in housing, health and welfare as far as *single* homeless people are concerned. On a general level I can think of many good things to say about the book and

some less good things. At a specific level I have rather more criticisms to make. The editors, Kevin Fisher and John Collins obviously care passionately about the plight of single homeless people who are routinely denied health care. The book brings much new empirical research together on the relationships between rooflessness and poor health. It deals squarely with the damaging effects of the 1980s so-called reforms in housing, health and welfare on single homeless people. The book offers hope that the situation may change in the future. This is done by describing and discussing the beneficial effects that innovative health/welfare and housing projects often led by the voluntary sector, have on statutory services and professional workers. The editors and the different contributors also take pains to explode the myths and assumptions about the characteristics of groups of single homeless people.

Having said all that the book has certain odd shortcomings. It does not have a clear overall purpose. It took me some time to realise that it focused on the single homeless because both the title and the description on the book's back cover do not mention this. The selection of topic areas for each chapter does not appear to follow any scheme and while some chapters are written in a very accessible style others are jargon laden. Obviously these sorts of difficulties have to be dealt with whenever editors of books rely on a number of contributors from different professions but they could have been dealt with better. The editors do not say why some topic areas were not chosen. For example, why was a chapter not included on relationship breakdown and violence - since both are key reasons underlying women's homelessness? Why was so little attention given to race? These are glaring omissions. I agree with the editors and the contributors that access to good basic housing, health and welfare is confounded by all the stereotypes about homeless people which they discuss. However, the experiences, needs and issues relating to black and ethnic minority groups, young single women and older women are not sufficiently covered and they do not inform the book throughout.

The discussion also focuses almost entirely on London since it draws on empirical research and descriptive material about projects largely in the capital. Why is this? Research and innovative practice have been conducted in other major cities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Indeed many Youth and Policy readers have been actively involved in both! In addition little attention is given to rural homelessness.

Turning to specific points the book offers a good historical and contemporary overview about housing, health and welfare policy in England. For example, the Foreword by Widgery and the introductory chapter by the editors are both first rate. Timms in chapter 4 provides some illuminating discussions on the different professional perspectives adopted by psychiatrists and health care workers who are in contact with single homeless people. There are some good descriptions of multi-disciplinary projects which provide health, rehabilitation, resettlement and supported housing to different groups of single homeless people. The chapter on youth homelessness and health care (Boulton) is good as far as it goes but it wanders and

repeats the same material which was discussed in chapter 1 by Everton. However, Boulton and Everton are both sensitive to gender and race issues in a way that is noticeably absent elsewhere. Reuler's chapter on the American experience (chapter 9) is interesting but I am not sure what it adds to the book. A comparative chapter on EC policies and experiences would have been far more appropriate given the current debate about close harmonisation of welfare policies between EC member states.

I was disappointed on several counts by what was not in this book and by what was not said. I consequently think that I would not suggest the book as a standard text to anyone although I would recommend some chapters to students or post experience professionals. For me, the book seeks to open up discussion and it demonstrates how the tunnel vision of professional groups bisect the formulation of appropriate policy and practice to enable single homeless people to get access to basic services. This is a brave thing to do and it is a difficult task by any standards. Hopefully the book may be the basis of more research and change in policy and practice and for this the editors deserve to be commended.

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TONY JEFFS

Until recently the idea of the 'community school' seemed passe, a quaint concept which floated around before the harsh realities of the market blew it away. Now community is back in vogue, it is the big new idea. Sound-bite politicians and commentators in the 'serious papers' are busy invoking the notion of community replete with heart-warming accounts of the

Dunkirk spirit and trestle-tabled street parties. Communitarianism it seems is the solution to crime, family breakdown, alienation and unemployment - unfettered possessive individualism is out and caring, sharing community in. If the trend outlasts our recollection of what we gave our least favourite niece for Christmas these books may be seen as precursors of a revitalised community school literature; if not they will be quickly forgotten.

Atkinson was involved in establishing St Paul's an independent community school in the Balsall Heath area of Birmingham. He tells us it was an area without hope and which had little to offer the young people growing up there. St Paul's took the young people the mainstream schools did not want or those who opted to truant. According to the account provided the academic results of St Paul's have been impressive, it now being placed 6th out of 70 in the Birmingham exam league tables. Since opening the school has expanded to provide a focus for the community producing a local newspaper, providing a venue for a community centre and a nursery whilst also serving as a catalyst for community development programmes. Sadly the book offers the reader remarkably little information about the St Paul's project, which is a pity for clearly it is a story worth telling.

Instead we are offered a spirited if totally uncritical account of the benefits of Grant Maintained status. The book argues schools should opt out and then freely join together in clusters, collaborating to provide mutual support and shared services. It calls for a new blend of individualism and collectivism which will uphold tradition, the family and local institutions, allow innovation to rule, stretch the individual and replace the old welfarism which has stifled creativity and curtailed self-development. If it sounds familiar it should, because you are once again encountering the ideas of Rupert Murdoch's pet academic Charles Murray.

Whereas the text carefully eschews all but the mildest censuring of post-1979 Conservative education policy it indulges in mindless and carping criticism of local education authorities. These, according to Atkinson, are unable to do anything right but serve to crush local initiative and creativity. The difficulty with this dismissal is that although they are far from perfect it has been individual LEAs, rather than central government, who have displayed a capacity for initiating creative educational reforms. Even the devolution of school budgets was a policy stolen by Baker from LEAs such as Cambridgeshire. No one would defend every LEA or everything they do but unlike the quangos created over the last decade to manage the national curriculum and funding they are democratically accountable. They are far more accessible to influence and protest than central Whitehall. Although dressed up as libertarian the reforms Atkinson defends have been overwhelmingly centralising and authoritarian. The curriculum has for most pupils narrowed, local communities have lost the right to determine how much they may or may not wish to spend on their schools, young people continue to be denied any meaningful say in the running of the school they attend and schools have increasingly sacrificed the education of those with the greatest (most expensive) needs in order to climb up the league tables or reduce costs. The author is right to campaign for greater community

involvement in the management of their schools however if he is to make progress that will mean paying less attention to the minor irritations inflicted by satraps down in the Town Hall and a lot more to the rampant authoritarianism abroad in the Palace of Westminster.

Atkinson's solutions are far from radical being simply a new form of managerialism. If a community controls neither what is taught (the curriculum) or how much is to be spent on the education of its children (the budget) then really what does it control of any importance? Who should have the final say on these matters he does not tell us just as he avoids the whole question of extending democratic practices to the internal life of the school. Townsend also shows little inclination to address these tricky questions. Like Atkinson he largely renders the student invisible. They are to be tested, evaluated, controlled and when needed by the management available to tell the world how fortunate they are to attend such a wonderful school, but share in the decision-making; never.

Townsend is concerned with the question of assessing the effectiveness of schools. The early sections provide a wide-ranging and useful summary of the comparative literature on school-effectiveness. He notes 'local school communities have rarely been used to determine issues of school effectiveness' (p.50) and sets out to address this omission. The case-study material is largely drawn from Australian schools but that does not matter. However the core-plus message of the second part is hardly new. It describes ways of extending community and parental involvement in the life of a school; how it can move beyond providing the core-activity of delivering the curriculum to young people and begin to act as catalyst for change within the community. It is a useful text for teachers looking to add a community dimension to the life of a school, full check-lists and tips. Nothing particularly new is suggested but it is great to see an old friend, the community school, making a comeback.

Tony Jeffs: *University of Northumbria, Newcastle upon Tyne.*

KEITH PRINGLE

Second wave feminism has in the last decade been confronted by repeated rebuttals on both sides of the Atlantic, some more overtly hostile than others. This book is the latest British onslaught and could undoubtedly be clas-

sified as hostile: at one point in the text (p247) Dench suggests to the admirable presenter of 'Woman's Hour', Jenni Murray, that she should wash her mouth out. In fact the general tenor of the book is combative with Dench cajoling alleged opponents such as David Gilmore (p 89) or Henrietta Moore (p 77). He also tells us in an annoyed tone that there are some things he really should not need to spell out (p 77) or have to point out (p 91) to those who disagree with him; of course he does then go on to spell them out to his readers. No one could accuse Geoff Dench of being a New Man - and he makes pretty clear that this is no loss to him.

Dench draws heavily on the 70s work of George Gilder and in terms of anti-feminist predecessors seems closest to Dennis and Erdos and Camille Paglia. His anti-feminist thesis is striking and extensive but the shibboleths he identifies are familiar ones: the pill; the sixties; state welfare; the moral degeneracy of the Anglican church as exemplified by the inclusion of women priests; the allegedly failed enterprise of socialism.

I will try to summarise his lengthy thesis. Dench starts with a very negative view of men: the are the pleasure-seeking, irresponsible 'frogs' of the eponymous fairy tale which he uses as a metaphor for his analysis. Only women ('the princess') can domesticate men and, at least partially, draw them in to the moral community of society ('the palace') which is women's domain. The price which women pay for the inclusion of men has been patriarchy, which Dench believes is primarily a female invention designed for the entrapment of men. To remain within the moral community men have to be made to feel they have value. That value is largely to be found in their family provider role and in their domination of the public domain. Women, of course, have primacy in the private domain and Dench makes clear that he regards the private sphere as being the source of true power in society. Thus to an extent men's patriarchal power is ceremonial but it serves to give them a stake in moral society and keeps them under control. Without this stake, many men would return to being, or remain, 'frogs'.

Dench believes this stake in society is being withdrawn under the influence of feminism and he variously describes the 'frogs' as 'a plague of feckless yobs' (p 17) and 'working class benefit-drones' (p 188). According to Dench, feminism suggests that men are not necessary in families and, due to the connivance of the welfare state, women can indeed easily (sic - p 22) bring up children without men by relying on benefits. Under the influence of feminism, women have also been invading the public realm of employment where men are now potentially at a disadvantage for two reasons: first, because women can undercut them by taking lower wages; secondly, because many men who are isolated from families have no longer any incentive to compete with women. Women have allegedly been making particularly massive headway at men's expense in the burgeoning field of welfare work and the service sector.

Thus for Dench, feminism is destroying those 'chains of dependency' which enabled women to enlist the support of men in their own realm. As a result men are resorting to dangerous mischief while the state is being over-

whelmed financially by supporting single mothers, lack of tax returns, paying for men's unemployment and the prolongation of the recession. At the same time, by diverting their energies to the public sphere, not enough women are maintaining the moral community with serious consequences.

Dench is, however, optimistic about the future. The Child Support Act and the Children Act have begun to stop the rot. He believes not only socialism but also feminism is running out of steam. Feminism's original advocates, such as Betty Friedan, are growing older and deserting the cause while class divisions also break it asunder. Dench believes the damage of feminism can be undone if the reliance of women and children on welfare benefits is ended and the state instead concentrates on job creation for men. Dench envisages more flexible familial arrangements but with men retaining a revised provider role and having primacy in the jobs market. This is what he terms equity rather than equality.

Whatever else it might be, Dench's thesis is thoroughgoing and my summary of it necessarily omits points. An adequate critique of Dench would entail a book of equal size, and it certainly needs to be critiqued. Here, I will only outline some of the more gaping holes in his argument.

First, why are men such 'frogs'? Dench seems unclear whether this is due to biology, the fact that men cannot give birth to babies, environmental factors, or some unspecified combination of all these. This lack of clarity is important given that men's allegedly 'frog' nature is central to his thesis. Moreover, all the factors he mentions are unlikely to do justice to the complex debates about the nature of masculinity, or more appropriately, masculinities. Where in Dench's long analysis is there any consideration of the social construction of gender, or indeed of sexuality? Where is there any consideration, for instance of Connell's concept of hegemonic and subordinate masculinities? It is as if all the conceptual work about men and masculinities which has taken place in the last decade did not exist. Ignoring these debates is highly convenient for Dench. If masculinities are socially constructed it is necessary to start thinking about difficult things like how men might reconstruct them in ways that are less destructive. It is much easier simply to admit that men are 'beasts' and it is women's job to restrain them: take it or leave it, as Dench says at the very end of his book. Such a cavalier approach to complex issues is not acceptable.

And what about the 'ease' with which women can allegedly bring up children by themselves in our society, thanks largely to welfare benefits? That suggestion flies in the face of a mass of evidence documenting the utter enormity of this task for most women due to the conjunction of child care, welfare, employment, and housing policies. Despite all this, why do women (and indeed children) flee in such large numbers from men? We need look no further than the increasingly well-documented (quantitative and qualitative) data on the massive levels of sexual, physical and emotional violence perpetrated by men on women and children. And is this new? The recent television series 'Forbidden Britain'' reminded us what scholars such as Linda Gordon and Harry Ferguson have long been telling

us: men's violences are historic. They long, long pre-date Dench's demon, feminism. If women bought men's good behaviour at the expense of patriarchy, as Dench claims, they clearly got the poorest deal in human history.

That deal was, of course, non-existent. It is a constant source of amazement that some commentators have the confidence to turn the mass of evidence about gender relations on its head. I should not be amazed. Many people, perhaps most people, of both genders do not want to believe what all the evidence is saying to us about the frequent horror of human relationships, and in particular the place of men in all this. We would have to accept so many painful things about ourselves or those we love or like. So there will always be a ready audience for books such as this.

The truth is not hopeless but it is far more complicated and more difficult than Dench's story, especially for men. Men are not frogs. We can be responsible for ourselves and choose to be different. And we cannot take it or leave it to do so.

Keith Pringle *is senior lecturer in Applied Social Studies, University of Sunderland.*

Celia Smith, Ed.
Developing Effective Aftercare Projects
Royal Philanthropic Society
ISBN 1 873134 01 0
£9.99 (pbk)
pp 121

DORY DICKSON

This is a very practical resource guide intended to help those working with young people leaving care and preparing to move to independence, particularly in setting up or developing aftercare projects.

Since the introduction of the Children Act 1989, with its new duties and powers for local authorities regarding young people whom they have 'looked after', numbers of aftercare initiatives have been developed as partnerships between local authorities and voluntary agencies. This guide is based on the experiences of six such projects run by the Royal Philanthropic Society.

The guide begins by setting out those parts of the Children Act and Guidance which are key to aftercare work. It goes on to describe ways in which local authorities should be responding to the Act in terms of policy statements and guides for care leavers. Suggestions are made and examples given as to what these documents might contain.

Having established the legislative context for the work, the guide examines models for the setting up of aftercare projects. Project policies and general aims and objectives come first. Partnership arangements and the possible components of service agreements are described in detail. Practical essentials such as management, staffing models, referral mechanisms and outlines of work with young people are described and examples are given. The projects described provide three main services to young people: planning and preparation for leaving care; provision of accommodation; and personal support, aftercare support, including help with finances, education, training and employment opportunities. This range of work requires an enormous range of skills on the part of the staff team, a recurring theme of the guide.

There are further separate chapters on Housing, Employment, Training and Education for Young People, Staff Development, Monitoring, and Implications for Practice. I was particularly impressed with the initiatives described on employment, training and education; it's too often assumed that this area is not a priority for care leavers, who may be disadvantaged by a lack of qualifications, low self-esteem and negative experiences of education. In fact, it is a key area where young people can be helped to dramatically improve their quality of life in the long term. The chapter describes methods of working with young people to improve their employment chances, and with employers to create opportunities, and includes suggestions on where to seek funding for this type of work.

What's different about this guide is the way it's been developed from and reflects actual practice. A wealth of examples are used, the style is confident, realistic and knowledgeable, and you have the sense that the contributors know exactly what they're writing about. As a 'how to' manual it's intensely practical down to the real nuts and bolts of setting up a project. Examples of the various forms used by the projects, job descriptions and service agreements, are appended. It also makes me wonder why more voluntary agencies aren't sharing their experience in this way. There must be masses of useful, transferable practice documented in various kinds of projects all over the country, and maybe hundreds of new projects trying to reinvent it. It's also a good way of publicizing an organization and recognizing the expertise of those who do the hands-on work. Presumably the relatively small size of the RPS as a child care charity, the proximity of the projects to each other and their relative newness have helped to make this manageable.

It's very much a work manual, and not bedtime reading. There are no anecdotes, illustrations or even much in the way of diagrams - but it is very business-like and clearly presented. It is careful to take account of equality issues and of the needs of young people from a range of minority groups; I would have liked to have seen more emphasis on user involvement in the projects, however.

I'd recommend this guide to anyone working in the aftercare field; not necessarily in developing a project, because the book could be used to stimu-

late the evaluation and re-examination of established work and is flexible enough to allow concentration on particular aspects. It should also be helpful to those trying to persuade local authorities to do *something* about aftercare - look, this is what *can* be done.

Developing Effective Aftercare Projects can be bought direct from the Royal Philanthropic Society, Rectory Lodge, High Street, Brasted, Westerham, Kent, TN16 1JE, tel. 0959 561611.

Dory Dickson *is Co-ordinator of the Children's Rights Project, Newcastle upon Tyne*

Frank Coffield and Les Gofton
Drugs and Young People
London: Institute for Public Policy Research 1994
ISBN 1 872 452 868
£4.95 (pbk)
pp 49

ANDREW WEST

This booklet provides a good brief introduction to and a multi-faceted consideration of drug use and young people. The authors draw together a number of threads, from a simple description of drug use to youth identity and consumption. In such a short book it is impossible to enumerate fully all the factors, and some points deserve increased weighting, but in general the balance is managed well, with much covered, noted and tantalizingly touched upon.

The central theme of the book is the need to consider drugs and related issues from the perspective of young people: this is not what is done in life and so public policy is in complete contradiction to contemporary life of young people, cannot achieve its aims and deploys the spectacle of two separate worlds speaking of and using drugs, but having different choices and failing to communicate with each other. This might be evidence by a Home Secretary, apparently desperate to alienate as many young people as possible, increasing penalties for cannabis against most professional advice. The authors sum up on page 1: 'Most drug use by most young people is not a problem to them and social policy has yet to come to terms with this awkward fact'.

Like most health education training programmes, the authors include tobacco and alcohol in their consideration of drugs, but unlike them there is no real reference to the use of legal, prescribed drugs which are unprescribed for the user. This may be due to the foundation for the work: it is not a mere polemical piece, but rooted in two research projects, conducted separately by each author with statutory funding, one on 12-18 year olds and one on 18-25 year olds. Material from research provides the basis for the argument.

The booklet moves from a statistical description of drug use (via seizures and offending rates) coupled with media moral panic, which has helped create a particular climate for policy making. They then move on to four good sections examining the patterns, the benefits and costs of drug use as perceived by young people. The first of these 'Drug use in post-industrial society' describes and discusses the movement from alcohol to drugs (illegal) alongside changes in leisure patterns, set against the massive changes in employment and industry and evidenced by changes in pub design and use: in short, the shift from production to consumption with all its connotation for income, work and identity. This section is clearly set in the north-east of England and, in its discussion of drink as a rite of passage to adulthood, is peculiarly male. Whilst the authors recognise the popular gender associations (predominantly male) of drugs throughout, some more space might have been given to specifically consider drugs and gender, particularly drugs and young women and perhaps also the use of drugs in gay and lesbian identities, black identities and access to them/experience of them by others such as young people with disabilities or Muslim young women. The frame of reference used in the book is partially that dictated by the moral panic (and which has presumably been the main influence on policy) - a supposedly mainstream youth which would appear to be white, able-bodied, heterosexual and with different connotations for males and females.

This interesting chapter (which also introduces raves as the environment to counterpoint the pub) is succeeded by a cost/benefit balance sheet intended to provide a single 'explanatory framework (with) all the main arguments used by our respondents to account for their drug taking' (p16). The use of such a balance sheet is novel, and is presumably an attempt to communicate with modern policy makers and a government obsessed by accountancy speak. The benefits are discussed further in the next chapter, beginning with 'pleasure': 'most young people take soft drugs because they enjoy them, and because they create fun and excitement' (p18). The authors go on to look at raves, tobacco, alcohol and the question of identity, now constructed by young people through consumption. There are central themes: the lack of credibility of drug education, like sex education, because teachers (etc.) deny or don't admit the pleasure; that whilst drug education might treat all drugs (including alcohol) as one, in one model, that does not fit with young peoples experience, who do categorise on the basis of perceived use, harm, culture. Policy implications are quietly raised in the threat to the drinks industry of a generation or more turned off beer bellies and alcohol, although the use of alcohol is also described and acknowledged.

The costs too are interesting: that young people perceive not the health risks in the same way as older/professionals, but also see the key costs as 'legal and occupational consequences' (p25). The notion of 'vulnerable ignorance', a category used by the authors, is explained. This is important given that legal issues are of concern to young people because of the ignorance and myths around penalties. The authors also argue that young people are not fixed groups and 'the processes of dabbling, quitting, slowly becoming a connoisseur or an antagonist ... deserve our attention ... not the fixed psychological

traits said to be characteristic of the drug "addict"' (p23). This is also impor-
tant in 'vulnerable ignorance' where young people need to develop a vocab-
ulary range and skills of saying no when they want to, without pressure.

From this the authors develop their recommendations for social policy. They
begin with the problem of law and incarceration and that prisons will be
unable to cope with the increased sentencing due to planned limitations on
cautions. They also point out the perhaps potentially parallel problems of
American prohibition and lawlessness. Their proposals include a monitored
and evaluated five year period of decriminalising cannabis (only) and for
drug education by peers.

Whilst the proposals have implications for professional practice in a number
of spheres, and for the family, so too does the remainder of the booklet. The
proposals, and indeed any proper work with young people and drugs, can
only be seriously considered never mind implemented, if there is an
immense change in the constructed public images of drug use and associ-
ated moral panics, a corresponding shift in the main political parties, and
recognition of the problem of lobbying by the brewers (the potential of this
last could have been given more emphasis).

Whilst the booklet provides a succinct discussion of a range of issues in an inter-
esting and accessible way, it is a pity that young people are largely treated as a
homogeneous group, especially given the emphasis place in identity. Despite
space restrictions greater prominence could have been given to this. The length
of the book is also a virtue, however and it deserves to be widely read for the
main description and discussion alone, apart from the recommendations.

Andrew West *is a Research and Development Worker for Save the Children
in Humberside.*

JOHN HOLMES

It is in the interests of writers and publishers to give titles to their publica-
tions that attract as much interest as possible, but in so doing this can lead
to a dilemma of how to write for people who are reading it from a wide
variety of expectations and interests. *Community Profiling* will attract just
such interest from a number of types of professionals, from students, and
from local people. The community profiles they may be interested in doing

will vary considerably in terms of type of community, extent of involvement of local people, intended size of the profile, time available, and not least the purpose of carrying out the exercise.

Burton has met this challenge well in producing a short guide, organised into ten practical steps, which is laid out clearly with lists in point forms and charts interspersed in the text. All the steps from *assembling a group* to *monitoring and evaluation* are described in a few pages, except for step 5 *gathering data* which runs to 24 A4 sheets. As such the guide is easily accessible and can be used as a reference document to be dipped into, as well as being able to be read fairly quickly from start to finish.

This guide derives from a recent exercise in promoting community profiles in the Bristol area, and was piloted with both professional staff and local groups (in Pathway and Tiverton). As such it is a practical document with appropriate emphasis on involving a range of professionals (including youth workers) and local people. The sections on *initial prioritising* and *initial planning* and *timescale* are a particularly valuable reminder about the importance of clarity at the start. Five foci are identified for community profiles and, despite the subtitle of this guide, rightly emphasise that there are other professional and political purposes for profiles than *identifying local needs*. In the present climate of cuts, short-term funding and 'value for money' the need for community profiles would seem to be increasing.

Despite the emphasis on prioritising there is some chance that readers may end up broadening their focus to take on the other possibilities outlined in this guide. This is fine but if they do so even the fourteen months timescale suggested in this guide may be insufficient. It is to be expected that many readers, such as students or workers in their first post, will be interested in producing profiles in a shorter time scale and as such will have to limit their objectives to only a few of those mentioned.

In being written primarily as a reference guide this book avoids that perennial philosophical questions of *what is community?* and where to draw the boundaries of *the community* once it is defined. Likewise although there is considerable emphasis on *assembling a group* as step one this does not lead into a long discussion of community development approaches. As such Burton's guide can be contrasted with a book such as the recent *Community Profiling - Auditing Social Needs* (eds M. Hawkin et. al., OU, 1994) which in nearly 200 pages can go into greater depth. Both approaches have their value but if it is recognised that other reading around *community* or *community development* may be required then the Paul Burton book is a useful guide.

It might have been better for Burton to have added a little more on the two main competing definitions of community i.e. geographical communities and communities of interest, and the implications of developing a community profile around existing resources (leading to positive images) versus identifying needs (leading to negative images). The length of the guide could still have been kept short if the research methods described in *gathering data* had been compressed. Just as there are plenty of other fuller descriptions of *community* and *community development* so there are about *gathering data*.

However despite this quibble about balance this remains a valuable (although not cheap at £14.95!) guide, particularly for hard pressed workers/students who need to get on with the job whilst avoiding the pitfalls involved in community profiles.

John Holmes *Head of Community and Youth Studies, Westhill College*

Short Cuts

Jacqui McCluskey
Breaking the Spiral: Ten myths on the Children Act and youth homelessness
CHAR
ISBN 0 906951 66 6
pp 82
(available from: 5-15 Cromer Street, London WC1H 8LS)

Roland Meighan
The Freethinkers' Guide to the Educational Universe
Educational Heretics Press 1994
ISBN 0 9518022 4 0 (Hardback only)
£12.50
pp 112
(available from: 113 Arundel Drive, Bramcote Hills, Nottingham)

Alison Skinner
Bullying: An annotated bibliography of literature and resources
Youth Work Press 1994
ISBN 0 86155 143 5
£7.00
pp 74
(available from: 17-23 Albion Street, Leicester LE1 6GD)

Youthaid
Under 18 and Pregnant
Youthaid
ISBN 0 907658 22 9
pp 29
(available from: Youthaid, 322 St John Street, London EC1 4NT)

TONY JEFFS

The passing of the 1989 Children Act was generally welcomed by those working with young people who were leaving care, homeless or at risk. It provided a hope that the quantity and quality of provision for some of them would improve. Like all such legislation, including the 1977 Homeless Persons Act, implementation has been undermined by an inadequate

resource allocation and, in some localities, an absence of enthusiasm on the part of workers and agencies. Based on extensive research this booklet provides guidance to practitioners struggling to secure for young people the benefits promised by the legislation. In accessible language it offers a guide to the tricky issues, examples of good (and less good) practice and case studies drawing upon the experiences of young people, Many youth workers will find this an invaluable publication.

Roland Meighan has produced a delightful collection. Set out in large bold type ready for transfer to an overhead projector are nearly 200 quotes from 'educational heretics'. It is one of those books you skip through, and then end up going through again but this time from the back to the front. As expected Dewey, Russell and Wilde feature but without wishing to spoil the surprise be prepared to encounter some unexpected names; for example Ronald Reagan who apparently asked 'Why should we subsidise intellectual curiosity?'; indeed.

Bullying has in recent years become a 'big issue'. It is one of those problems that unites rather than divides; bullying, like sin, is something no one could possibly promote or defend. Ministers, teachers, parents and managers all express outrage at each fresh manifestation, big or small, before sagely agreeing something must be done. Needless to say much of the outrage masks considerable cant and hypocrisy. The bullying inflicted by pupil upon pupil probably pales to relative insignificance compared to that perpetrated by headteachers on staff and students and by teachers on students. However the power structure within education has always ensured the spotlight is turned on the playground 'tough' not the tyrant in the study or classroom. The imbalance in the literature is something the author of this publication cannot be held responsible for. Alison Skinner has produced an excellent publication for those wanting to do something about pupil bullying. In addition to presenting an extensive annotated bibliography of the available literature, both from the UK and elsewhere, she provides contacts and information on resource material.

Few groups have been more consistently discriminated against in recent years than young parents. An under-lying theme of so much recent government policy has the creation of disincentives to young women who might choose to become mothers. Financial and other support has been eroded whilst the media and right wing politicians have employed stigma in an attempt to turn the young mother into a social pariah. Youthaid have produced a welfare rights guide for both pregnant young people and those working with them. The levels of support detailed are a disgrace and make a mockery of claims that the government is in some way pro-family, let along pro-child. The publication covers the key areas, education, employment, training and income support. Also it also provides information on where to acquire further help and information if this is required.

Tony Jeffs *University of Northumbria*

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

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

Any information which is supplementary to the main text should be noted by a number in parentheses and listed in numerical order at the end of the article before the references, under the title of Notes.

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