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FOYERS:

Housing solution or folly?

RUTH GILCHRIST and TONY JEFFS

Young people's housing needs are remarkably similar to those of the rest of the population. Their preferences do not radically diverge from what others aspire to. Some might consider them conformist, others merely realistic - it matters not - they overwhelmingly covet the sort of accommodation their parents have or desire;

decent, secure affordable housing. They recognise that at some stages in their lives they may need or want shared housing in the form of a housing project, a hostel or a shared flat/house. However the main desire is for self-contained accommodation with an option of having some source of advice, help or support in case of problems. (Carey-Wood, Smith and Little 1993, p. 26)

Forget or overlook their preferences and all too easily you begin to repudiate both their humanity and status as citizens.

Obviously young people joining the housing market for the first time have always disproportionately encountered certain difficulties and problems. During the last decade or so, however, the situation facing a growing proportion of young people on entry has deteriorated (Killeen 1992). A combination of widespread youth unemployment; changes in the benefit system deliberately designed to keep them in the parental home; the failure of student grants to match inflation; relentless reductions in training allowances to minimise costs and the pushdown of youth wages to encourage employers to see young people as a cheap alternative to adult labour; have all tended to increase the incidence of poverty amongst young people and therefore restrict the housing options available to them (Stewart and Stewart 1988, Craig 1991, Carlen 1994, Jeffs and Smith 1992, 1995). Currently over 800,000 young people, for reasons of poverty or shortage, live in multi-occupancy properties including some of the poorest quality stock with four-fifths lacking an adequate fire-escape and half needing major repairs (Gosling 1992, p. 11).

Today, as always, the young poor do not make attractive tenants, being far more likely to fall into arrears with their rent, default or require income support to meet their costs. Young people on training schemes, in full-time education, even those with a job often lack the resources to pay the required 'economic' rent or secure the necessary deposit to commence a private sector tenancy. Unlike private landlords local authorities may not require a deposit but what they offer is usually unfurnished which poses a similar problem to acquiring a deposit. Relentless cuts in income maintenance grants and loans, which are now budget-limited, and the designation in some areas of items such as cookers and fridges as 'non-essential' mean non-parental financial assistance for setting up home is minimal. Whilst the requirement to secure a deposit prevents many entering the private rented sector, shortage of capital results in others acquiring local authority tenancies only to decamp when they are unable to survive without essential household items.

A proportion of these become homeless, mostly for a short period of time, surviving on the streets, moving-in with 'friends' or drifting in and out of hostels (Jencks 1994).

Many, possibly a third, return to parents or relatives where their arrival often signals the re-commencement of the hostilities which prompted their initial departure (Jones 1995, 1995a). Some of course cannot return home; for a high proportion of the long term young homeless comprise those who have left local authority care or are survivors of sexual and physical abuse perpetrated within the family home (O'Mahony 1988, Killeen 1988, Barnados 1989). Whether the reunion is harmonious or not, those returning to the hearth join a growing proportion of young people living with their parents for more years than their parents did with their grandparents. Poverty, unemployment and the absence of adequate educational support all contribute towards obliging young people to stay at home or return to it after a period of study or training; 80 per cent of 15 to 19 year olds currently live in the parental home as do 40 per cent of those aged 20 to 24 (Mintel 1995). Most live in relative harmony with their parent(s) but a significant number we know endure serious conflict (Hutson and Jenkins 1989). Whatever the challenges most young people successfully negotiate entry into adult status and independent living. However 'uncertainty and risk in the labour market, in the housing market and in family life' (Jones 1995: 35) are making the transition more rather than less perilous. These trends require those concerned with youth policy to re-appraise past practice and current policy options not least in relation to housing provision. The current attention being paid to the establishment of foyers for young people partially reflects a reading of the changing circumstances outlined above. Unfortunately, as will be subsequently argued, we believe this to be a flawed interpretation. Foyers, we hold, are an expensive diversion unlikely to make a substantive contribution towards overcoming the housing problems young people encounter.

Foyers: a brief history

Foyers are not a new idea, most certainly not as recent as many would have us believe (Chatrik 1994, Anderson and Quilgars 1995). They emerged from pioneering work undertaken by the YMCA with soldiers in the Spanish - American and Russo - Japanese (1904-5) wars. However the concept really took shape during the 1914-18 war. 'Foyers du soldats' were established shortly after the onset of hostilities largely as a result of funding provided by the American YMCA and augmented by materials and equipment supplied by the French Ministry of War. Designed to offer soldiers 'morale revitaillement' each sought to provide combatants with a place of relative shelter, safety and comfort where the workers might create a family atmosphere augmented by educational and recreational facilities. Foyers were generally a more sophisticated version of the YMCA huts, tea-bars and centres situated in every theatre of the war, army and prisoner-of-war camp (Yapp 1916, 1927, Stevenson 1920). Between January 1915 and June 1919 over 1500 foyers opened each managed by a French director or directress, usually shadowed by an American associate director. Early in 1918 the French government demonstrated a determination to intervene directly in their management by issuing regulations which

entered into such details as fixing the price of hot drinks and other canteen supplies, forbidding free distribution except in special cases, limiting libraries to books approved by the Ministry of War, and prescribing types of building, equipment, lighting, and the like. (Taft et al 1922, p. 344)

Once hostilities ended the number of foyers quickly declined to around 300. Linked by a new national organisation the survivors were predominately sited in

military garrisons, serving military personnel and industrial and urban centres where they provided accommodation, support and recreation for homeless and transient workers. Both their survival and relatively successful transition to peacetime conditions owed a great deal to the support they received from 'leading personalities in French military, industrial, professional and governmental circles' which enabled them to 'become a permanent and influential force in the life of France' (Taft et al 1922, p 348).

Established and new foyers alike were managed by a variegated group of voluntary and religious organisations which eventually came together in 1955 to form the 'Union des Foyers des Jeunes Travailleurs'. Particularly after the German Occupation foyers acquired a favourable reputation with government officials and industrialists who saw them as a mechanism for improving labour mobility by enabling young people to relocate 'where the jobs were'. France during the post war years, like other European countries, experienced an acute labour shortage which it was assumed foyers helped to alleviate by offering protected accommodation, assistance in securing 'training' and the monitoring of employment. Equally they may have curtailed the movement of those young people who in England were dubbed 'chronic job changers'. When jobs were plentiful and housing scarce foyers had a clear role in the eyes of French planners and politicians, therefore funding was made readily available spawning a new generation of foyers. By the end of the 1970s France had a network, largely funded by central government, of nearly 500 foyers with in excess of 45,000 beds (Crook and Dagleish 1994). Many of these were and remain of a poor quality (Skerrett 1994); some are in desperate need of re-furbishment; and overall offer a style of living increasingly unpopular with young people (Anderson and Quilgars 1995).

It was the French system which provided the stimulus for the subsequent British initiative. In particular a study visit organised by the housing charity Shelter and the subsequent *Foyer Background Papers* it circulated during 1992 fuelled widespread interest in the UK. Within months foyers were being heralded by and for the gullible as a panacea: the ultimate solution to the 'no home, no job; no job, no home' log jam; youth homelessness; and poor take-up of training programmes. A Foyer Federation was established in 1992. The Board included representatives of the YMCA, YWCA, London and Quadrant Housing Trust, Peabody Trust, Look Ahead Housing Association, Grand Metropolitan Trust and John Laing Builders. The majority of these had at best a predisposition and at worst a vested interest in the expansion of large hostel-style units either as managers, agents or builders. With such powerful supporters it is not surprising that funds were rapidly garnered to finance five pilot projects based on existing YMCA hostels. The fact that these were dubbed pilot schemes proved something of a misnomer. For well before they were fully operational, let alone evaluated, money was being allocated, working parties assembled and building work begun on new foyers.

Once you delve beneath the rhetoric it becomes exceedingly difficult to discover precisely what advocates mean when the term is invoked. Similarly it is perplexing as to who they perceived as comprising the target group (see for example discussion in Chatrik 1994). However for those seeking a fairly typical, if somewhat bland, definitional statement the following should suffice

At its simplest level the Foyer concept is a form of transitional accommodation for young people linked to training/employment and social support. At a more complex level it provides a tool for integrating alienated youth into mainstream society. (Foyer Federation 1993: 3)

The scale and grandeur of the provision does and will vary according to funding, locality and whether or not the foyer is purpose-built or a modification of existing hostel accommodation. At one end of the continuum are those incorporating extensive leisure provision such as a cafe, information shop and gymnasium open to the public. At the other extreme you encounter those providing a residents' TV lounge, laundry, an array of games machines, communal cooking facilities and little else. In terms of size they seem to range from accommodation for around 30 to approaching 100. Common to all is the offer of a single room in a unit employing some staff 'trained' to provide help and advice about work, job hunting, training courses and personal problems. What differentiates them from hostels is that they link the right of residence to either involvement in a training programme, employment or membership of job search schemes such as a 'job club'. Although the extent to which leaving a scheme or failing to attend the job club predicates expulsion is invariably fudged in any discussion with managers and advocates, this threat is clearly poised over the head of the young person. Also the coupling of the two provides the basis on which 'personal action plans' are often constructed prior to admission. Finally the foyer provides only time-limited accommodation of between 1 and 2 years.

Lack of precision and a total absence of any evidence that the French foyers 'were a success' has not curtailed the enthusiasm of the converts. Ignorance it seems is bliss and requires us to reflect in some measure on why such a poorly defined, inadequately researched programme has become so instantly and often uncritically accepted. Within three years 22 projects have been established, 50 are in development and the Foyer Federation expect over a 100 to be operational by 1998 (Mason 1994, Nother 1995).

Why are foyers so popular?

Foyers attracted a great deal of attention and some influential supporters in a very short time. For example, the last Conservative Party election manifesto promised that if re-elected they would:

carry out pilot projects for the 'foyer' concept, whereby young people are given a place in a hostel if in exchange they give a commitment to train and look for work. (1992, p. 39)

This enthusiasm was echoed by the Director of Shelter who heralded them as 'the housing innovation of the 1990s' and the 'first positive attempt to help young people become good citizens instead of treating them like so much litter on the streets'. A plethora of organisations local and national clamoured to climb on board the latest central government approved bandwagon. Prominent amongst these were the YMCA; the Grand Metropolitan Community Services Trust; the Housing Corporation (a government quango responsible for funding housing associations); housing charities and associations such as Shelter and Centrepoint. At a local level TECs (Training and Enterprise Councils), City Challenge and Development Corporations loyally did the bidding of their governmental masters and exhibited

the requisite enthusiasm. This motley crew in a number of areas acquired allies amongst youth and community workers employed by both statutory and voluntary agencies as well as small regional housing associations. Soon ad hoc working parties appeared in some localities working towards opening a local foyer.

Youth work for some time has been weighed down with a sense of its own futility and irrelevance. Many workers have retreated into management, the world of meetings and individual counselling in order to justify their existence. Painfully aware they are unable to do anything substantive to tackle the over-arching problems of youth unemployment, homelessness and crime it is often difficult to retain credibility whilst waiting for 'something to turn up'. Here, at last, some believed was an opportunity to do something positive about the first two of the 'great problems'. To respond to a government initiative which clearly encompassed a role for youth workers and youth work agencies either as support staff or managing agents. A chance to offer young people a way out of the no home, no job cycle. Foyers seemed to present a new role for the Youth Service incorporating the informal education and leisure traditions whilst intervening in a way others could perceive as worthwhile. For a service that had been deprived of capital funding for nearly two decades foyers seemed to fuel a hope new facilities and buildings could be acquired - not exactly a second Albemarle but the best to be hoped for in contemporary circumstances.

The enthusiasm of youth workers was and is easy to understand and sympathise with. Especially as the 'experts' assured them foyers could plug so many gaps and solve so many problems. An Employment Department funded report promised foyers would:

- provide a safe place to go when they first leave home in search of a job and independence;
- provide the chance to mix with other young people;
- provide expert information and training in a wide range of areas;
- give an opportunity to develop skills and earning power needed for living independently;
- provide an environment and ethos that are both encouraging and conducive to work. (Fordham 1993, p. 17)

Progress from the onset of initial enthusiasm has taken a number of forms. In some localities apparent consultation with young people to determine how they perceive their housing needs and ascertain the extent to which they feel a foyer might help to meet them has apparently occurred. However only in one instance does this work appear to stand up to close scrutiny. Uniquely the Bolton Foyer Discussion Group initiated extensive research, funded by the Rowntree Foundation, into the viability of a local project. This revealed amongst young people a distinct absence of enthusiasm for foyers. Moreover the research highlighted an over-estimation amongst advocates of the demand for short-term accommodation and an under-estimation of the need for permanent housing. This mis-match was already compelling providers of hostel and similar units in the locality to set aside their own procedures regarding length of stay. Finally it exposed a shortage of direct access emergency accommodation espe-

cially for young women. In other words none of the most pressing housing needs of young people were likely to be met by investment in a foyer (Carey-Wood, Smith and Little 1993).

Typically the Bolton City Challenge funding bid had been submitted before any detailed discussion or research was undertaken and funds of one million pounds were set aside to establish a large foyer. This is the norm. Wisely, in this instance, after reflection the original plans were reformulated. Money was re-directed into the provision of the dispersed self-contained accommodation preferred by the young people. Elsewhere a different approach has been adopted. Endorsement of foyers by ministers, the decision of central government agencies to sponsor pilot projects and the availability of favourable funding packages have all sanctioned a willingness in some localities and within certain agencies to suspend critical judgement. Almost no hint of criticism has been allowed to sully their reputation as, in the words of a minister, 'one of the most exciting developments in provision for homeless people in recent years' (Widdicombe quoted YMCA 1994). The care with which information has been controlled is well illustrated by the experience of one research student who found that

On arranging visits to the French Foyers, I was specifically asked to only visit Foyers that were 'recommended' by the Foyer Federation both here and in France, and there was a resistance to giving me the general address list of the 450 Foyers in France. (Skerrett 1994, p 8)

It is not difficult to understand why those centrally involved are often so defensive and anxious to curtail debate and stifle the circulation of criticism. Financially too much is at stake for funding bodies to encourage undue scrutiny. With a typical foyer costing more than one million and a purpose-built unit such as the Camberwell Foyer priced at 3.3 million pounds it promises them not only a resource but a capital asset. Also a number of local YMCAs have re-designated existing residential buildings as 'foyers' and in the process secured substantial cash inputs which raise the quality of the accommodation and the profile of the organisation. Elsewhere housing associations have taken advantage of foyer mania to either refurbish existing units or acquire capital for new developments. For such organisations the risk is minimal. They know even if the foyer fails or the income is insufficient to cover the costs of adequate, let alone the promised, staffing levels and the up-keep of the social facilities they stand to inherit a valuable asset.

Foyers are also expensive flagships offering agencies, often with a justifiably poor public reputation, to own something substantive and highly visible. In particular they provide TECs, City Challenge and the like with a public affirmation of their 'good works', a justification for their existence and a memorial to their transitory presence. In Newcastle, for example, the whole process of consultation has been carefully controlled and managed to ensure little hint emerges of public opposition to the proposal to open a foyer. As a hurried and amazingly thin piece of research into the need for a foyer explains, without apparent embarrassment, 'it is a flagship for City Challenge, it is vital that the development is successful' (Turner et al 1994, p 1). Little surprise then that critical voices were left off the steering committee and research and opinions contrary to the views of those with control over funding ignored. This is an inevitable result of allowing funding rather than need to deter-

mine the direction of policy. As one worker sceptically regarding the value of investing so much in one project explained 'if the money was not there for the foyer it wouldn't be there at all ... if it is not spent on a foyer it would probably be spent elsewhere and not on young people'(interview, youth worker). It is easy to understand why some therefore argue better a foyer than nothing at all and opt to try and make the 'best of a bad job'. Government policy has largely placed the funding for foyers in the hands of unelected and unaccountable bodies whose decisions are open to neither public scrutiny nor monitoring. Therefore those who see little merit in putting millions of pounds into a suspect and untried programme also have little expectation they will stem the tide.

Problems with foyers

Foyers are based on a restricted approach to service delivery. Young people are required to enrol (or be referred) and then undergo screening as to suitability prior to access being granted to services such as careers advice, debt counselling and training. As one keen proponent explained 'not all young people are ready for the foyer experience so we have to be careful who we select' (interview, youth work manager). This approach is akin to a return to the nineteenth century workhouse test which demanded servility as a pre-condition for receipt of help and enforced selection to weed out the 'undeserving'. Certainly it is a *modus operandi* which runs counter to progressive youth and community work practice which consistently seeks to offer services to those in most need, allow open access and minimise the erection of barriers between worker and client. A fundamental weakness of the foyer approach is that those in greatest need of professional support are rarely likely to equate with those ready for the 'experience'. Centralisation of services also heightens the risk of allowing easy enforcement of unwarranted restrictions and means-testing. Workhouses were popular with respectable Victorian society precisely because they made relief conditional - those unwilling to enter the institution were not to be helped; those who balked at degrading and futile labour were not to be supported. In the 1830s the workhouse was viewed as an innovative way of solving the problems of poverty and mendacity. However, like foyers, the workhouse was founded upon a flawed analysis - one which assumed individuals chose poverty, homelessness and unemployment, therefore must be rehearsed into new ways of behaving. Foyers adopt the workhouse model, without the cruelty, but like their forerunners they have all the potential for inflicting repressive sanctions on those unable or unwilling to conform. They embrace a deficit model of young people which views reluctance to register for or remain on training schemes as a failing on the part of the individual, refusing to see that in most cases the 25 per cent or more of trainees who leave YT prior to completion are making a clearheaded choice (Forsythe 1994). They are responding rationally to the poor quality and futility of many of the programmes. Any policy which seeks to link the right to shelter to employment is fundamentally regressive. Such a relationship is one which workers have since the nineteenth century sought to break. Farm workers, miners, railway staff and more recently the police, nurses and prison officers have all found the tied home hampered mobility, inhibited the capacity of unions to negotiate improvements in wages and conditions and gave employers, who already possessed an unfair advantage, additional leverage. Tied-housing, like living-in, may be essential for a small number of jobs but is something workers, young and old alike, have consistently sought to replace with

access to social housing or owner-occupation. The enthusiasm of low pay employers and managers of unpopular training programmes for foyers which help bind young people to them is understandable but the support of those who claim to be working for young people is more difficult to fathom.

One of the most exciting developments of the post-war period has been the gradual closing of large inhuman institutions. Gone are the ghastly children's home with 1,000 plus residents in dormitory accommodation; fast disappearing are the giant mental hospitals on the fringes of urban areas; under attack are the swollen residential units for the elderly and handicapped. Institutionalisation has been deemed to be damaging, inefficient and expensive. In terms of housing, tower blocks have failed and students overwhelmingly vote with their feet - fleeing the monstrous halls of residence at the earliest opportunity. The latter are now increasingly the temporary billets of first years lacking the requisite contacts and friendship networks needed to set themselves up in independent units. Halls have become for students the housing of last resort for precisely the reasons French foyers are proving to be unpopular. They are noisy; regimented; impossible to personalise; temporary (you cannot retain occupancy after the course has been completed or if you fail); deny you adult status by imposing supervision as a condition for the provision of shelter; and they prevent you fulfilling fundamental social obligations such as being able to offer friends and relatives somewhere to stay, a meal or hospitality.

Advocates of the foyer seem to have learnt little from either the history of post-war welfare or research into the housing aspirations of young people. What they propose is to take individuals out of the community, to impose on them the types of rules and regulations (such as no visitors after 11.00, only two per person, all keys to be handed in and collected at reception) which students and others found so irksome. Inevitably foyers seem to acquire the persona of the institution - clinical barren lounges, the television chained to the wall, the smell of cabbage and the pervasive air of the barrack rather than the home. The comparison with halls of residence (which advocates frequently cite) although helpful, is limited. The former rarely encounter the problems of inter-age conflict which seem to bedevil foyers. They overwhelmingly cater for 18 to 19 year olds who arrive and depart en masse whereas foyers quickly acquire a floating population aged from 16 to 25 who lack the cohesion of a common educational experience and shared goals. As one resident explained to us, 'It would be alright if it wasn't for the other young people' (interview). Whilst in another a system of apartheid seemed to operate, with the building divided by age and status to minimise the conflict between different groups - 'A member of staff asked what floor I was staying on. When I told them they said that was the "unemployed floor" and asked if I was frightened' (interview, youth worker). Also whereas entry into a hall of residence emanates from the achievement of academic success, finding yourself in a foyer signals educational failure. Finally the student is clearly in transition towards independence, whereas presence in a foyer spells out partial or total failure to secure autonomy. Therefore the latter is likely to be at best a holding station - somewhere to stay until your time runs out and you have to go back to the hostel, family home, street, project or, maybe with good fortune find somewhere better to move onto.

Despite all the best efforts of staff and generous funding, foyers cannot solve the problems which bring young people to their doorstep. They can offer training but this will rarely lead, as preliminary research shows, to a permanent well-paid job capable of providing the bedrock upon which genuine independence can be built (Anderson and Quilgars 1995). They can offer temporary shelter but in doing so consume the very resources which if better deployed might provide permanent accommodation. Hostels are needed and they can work for many of those who use them. Foyers will duplicate what many small hostels and housing projects are already doing. However they embody the worst aspects of hostel accommodation. As large institutions they tend to be rule-bound whilst their impersonal nature and floating population mitigate against staff furnishing individual attention and creating opportunities for residents to meaningfully engage in the management of the project. Indeed it seems an almost universal feature of foyers that they provide few, if any, opportunities for residents to be involved in management or agenda setting. One senior member of staff informed us they only worked 'because we manage them' and seemed genuinely puzzled by the suggestion that the residents might have a say in the management of the foyer.

Need for alternative

Sadly, for the foreseeable future at least, foyers will not be empty - because managers by exploiting market shortage will be able to fill them. Already it appears the latter have adopted a pragmatic sliding scale of need. With those able to manage without doing so, opting not to admit young people with special needs; some welcoming Higher Education students, others rejecting them; some catering for the homeless, others not; and some providing cheap affordable accommodation for the low paid whilst others hoping to avoid that role. The screening process for admission appears to be highly flexible and given the funding formula social welfare considerations are unlikely to over-ride commercial ones. In many areas foyers seem destined to degenerate into housing of the last resort for young people: places which stigmatise by association. Few have any guarantee that the funding for staff involved in face-to-face work with residents will be anything other than short-term. Therefore many are likely to revert to or become little more than traditional YMCA style hostels. A number of people we have spoken to certainly conveyed a strong suspicion that Housing Association managers have already well-laid plans for alternative usage once the initial enthusiasm fades.

Alternatives to the large-scale investment of resources in foyers are not difficult to delineate. First, what is required is a recognition that young people have differing needs, and that those of an individual change over a given period of time. The nature of housing needs are not fixed, neither do they progress smoothly from point A to point B. For example hostels are essential for some young people leaving care or the parental home and for others made homeless or facing a personal crisis. Given that those who have left care comprise an estimated 40 per cent of the young homeless, specialist provision for this group must be a priority. However simply transporting them from council homes into short-term transit camps like foyers is probably the worst of all options. What they and others in similar situations deserve is access to smaller and more intimate settings with no predetermined time-limit set on the length of stay. They must also be free to return to the accommodation if their experience of independent living, for whatever reason, does not work out.

Second, 'big' units like foyers are ill-suited for meeting the specialist needs of key categories of young people. Anderson and Quilgars (1995) inform us that 83 per cent of the occupants of the pilot foyers were male, Afro-Caribbeans comprised one per cent and the Asian residents appear to have been non-existent. This imbalance is disturbing but not surprising. Young women, gays and lesbians and black young people often rightly view hostels and large units such as foyers as male dominated and at best intolerant and at worst dangerous places for those who are 'different' (Smith, West and Davies 1994). Given that in many localities young black people are disproportionately found to encounter homelessness (Ferguson and O'Mahoney 1991) it is crucial that resource allocation and policy take account of the specific needs of such groups. That means encouraging the development of units small enough to cater either exclusively for such young people or which can be monitored and managed in ways which make them safer, more secure and above-all welcoming.

Third, is the need to invest in educational programmes in schools and elsewhere which help prepare young people for independent living. One recent survey found 80 per cent of young people interviewed hadn't even had the benefit of a discussion on leaving home whilst at school (Shelter 1994). The potential of such educational inputs is limited and they need to be augmented by informal community based education projects supporting, where required, those young people who are living independently or in hostels. Many young people will have little need for either short or long term support from such workers. Others will require substantial help in acquiring independent living skills and intermittent assistance during periods of crisis. The value and worth of such projects lies in the way in which they foster independence, avoid constructing barriers between young people and the wider community and are based upon free association. Again it is important that they allow young people the chance to experiment without closing down the option of returning for help at a later date.

Finally we need to invest in suitable property either by adapting what exists or building what is required. To provide low cost rented accommodation suitable for single young people, couples and groups. Much of this could, if the political will existed, be managed by autonomous co-operatives formed by young people themselves. Some could be built, adapted and maintained by young people. Rather than foyers built by large construction firms and managed by professionals the funding should be used to create longterm training and employment opportunities for young people. Burton et al (1989, p 51) suggest the most successful accommodation initiatives in Europe are those which 'involve young people in defining for themselves the problems they face and which then provide them with support in devising their own solution'. Foyers are the antithesis of such an approach. Indeed the tragedy of the whole foyer programme is that it has diverted attention and funding from viable and proven alternatives that work. Such alternatives would be based on a wish to facilitate the independence of young people rather than extend dependence, which can offer participants the opportunity to be part of a collective longterm response rather than be a transitory customer.

Conclusion

Crook and Dalgleish (1994) admit that amongst the young people who had been involved in the five pilot YMCA foyers only a 'modest number' had found permanent jobs. Further

there is little evidence in the USA or the UK that training schemes markedly alter the recipient's chances of work on completion of the programme. This is not surprising as the real problem is a shortage of jobs in the first place. (Hutson and Liddiard 1994, p 151)

Therefore it is hardly an achievement for advocates to boast they move young people onto training programmes. Linking housing to employment in the present circumstances is a cruel hoax. One made worse by the reality that residence is time-limited and staff know many if not most will leave the foyer without a job, or a permanent home or both. In a full employment, high wage economy where young people have genuine opportunities and choice; where their income levels make them desirable tenants, both for landlords, friends and parents; and where eventual entry to the owner-occupied sector holds few terrors for the overwhelming majority investing in a limited number of foyers is a perfectly respectable option. However in such circumstance it is unlikely such investment would occur because few young people would seek them out as an alternative to autonomous living. In present circumstances foyers are a policy of despair. We have an abundance of reports on existing projects and research into why young people are homeless, trapped in the parental home or unemployed. The problem is not that we do not know what is needed but have allowed policy to be driven by funding and fear of 'dangerous youth' rather than a belief in the potential of young people to control their own destiny. Any housing initiative that does not foster independence and enhance the capacity of the individual to build long term relationships and form partnerships and families is a retrograde step. As foyers address neither of these criteria let alone generate employment it is difficult to see why they are needed.

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JUVENILE SEXUAL ABUSERS

A Challenge to Conventional Wisdom about Juvenile Offending

HELEN MASSON

Introduction

Although only quite recently recognised as a problem it is now accepted that a substantial minority of sexual offenders are children and young people aged under 18 years. Indeed research estimates in North America and in this country are that between a quarter and a third of sexual offences are committed by young people (National Children's Home, 1992). This article explores the issues thrown up by juvenile sexual abuse, in particular the challenge it presents to current policy and practice wisdom about how to deal with young people who commit offences. The article will focus particularly on those aged over the age of criminal responsibility though there is evidence that children below the age of 10 years also sexually abuse other children (see, for example, Johnson, 1988).

Juvenile Sexual Offending - background information

Notwithstanding some of the difficulties in distinguishing between normal childhood sexual experimentation, inappropriate sexual behaviour and sexual abuse, it is agreed that juvenile sexual abuse does occur. A widely accepted definition of such offending is that provided by Ryan and Lane, (1991, p 1):

The juvenile sex offender is defined as a minor who commits any sexual act with a person of any age (1) against the victim's will, (2) without consent, or (3) in an aggressive exploitative or threatening manner.

Such behaviour encompasses the whole range of sexually abusive acts from minor assaults through to gang rape, with varying degrees of distress and trauma resulting for the victims, who include both children and (usually female) adults. Research and literature indicate that juvenile sexual abusers being seen in treatment are predominantly white, male and in their middle teenage years (O'Callaghan and Print, 1994; Ryan and Lane, 1991) and that their abusive behaviour is multi-faceted in its causation, resulting from a combination of family, environmental and societal factors, including in a proportion of cases, the abuser's own previous victimisation.

When treating the juvenile sexual offender, a range of strategies have been developed in the USA and this country, usually involving group work based on cognitive behavioural approaches which have been adapted from work with adult sex offenders. Individual behavioural and family treatment are often strongly recommended as complementary approaches. It appears to be generally agreed that the treatment should include 'sex offence specific' work, as well as treatment to address, for example, the offender's own abuse and victimisation if relevant and other more general developmental issues. In addition, as emphasised in paragraph 3.33 of the National Children's Home report (NCH, 1992):

All management and intervention programmes must take account of power and gender issues. Sexual abuse does not occur in a vacuum; the norms and values of society play a large part in this area of work. It is important to

make a connection between ... cognitive distortions ... and their origins in inappropriate messages relating to sexuality, power and gender communicated to children through the family, peers, role models and the media.

Although theoretical models of work have been developed, in practice treatment facilities in this country are few and far between and only a very small number are being rigorously evaluated (NCH, 1992; DoH, 1992). The same can be said as regards the evaluation of treatment programmes for adult sex offenders, a notable exception being a recently published report by the STEP team which comprises a Home Office funded empirical evaluation of seven community based group treatment approaches (Becket et al, 1994). The report provides evidence that cognitive-behavioural approaches to the treatment of adult sex offenders do have some impact on the attitudes and behaviour of offenders in the short term at least. Similar evaluations of treatment approaches in the case of young sexual abusers are urgently required in order to establish what works with those who are referred for treatment. At present we do not possess an adequate knowledge base from which to draw confident prescriptions for intervention approaches.

Official Responses to Juvenile Sexual Abuse - A Child Protection Issue

Front line practitioners have provided most of the impetus for increasing the pressure on managers and policy makers to develop systems of response to juvenile sexual abuse. This has been supported and informed by the work of the National Association for the Development of Work with Sex Offenders (NOTA, 1993) and publicised in the report of the Committee of Enquiry into Children and Young People who sexually abuse other children (NCH, 1992). The Department of Health and the Home Office, via their Interdepartmental Group on Child Abuse, have also been attempting to set an appropriate context for work with juvenile sexual abusers.

Working Together (Home Office, 1991), which provides central guidance on the arrangements for inter-agency cooperation for the protection of children from abuse, has clearly identified juvenile sexual abuse as a child protection issue and states that official responses and interventions should take place within child protection procedures. Paragraphs 5.24 of the guidance is quoted in part to highlight the process that *Working Together* recommends should be followed when sexual abuse of a child is alleged to have been carried out by another child or young person:

Upon receipt of such a referral there should be a child protection conference ... (which) should include consideration of the possible arrangements for accommodation, education (where applicable) and supervision in the short term pending the compilation of a comprehensive assessment. This assessment should ideally involve a child psychiatrist to look at issues of risk and treatment ...

The conference should reconvene following the completion of the comprehensive assessment, to review the plan in light of the information obtained and to coordinate the interventions designed to dissuade the abuser from committing further abusive acts. Experience suggests that in many cases, policies of minimal intervention are not as effective as focused forms of therapeutic intervention which may be under orders of the civil or criminal courts.

Thus the child protection system is seen as the best way of responding to the problem. *Working Together* also recommends that Area Child Protection Committees

(ACPCs) should coordinate the development of a strategic plan for dealing with young abusers, bring them into the child protection conference system, and devote a section of their annual report to outlining progress. Analysis of ACPC annual reports for 1990 - 1993 indicates that most ACPCs (of which there are 106 in England and the London Boroughs) have responded by incorporating para 5.24 into their local inter-agency guidance on child protection procedures.

Moreover it is also assumed that juveniles who sexually abuse others are unlikely to grow out of their offending behaviour and require early treatment often supported by a legal mandate which recognises the seriousness of the offence and requires the offenders to participate in treatment programmes and take responsibility for their behaviour. The approach is much influenced by research and models of intervention developed in the USA and echoed in recent British literature (Hollows and Armstrong, 1991; NCH, 1992; Morrison et al 1994). Thus a major tension that ACPCs are now having to address is that this model of good practice in relation to juvenile sexual abuse and the assumptions which inform it are in sharp contrast to the model which has developed more generally in the area of Youth Justice over the last 15 years.

The Development of Youth Justice Approaches

Underlying Youth Justice approaches is the recognition that most young people will grow out of their offending behaviour and that much youth crime is situational. Thus since the publication of the classic text *Out of Care: The Community Support of Juvenile Offenders* (Thorpe et al, 1980) there has been a steady flow of literature and research focusing on the diversion and decriminalisation of young offenders. Youth Justice teams within Social Services departments and other agencies have collaborated to develop inter-agency based programmes of delinquency management which keep children in trouble out of the courts and the formal Youth Justice system as far as possible, to avoid labelling, and which aim to work with children on a voluntary basis or in the context of community based disposals. A particular emphasis is put on the use of the caution, diversion and keeping young offenders 'down tariff'.

Since the 1980s diversion has been repeatedly affirmed in Government documents (eg. Home Office, 1980), consultative documents (Home Office, 1984) and the Code of Practice for prosecutors (Crown Prosecution Service, 1986). It is made clear that prosecution should not occur unless it is 'absolutely necessary' or as 'a last resort' and that the prosecution of first-time offenders where the offence is not serious is unlikely to be 'justifiable' unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. The principle has been echoed in local police force procedures. The result has been that the proportion of 14-16 year olds cautioned for indictable offences increased from 34% in 1980 to 73% in 1992 and for 10-13 year old boys from 65% to 92%. Home Office Circular 14/1985 explicitly referred to the dangers of 'net-widening' and encouraged the use of 'no further action' or 'informal warnings' instead of even formal cautions. Thus since 1982 there has been a decline both in the number of juveniles prosecuted and in the rate of known juvenile offending (DoH, 1994). In many police areas 'instant cautions' have been introduced and there are well established systems for interagency consultation (involving probation, social services, education and youth services as well as the police) where decisions are taken at the pre-court stage to maximise the potential for diversion (Davis et al, 1989). Many areas now have a well established multi-agency youth

liaison bureau (Uglow et al, 1992). Considerable 'success' has thus been achieved by 'managing' to keep juveniles out of the system (Nellis, 1991).

The changes and central principles of the 1989 Children Act are also of significance. The care order is no longer available to the court in criminal proceedings and the offence condition has been removed from care proceedings. The change recognised the decline in the use made of the order, its inappropriateness in criminal proceedings, the principle of determinacy in sentencing and the importance placed on parental responsibility, partnership, family support and voluntary agreements (Harris, 1991). New rules provide for the transfer of care proceedings from the juvenile court to the renamed family proceedings court, while the newly named youth court only deals with criminal proceedings. There is now a clear demarcation between the 'deprived' young person in need of protection and the 'depraved' youngster who has broken the law. In the case of juvenile sexual abusers the abolition of the criminal care order is seen by some as an unfortunate consequence of the new legislation. Thus Tony Morrison, until recently Chair of NOTA, comments (Morrison et al, 1994, p 37):

With regards to juvenile sex offenders, the main effect of the Act has been to end criminal care orders, at a point where some would argue, a real purpose has been found for them.

Developing Good Practice

A Synthesis of Child Protection and Youth Justice Approaches?

Evidence from various sources indicates that the debate about the respective merits of these two perspectives in relation to the management of juvenile sexual abusers is ongoing. In a recent edition of NOTA's newsletter Alix Brown (Brown, 1993, p 26), as part of her discussion about Shropshire's Adolescent Sexual Offenders' Programme, comments:

Many social workers now believe that young people who commit sexual offences should be put before the courts as a matter of course. This is seen as a way of accepting responsibility and also as a means of providing a mandate, legally sanctioned, in order to work with the young person ... However, some workers continue to argue for simple cautioning with no intervention on the grounds that juvenile sexual offending is no different to other juvenile offending ...

At the last NOTA National conference at Durham University in September 1994 one of the keynote speakers, Andrew Rutherford, Professor of Law at the University of Southampton, argued in his address entitled *The Efficiency of the Criminal Justice System in Responding to Sexual Offenders* that formal cautioning for sexual offenders should be extended beyond the already high levels of approximately 40%. He was clearly in favour of cautioning in respect of young offenders particularly, on the basis of some evidence that such young offenders often do not re-offend and because the Criminal Justice system had so many negative, unintended consequences that it was an ineffective and risky mechanism of response. In contrast, in a recent Guardian article (Eaton, 2nd November, 1994), Dr Eileen Vizard, Consultant Child Psychiatrist with the London based Tavistock Clinic and in charge of a Department of Health funded specialist therapeutic service for juvenile sexual abusers, is reported as believing that:

Offenders who are old enough should always be charged, both to protect the victim and to make the offender realise he has done wrong. She also hopes that by referring children to court, there is a chance they may get treatment, without which these young offenders may become adult paedophiles.

Clearly this debate will not be resolved until there is much more research into, for example, the career paths of young sexual offenders, as to whether, without intervention, they become more entrenched in their offending behaviour as compared with other juvenile offenders and whether some are anyway more at risk of subsequent offending than others because of one or more factors. A recent article in *Child Abuse Review* (Glasgow et al, 1994) describes a study of all children alleged to have sexually abused children in Liverpool during a 12 month period. It was found that adolescents (aged 13-17 years) were more than twice as likely to be suspected of having perpetrated child sexual abuse than any other comparable age band in adulthood and childhood, which does suggest that a lifespan developmental perspective is likely to be a fruitful future line of further enquiry. In the meantime, following Professor Rutherford's suggestion for increased levels of cautioning runs the risk that some young people who are in danger of reoffending are filtered out at an early stage from systems which have the potential for managing and treating their problems.

However, whilst the debate continues, current practice suggests that assessment processes are being seen as an important means of providing an effective and differentiated response to young sexual abusers. Specifically the nature and basis of any intervention should depend on the outcome of a thorough assessment of the juvenile in the context of his family circumstances (see, for example, O'Callaghan and Print, 1994), carried out under the auspices of a child protection case conference and hence the Area Child Protection Committee. Careful assessment of the young person is recommended which focusses on whether further professional intervention is needed, the level of denial exhibited, the estimated risk of re-offending, the young person's social and intellectual skills and assessment of what, if any, legal mandate is required to ensure the public is protected and the young person gets the treatment required. Thus the outcome of such assessments may lead to recommendations that some offenders should be prosecuted and a legal mandate obtained, some would be better served via civil action under the Children Act, and others may be offered treatment without any legal action or just a caution.

The differences in philosophy and practice associated with Youth Justice and Child Protection and the way the law is interpreted and used is explicitly recognised by the NCH report (1992). It argues that the use of the informal warning or 'word of advice' should not generally be used where young sexual abusers are concerned (para 4.11.1) and recommends that the use of the 'Caution on its own is inadvisable, but that such a measure may have a role in combination with a referral to an agency which is able to provide counselling and treatment' (para 4.11.2). Similarly in some circumstances prosecution might be the most suitable response to provide a legal mandate (para 4.11.3). The report also recognises that the 1989 Children Act does 'not appear to have addressed itself specifically to the problem of children and young people who abuse other children' (para 4.7). It is recommended, however, that authorities interpret the Act so that care or supervision orders may be obtained in appropriate cases (para 4.10).

NOTA has recently published a document *Good Practice in the multi-agency management of sex offenders who assault children* (NOTA, 1993) which has been distributed to all Area Child Protection Committees for their consideration which argues (Appendix 3):

*Many adolescent abusers (and some adults in special circumstances - for instance where the adult has learning difficulties) can be kept out of the formal court process and receive a caution, provided that they admit their offence. **While diversion from Court may be desirable, it is essential that a specific assessment is carried out to look at the potential risk posed by the abuser and whether cautioning is appropriate.*** (NOTA's).

The most recent Home Office Circular (1994), although underlining that cautioning is an important way of keeping young people out of criminal courts, also stresses that the presumption in favour of diverting juveniles from the courts does not mean that *they should automatically be cautioned, as opposed to prosecuted, simply because they are juveniles*. Repeat cautions are discouraged and it is stressed that cautions should never be used for the most serious indictable-only offences such as rape and only in exceptional circumstances for other indictable-only offences. Nevertheless, despite one of circular's aims of creating greater consistency across police forces, practice across the country remains variable as regards the administering of oral or informal warnings, instant and formal cautions - justice by geography as it has been termed by some critics (Evans and Wilkinson, 1990).

Currently the interdepartmental group on sexual offenders (involving the Department of Health, Home Office, Crown Prosecution Service, Area Child Protection Committees and Police) has a sub- group working on the issue of young abusers which is intending to publish guidance shortly which acknowledges the need to maintain a balance between child protection and youth justice approaches.

Local Responses to Juvenile Sexual Abusers and Ways Forward

As already indicated most ACPC areas have at least incorporated paragraph 5.24 of *Working Together* (Home Office, 1991) into their local inter-agency guidance but, beyond that, my own research shows that the level of response to juvenile sexual abusers is patchy. My ongoing study of ACPC Annual Reports since 1990 and analysis of a sample of inter-agency guidance documents provide evidence of this, as do discussions with practitioners in the field. For example interviews in three ACPC areas indicate that there is virtually no monitoring in place in order to obtain accurate information about the numbers or circumstances of young sexual abusers being processed through either youth justice and/or child protection systems. Although computerised data about abused children is now being kept in at least one of the areas, even this is not kept in such a form to facilitate extraction of data about abusers, young or otherwise. A few interested and committed professionals across agencies, including the police, are trying to raise awareness, and develop inter-agency coordination and practical guidance for the management of young sexual abusers but most initiatives are at a very early stage in development and will need to be underpinned by considerable staff induction if any new arrangements are going to be effective. The consequence is that some juvenile sexual abusers are discussed at youth justice panels, a very much smaller number are case conferenced under child protection procedures and an unknown number of those reported to the police are dealt with without referral through either system.

All the professionals interviewed commented also on the dearth of facilities in their areas for undertaking the specialised assessment and treatment programmes required, and on the lack of training available for multi-agency practitioners or for residentially based staff and foster parents, with whom young sexual abusers may well be accommodated.

So what is required in order to develop effective systems of response? For a beginning there has to be a recognition that a problem exists with senior managers taking responsibility for implementing change as recommended by central government guidance at an ACPC level. This in itself may be problematic politically, given the inevitable increase in resources required to bring young sexual abusers into the child protection system. Structures for policy and practice development have to be established with key individuals from the various agencies concerned given authority to take a lead in the work. This may well mean inviting representatives of, for example, youth justice teams or the Crown Prosecution Service, onto ACPCs who have not previously been directly involved in child protection work. Making effective connections between child protection and youth justice processes is crucial to the effective identification and management of young sexual abusers. However this has to be underpinned by the provision of appropriate resources, including staffing, and community based and residential facilities, and an infrastructure of training (to address attitudes, definitional problems about defining juvenile sexual abuse and to develop professional interventions), supervision and consultation. Finally, monitoring of cases and evaluation of assessment and treatment programmes is essential for the development of cost efficient and effective practice.

A few ACPC areas in England and the London Boroughs are much further on than others in the development of policies and practices in relation to juvenile sexual abusers and various models are being developed to facilitate the synchronisation of child protection and youth justice networks. For example, in one or two areas special projects have been established which provide initial assessment reports to both child protection conferences and youth liaison panels, as well as offering full assessment and treatment facilities. In some ACPC areas child protection case conference reports are available to youth liaison panels in order to assist with decisions about prosecution, whereas in others child protection conferences usually follow youth liaison panel meetings though the latter model seems to cut across the recommendation that child protection processes should take priority. In yet another area a separate multi-agency panel for dealing with referrals of juvenile sexual abusers has been established which makes recommendations both to youth liaison panels and child protection conferences. In this area also, as in some other ACPC areas, it has been negotiated that no instant cautions are given and that all cases of alleged juvenile sexual abuse are referred to the panel. What seems key in all these developments is that someone or a small working group of professionals take the lead in coordinating responses to juvenile sexual offenders both at a policy level and at a case management level, in the context of shared understanding that they may well require a different response from 'ordinary' young offenders (Brown, 1993; Holt et al, 1989). To address chronic problems of insufficient assessment facilities, inappropriate accommodation and a lack of training opportunities some areas have or are considering the sharing of resources and expertise in order to make best use of what exists.

Conclusion

The problem of children and young adolescents who sexually abuse other children is an emerging one and one which challenges existing models of practice in relation to juvenile offending. The way forward seems to be a synthesis of child protection and youth justice approaches with a risk assessment of the young person concerned crucial to the determination of whether legally mandated intervention is required or not. Whilst central government guidance and local policy and practices are still being worked out, responses to juvenile sexual offending appear currently to be fragmented and inconsistent although there are indications that some useful models are in the process of being developed.

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THE WOMAN IN THE WORKER

Youth Social Work with Young Women

JENNIFER J. PEARCE

In this article I address the significance of current debates within feminism which prioritise relationships between women. I argue that social work practice with young women could benefit from a theoretical analysis which explores the meaning of the category 'woman'. I suggest that this will inform practice which intends to break down assumption and prejudice between women throughout the process of social work interventions. It is through exploring categories of assumed knowledge that a non-oppressive social work practice with young women can evolve.

Gender Specific Knowledge

Feminist research has broken through boundaries containing knowledge of social relations. In so doing it has exposed the gendered location of predetermined knowledge and truth. Feminist research asks questions about how knowledge has been created and by whom? Answers identify a male domination of the 'cultured' world where established knowledge of the social world has been created within a masculinist tradition (Alcoff & Potter 1993). Further questions challenge the way that knowledge has been categorised. Why do we ascribe bodies of knowledge to separate male and female domains? The binary opposition between men and women has been argued to work to male advantage. The interests of man, who applies scientific rationality to the pursuit of understanding social and cultural facts, are advocated. Woman, the feminine subject, remains ignored or objectified within the natural world (Sydie 1987 pp. 169-211, Whitford 1991 p. 126).

Through questioning this historical premise to the development of knowledge, feminism has encouraged both male and female sociological researchers to address 'gender' as a significant determinant behind the research method, methodology and epistemology. It is asked that we question how such determinants have been employed in the creation and understanding of knowledge (Harding 1986 pp. 24-29).

Social work research into the lives and experiences of young women has yet to explore these opportunities. Although we know that inequalities exist in the treatment of young men and young women, we have still fully to explore the way that men and women have contributed to create these inequalities (Griffin 1993). For example, previous work has exposed the inequalities experienced between young men and women within the youth justice and social work systems (Cain 1989, Campbell 1991, Gelsthorpe 1989, Hudson 1988, Pitts 1995). It has been noted that young women are judged for transgressing expected feminine behaviour, and that their domestic and private worlds are invariably brought into an assessment of their behaviour. Sexually active young women are penalised for being 'promiscuous' and in need of control, whereas their male counterparts are perceived as engaging with healthy and natural experimentation (Hudson 1985 pp. 635-655, Hudson 1989 pp. 108). Seidler talks of how gender roles affect boys and men. He notes that men are expected to hold a strong command of self within the public sphere, hid-

ing any personal and emotional vulnerabilities. Boys can and do express behaviour stereotypically ascribed as 'feminine', but are invariably penalised by peers, family and professionals for stepping outside the masculine domain (Seidler 1991 pp. 73-76, Humphries and Metcalf 1985). Such prejudice is reflected in recent political rhetoric which limits the description of 'yob' to the male, public domain (Cambell 1993). Boys are seen to need tough control on the street while girls remain passive, sexual appendages to the male stage (Campbell 1991, Griffin 1993, Lees 1993). The adult fear of male youth abandon is noticeable in the recrimination directed towards the joy rider. Although, as male, he is expected to frequent the outside world, he has stirred up fears in the adult population by representing a masculinity out of control (Cambell 1993). The media and popular response interplay to create a 'hooligan', echoing similar events of the past (Pearson 1983). A social problem is created, building its own specific momentum (Vass 1986). So if young people exaggerate or transgress popular bodies of knowledge, they shock and alienate a fearful adult population. I argue that the adult population demonstrate such defensive reactions because they need to protect their own confusions and vulnerabilities; vulnerabilities associated with adopting a fictitious, socially constructed, fixed and static gender specific identity. It is evident from research that gendered expectations exist. We need now to give more time to analysing the way that the adult world contributes to creating the expectations. If we are to protect young people from recrimination, it is time for the 'us and them' divide between boys and girls, adult and young people to be broken down. We need to start to look more closely at the fears and vulnerabilities of the adult world before openly blaming and labelling youth. We need to look more closely at the tensions between us as men and women with fractioned and changing identities before we blame and penalise young people for stepping outside the gender divide. Recent youth culture studies have begun this task (Griffin 1993, Walkerdine 1990, McRobbie 1991). Debate within youth social work and youth justice ought to be ready to grasp the nettle.

I am interested in exploring the complex ways that gender specific behaviour is constructed, challenged or reinforced in relationships between adult and youth. In youth social work this means addressing the ways that individual workers respond to young people's developing femininity and masculinity. The challenge, as I see it, is to embrace some of the lessons of recent feminist theory which prioritise the importance of 'self' as gendered (Probyn 1993). This means seeing ourselves as holding different potentials which may not have been developed, which may have been split off and denied because they have been perceived to be the property of the opposite sex. Our 'self' does however, hold the potential to transgress between the masculine and feminine. We need to assess how this potential is communicated during social work interventions with young people. My research question, which follows from this, is not how young women's behaviour compares to young men's, or what differences exist in the treatment they receive, but how their female workers contribute to the creation of their gendered identity. For female workers this means adopting a critical analysis of the messages about what it is to 'be female' conveyed during practice.

Women and representation : the individual within a political movement.

There is an established and credible history within the feminist movement arguing for research which reveals women as active subjects participating in the construc-

tion and development of their own knowledge. It is asserted that traditional sociological research has positioned women as 'objects', overlooked throughout the gender blind research activity or reduced to features for male interest.

Male orientation may so colour the organization of sociology as a discipline that the invisibility of women is a structured male view, rather than a superficial flaw. The male focus, incorporated into the definitions of subject areas, reduces women to a side issue from the start (Oakley 1974 p 4).

Research by women, on women has been proposed as a *corrective* exercise to fill in the gaps about women's experiences left by gender blind sociological research (Stanley and Wise 1983 p. 17). Such empirical feminist research, invariably developed within the potential ghettos of 'women studies', has based itself in the belief that there are distinct and separate experiences of women hitherto excluded from or misinterpreted by mainstream, malestream research. This identifies a need for knowledge derived from 'a committed feminist exploration of women's experiences of oppression' (Stanley 1990 p. 27). Such 'gap filling' research work attempts to build what Dorothy Smith calls a sociology for women (Smith 1987), where women become empowered through the advancement of knowledge of their cultural, political and intellectual world.

My own research work can be seen to provide such information about women's experiences. I have concerns however, if the material is seen to represent 'women' as a homogenous group. I question the validity of proposing similarities between women, although I see that there are obvious political advantages in claiming a unified voice representing women as an oppressed group. This unified voice, the feminist standpoint, originates from the need to represent women in a challenge to the pedagogic, patriarchal assumptions of previous male research projects. But as argued by Walkerdine, women have different social, cultural and personal histories that make uniform representation of oppression problematic. In her work on power and powerlessness within the education system she asks for an analysis which looks at the shifts of power in the relationship between and within the categories of oppressor and oppressed (Walkerdine 1990 pp 3-4). She notes that current debate recognises that 'Woman' is not a unitary being. Women are different individuals with various changing and often contradictory histories (Walkerdine 1990 p 10, Katz 1993, Butler 1990).

But if I abandon the credibility of a unified feminist voice from my work, do I negate the driving force behind the feminist movement which has argued for change on behalf of women? This is not a new question. Much work has debated both the achievements of and the problems with the feminist claim for representation. Butler (1990), Flax (1990 p 56) Haraway (1991), Harding (1993), Hooks (1991), Ramazanoglu (1992), Wheedon (1987) are, for example, some of the many who have debated the validity of a representative contemporary feminist movement. These theorists ask for a continuing analysis of the relationship between power and gender, but also ask for tolerance towards ambiguity and multiplicity within the categories of male and female. Such requests are most pronounced within poststructuralist theory where feminists see 'meaning' as changing and variable (Wheedon 1987 pp. 107-109), offering scope for resistance at an individual level. Resistance is located not only within a specific representative political

movement but also at the level of individual subjects who can both transmit and produce power. It is the individual who holds the potential to both reinforce power, undermine it or expose it (Wheeldon 1987 pp. 107-111). Although many powerful forms of social interventions have firm institutional bases (such as social work for example) resistance to them is potentially possible at an individual level.

The individual does not, however, function within a vacuum. As argued by Probyn, we need to be wary of theory slipping into potentially self-indulgent autobiographical narrative.

I consider the possibilities of speaking selves to be great, and the liabilities of an untheorised return to the 'I' to be even greater (Probyn 1993 p. 11).

Silverman also warns us of

approaches in sociology which imply that feelings and experience are the most authentic data about the social world (Silverman 1990 p. 4).

I endorse these worries if feelings and experiences of one individual are assumed to be representative of others, and if they are put forward as the only data about the social world. If, however, they are analyzed as situated and specific, these personal narratives hold the potential to reveal the individual as an active agent participating in the formation of changing interpretations and knowledge. Probyn argues that through an analysis of the individual adult 'self', the fragility of gendered identities can become apparent (Probyn 1993 pp. 88-94). With this in mind we can attempt to accommodate, rather than be fearful of and repressive towards, the vulnerability of individual young people. We may be more able to help them see the notion of a fixed gendered adult identity as hypothetical, as opposed to concrete and secure.

In my work that follows, I do not advocate slipping into an untheorised narrative of 'self', or falling into a relativism which, according to Haraway, is a 'way of being nowhere while claiming to be everywhere equally' (Haraway 1991 p. 191). Instead, I propose an enquiry which locates the centrality of individual experience in the construction of knowledge.

Youth social work: Exploring within and between.

Applying some of these thoughts to social work interventions has been initiated for me by Annie Hudson's analysis of men's enthusiasm to work in juvenile justice with 'delinquent' and 'difficult' young men. She noted that the nature of the work can

foster and sustain a male worker's 'masculine' identity. In order to work effectively with young and often very 'traditionally' masculine delinquents, workers need to be assertive, to be able to engage in 'bantering' modes of communication (Hudson 1988 p. 43).

Hudson argues that unless explicitly challenged, the use of such skills, which are synonymous with masculinity, can reinforce the masculine identity of the male worker. Men's enthusiasm to work with young men within the youth justice system, compared with their lack of enthusiasm to join the ranks of the female dominated basic grade social work profession is, through this analysis, connected to their desire to reflect and reinforce their image of themselves as masculine.

The extent to which this applies to female workers, having the 'feminine' reflected and re-enforced in their work with young women remains unexplored. While many female workers may shy away from the reminder of adolescent conflict by avoiding this client group as much as possible (Pearce 1992), it is evident that some have fought against great odds to establish services and resources for young women (Carpenter and Young 1986). It was not until being supervised in my work with young women that I began to understand the determined dedication I had employed with other women to establish a specific resource for young women. I began to see my own need to assert an independence from the male dominated resources within juvenile justice (Hudson 1988 pp 30- 47). It became clear that developing the resource was as much to do with my need to 'break away' from this as it was to do with providing a service for young women. This was echoed by the content of an interview with a female worker employed with an alternative to custody project. She explained that there was 'temptation to feed on your needs rather than the young women's' (Sue 1993) ⁽¹⁾

She specifically located her interest in working in an all women's project because

I've always found women to be the most easiest to kind of to communicate with to me, even when I was young they, they.. there was always the expectation that they would understand what I am talking about every time I said something ... (Sue 1993).

As she later noted, the temptation to feed on your own interests is 'in everything'. It is essential to clarify and express self interest in order to assess the boundary between self and other, both as a practitioner and as a researcher.

To develop this theme, I draw on material from my work as a researcher within a six week summer holiday group work scheme run by an Inner City statutory social work project designed to support young women who are being accommodated or looked after by the Local Authority, or who are at risk of being received into care or custody.

I accompanied workers in their day to day events: going on project outings and staying in for activities and discussions. I was overt with the workers and young women about my role as a researcher. I interviewed young women and let the microphone become an activity within the summer scheme. Young women interviewed each other and became familiar with leaving the recorder on during activities and discussions. I also acted as a participant observer, helping as a youth worker during the activities yet keeping notes of my observations of specific events. I used these notes to confer with the workers. We discussed my observation of the events and of the social work practice. It is to such discussion that I refer below, trying to draw out the way that I and the workers saw the use of self within the relationship between practitioner and young woman. I note our observations as to how this 'self' functions within and across the boundaries of the male and female, masculine and feminine. I selected two opposing examples: the first where the young woman is looking to the worker to fulfil the stereotypical role of 'mother' and the second where a young woman responds aggressively towards another young woman and towards the female workers. In the discussion of the two incidents I hope to reveal some of the complexities involved in understanding how gender

specific behaviour can be perpetuated or challenged within the relationship between young and adult women. I will explore the fragility of the gender specific adult self and assess the interplay between this and the developing adolescent.

In search of ...

The young women attending the 'summer holiday project' engaged with a mixture of centre-based activities and trips out to various resources. When out away from the project, young women would occasionally refer to 'going home' to the premises. This was not encouraged by workers, although the young women's identity and pride in the project premises often led them to think of it as 'their base', their 'home'.

On returning from such an outing, one young woman who had held a prestigious position in the group as one of the more established members began to be fractious with the remainder of the group. She was particularly hostile to a 'new' young woman, who had recently joined the project summer scheme. Young women were each allocated a 'key worker', who would be responsible for overseeing the social work intervention taking place. Both the new referral and the established member of the group had the same 'key worker'. It had already been noted that the presence of the new referral had made the more 'established' young woman feel vulnerable within the group.

On return to the project, this young woman 'showed off' her familiarity with the project by going straight to the communal room : the place allocated as the base for workers and young women to relax. She pulled the curtains, making the room quite dark, claimed possession of the sofa and, referring to her key worker as 'mum' demanded a drink be brought to her. She asked that the worker come and 'cuddle' her on the sofa, and made attempts to have physical contact with the worker. The worker did not immediately fetch drinks for the young women, but sat with them and began a discussion of the day's events.

I have in previous work explored the way that this female worker deals with the request for mothering, showing how she works with the sex/gender system that places women in the role of carer and mother, without rebutting the young woman or negating her need for care (Pearce 1992). I elaborate here on the distinction the worker makes between her role as a mother and a worker. She recognises in herself a desire to respond to the request to be 'mum'. She is aware that this desire is her own personal response, one which is located within a specific phase of her own development. She recognised that this was not fixed, as she remembered feeling differently towards similar requests in the past. The potential for different initial emotional responses to demands from young people was recognised.

with my own kids if they said you know 'get me something to drink' I'd automatically do it, cos I'm the person whose supposed to have that last ounce of energy. But when you're working with this situation there's more that you've got to respond to (Sue 1993).

Many of the young women referred to the project have experienced 'mothering' differently than the prejudiced stereotypical image of the caring mother who, as said by the worker, is expected to have that 'last ounce of energy' spared for meeting the needs of others. How individual mothers work with these stereotypical

expectations is impossible to generalise. It is such generalisations that have made damaging assumptions about the 'good' and the 'bad' mother. However, rather than ignore the relevance of 'mum', the worker has to embrace the young woman's request for care without becoming 'mother.' In later discussion she describes what she calls the damage that can be done if the distinction between worker and mother is not maintained:

*damage is around crossing of the boundaries ...
I think its a kind of depowering thing ...
it's taking away from the young woman their right to be anything other
than a child (Sue 1993).*

The worker is asserting that as a child, the young woman has a right to be cared for, while the adult practitioner has the responsibility for delivering practice that enables that care to be delivered. If she had colluded with, rather than addressed the request to become 'mum', the worker would have merged the boundaries between worker and mother.

She continues ...

it's the damage that you can cause with bringing up relationships and having to say goodbye at the end of the day and the damage that's around where a young woman is really looking for a surrogate mother and will get ever so attached that you just cannot function (Sue 1993).

She would be 'bringing up' a relationship of attachment that prevents her functioning as a worker, undermining her role in social work intervention. Instead of using the incident as a focus for entry into debate about the young woman's needs, the worker becomes a mother who can then be compared and contrasted as better or worse than the natural mother.

there is a lot of damage and it does feel disempowering .. it means that she can't say what she wants to me and there's got to be all this kind of like feelings around.. I've got to love you 'cos you're my mother or I've got to love you 'cos you're my surrogate mother you know, not I like you 'cos you're my project worker.... I prefer that (Sue 1993).

The worker's preference clarifies the importance of containing the immediate desire to step in and become mother. By holding onto this urge, the worker maintains the distinction between her and the young woman's needs. Thinking some more about this, we discussed two different scenarios which could have occurred. We looked at the different effects that they could have on subsequent practice.

On the one hand, the 'matronly', 'homely' domestic feminine self could have become a temporary, replacement mother for the young woman. This may respond to the particular aspect of self within the adult woman which wants to care for others, a desire stereotypically ascribed to the feminine, but one which should not be belittled or ridiculed. The young woman's need for care would stimulate this particular worker's desire to care for others, confirming the expectation that care will be provided by women. While this may satisfy the immediate need expressed by the young woman, it would have inhibited her from using the worker as a tool to assess her needs, and it would have established a false expectation that

the worker can fulfil the stereotypical role of the mother. Although this scenario may appear unlikely, it is a live and relevant debate for many women working with adolescents, particularly within the residential setting (Aymer 1992).

The alternative hypothetical scenario that we discussed involves a worker who may have an initial response of anger and frustration that as a woman, she should provide care or accept the title 'mother'. In this response the worker may appear hostile to the request that she should satisfy need, and may initiate an analysis of the structural divisions in society which attribute specific roles and responsibilities to men and women. Even if put forward in a flippant manner, the worry is that the expression of the need 'for care' and 'to care' may become inhibited. It may be thought to originate from a sexist, patriarchal division of labour and should therefore be hidden or removed. The young woman may receive a message that women must present the image of themselves as strong and capable, hiding any cracks or faults from either the punitive male gaze or from the politically correct code of behaviour. In the first scenario painted above, the young woman fails to see her own needs as separate and distinct from the worker's. In the second the young woman fails to express her need for care and love for fear of being seen to collude with a sexist stereotype. While this is an over-simplified analysis of what could happen, it is helpful to highlight the skills needed by the worker in negotiating a practice which accommodates the qualities attributed to the feminine without colluding with a historically located prejudice imposed from both outside and within. Being able to take pride and confidence in the feminine self : not belittling or rejecting the attributes stereotypically ascribed to the feminine, while simultaneously maintaining a critical analysis of the assumption of 'woman' as 'mother' is a hard task when responding to the urgency of a specific incident. It is in the urgency of the day to day event, when things are 'thrown at you', that the worker must consider the implications of her response.

you might get questions thrown at you like if you was a mother what would you do... and you try and think 'cos it's kind of a trick question..... it's a reality ..this situation probably is , did happen ..but they never made a decision or they disagree with the decision... and now that they have gone through the experience and... you've got to kind of answer it and kind of be truthful with your answer.....and you try to get them to look at circumstances (Jane 1993).

Stopping to look at the circumstances is part of the epistemological project that engages with the taken for granted and underestimated ways in which women express themselves (Probyn 1993 p. 87). The task above for the specific worker concerned is to recognise her own response in this instance to the taken for granted assumption that women respond as mothers.

The second incident explored between myself as a researcher and workers in the project was one which blew apart the taken for granted ways in which women express themselves.

Hurting me..hurting you..

This incident involves acts of violence between women which provide an overt challenge to the assumption that women care for others. As existing research shows, women who direct violent and aggressive feelings towards others are

penalised more heavily than their male counterpart (NACRO 1993, Gelsthorpe 1989). While it is evident that the male bias of the justice service perpetuates this, it is time for women to look at the part they play as active agents within a social work and justice system regulating and controlling specific forms of behaviour. Women must address their feelings and responses when faced with the expression of their own or other women's aggressive feelings. Social work has repeatedly failed to accommodate research and analysis of women's role as perpetrators of violence (Brown 1992, Wise 1990). Women who express violent feelings towards others are invariably marginalised and removed from the public gaze. Harding claims that it is with such marginalised peoples that research should continue (Harding 1993 p. 60). To fail to do so prevents a discourse from developing that can accommodate the hurt experienced by all throughout an open and critical analysis of gender. Although it is difficult to 'exclude' and 'refer on' a problematic client, this can invariably be an easier course of action than holding and accommodating the problem. While it is necessary to maintain boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, practice must be sure that the cut off point occurs when the young woman steps over the boundary, rather than when the worker's tolerance or understanding has been challenged. If women rejected angry or violent feelings because of a fear of face to face confrontation with the unknown, criteria for intervention are being established through worker capability as opposed to client need. Hudson notes that social work with young women creates anxiety and fear for many social workers (Hudson 1988 p. 39). Work with the adolescent young woman in conflict can provide a fearful reminder of unresolved conflict; conflict that has been split off and avoided in adult life (Brown and Pearce 1992). The adolescent can become the 'violent other' who is then excluded and removed from the view of the peaceful adult self. Maintaining an awareness of this, keeping the discussion open and flowing, can be extremely hard, although essential if an appropriate and enabling service for angry young women is to be maintained.

we're dealing with a lot of young women who are angry with the system, who are angry with the lack of opportunities and choices they feel they've got,... we at the same time have to deal with how they respond to that, that their behaviour may get them into trouble even further.... we still have to respond to challenge that, and it's because we challenge that I think we get, we get the backlash.. and I'm not prepared for us to stop challenging (Jane 1993).

Being prepared to meet this backlash, and employing methods that allow the young woman to shift from her violent behaviour without feeling forced into the passive, non-aggressive female stereotype presents a challenge to youth and social workers. The incident discussed below occurred with a young woman aged 14 who had recently started to attend the project described above on a regular basis. She was becoming noticeably more confident, beginning to participate in activities and conversations with an enthusiasm that had not been apparent at the initial stages of her referral. This young woman lived locally on a large housing estate which was renowned for 'gang fights', and regular disturbances between young people and police. She had been a member of a gang of young women on the estate. At the beginning of the summer project, she announced that she was going to give up smoking cigarettes, and that she was going to stop 'hanging around'

with her gang because she was fed up with getting into trouble. This progressed well until three days later when she arrived at the project in a very distressed and angry state. She had bad cigarette burns on her leg. On her way home the previous evening her gang had cornered her and tried to get her to have a cigarette. As she had refused, a fight broke out. During the course of this fight, the gang held her down and burnt her leg.

The young woman was struggling with a mixture of feelings which ranged from being angry about having been hurt, and yet proud of the fact that she had been singled out as needed by the gang. Their overt display of wanting her back created a pull between the 'good' activities that occurred within the project, and the 'bad' activities that took place on her estate. In response to this she behaved very angrily. She ignored her wounds and verbally and physically threatened staff. The workers tried to tend the wounds suffered while she was in an angry and aggressive state, but found they had to ask her to leave until she had calmed down. They were clear that she could return when she was prepared to talk calmly without demonstrating threatening and angry behaviour.

Whilst discussing the incident, the worker noted the difficulties of maintaining constructive intervention with violent young women. These revolved around a rejection of the fact that women could or would be violent towards each other. The violent terrain between women was unfamiliar to the worker to the extent that

I didn't see her as a young woman at all, I just saw her as I don't know what, she was a kind of sex I didn't recognise, she wasn't a man and she wasn't a woman (Chris 1993).

and later she said

part of me felt betrayed, but I think that the other part was, well, not wanting to accept it (Chris 1993).

The young woman's actions had 'betrayed' the worker's sense of self, leaving her struggling with her desire to deny the fact that women could hurt each other to this extent. By maintaining an angry and aggressive stance in this instance, the young woman could prevent attempts to reach the vulnerable and fearful part of herself. The fact she may want to express fear, or a need for emotional contact between women is effectively denied through her employment of the 'masculine' stereotype. She has delivered the 'double whammy': the attack against social work intervention is accompanied by an attack of masculine against feminine: a tactic traditionally ascribed to male users of social services (O'Brien 1988 pp 109-123). Through employing the masculine to repress and inhibit the feminine the young woman remains in the powerful position of being 'untouchable', until, perhaps, contained by a physical force greater than herself, such as secure accommodation.

While this particular project embraces work with difficult, violent and aggressive young women, it has struggled to define the cut-off point when expulsion occurs for unacceptable behaviour. As posters on office walls stating that no racist or sexist language is allowed run the risk of displacing the language from one location to frequent another, so does exclusion remove the problem to be manifest elsewhere. The project workers noted that different women would respond in different ways to the

incidents described above, recognising the variety of skills and experiences between women in their work. They identified and embraced the problem through organising time for training in dealing with violent behaviour, and through establishing 'mediating sessions' where young women addressed their conflict between themselves and their workers through a supervised process. Here we see a facilitated attempt to ensure that no one narrative or manifestation of self can be accepted as the fixed and definitive statement of the whole (Butler 1990 p. 332). Through such mediation work, the young woman is encouraged to assess how the singular presentation of aggression and violence can be misinterpreted as defining the total self. The training ensures that a similar process takes place for the workers concerned.

Discussing this incident with the worker enabled us to identify our own different levels of confidence with our multi-faceted and fractioned selves. We discussed our different responses to the violent and angry feelings portrayed by young women, looking at the effects on our practice. For some, there was a temptation to perceive the violent or angry young woman as 'other', denying similar feelings that existed within the adult female self. We explored this as a defence mechanism, looking at the way that our own angry feelings may be split off and repressed. The angry young woman was an uncomfortable reminder of this splitting. It was easier to defend ourselves by removing her than it was to open up the repressed pain of unspoken anger. We became concerned about our own part as women in the fast escalation through the criminal justice system of angry young women, who nobody appeared to want or be able to work with. Creating the angry young woman as an 'other' defends the self from seeing the potential and actual expression of women's anger.

It is through the critical analysis of the use of 'self' and 'other' that, in her argument for writing against Othering, Fine says we can move to

a set of texts which self consciously interrupt Othering, which force a radical rethinking of the ethical and political relations of qualitative researchers to the ob/subjects of our work (Fine 1992 p. 14).

In order to interrupt Othering, it is necessary to focus on an understanding of the parameters of the multifaceted 'self', and the use of the 'other' in the creation of reflections of 'self'. Developments in feminist epistemology introduce ways of approaching this through the creation of new knowledge and ways of thinking about the world. This project is not exclusive to women or men, as both function within changing and developing practice.

Conclusion

I hope to have shown that research into the use of self in youth social work practice has implications for the development of a gender-aware practice. Through this analysis I have not intended to draw on situated and specific examples to make generalised statements about all practice between women. Instead, the use of the specific develops a situated epistemology that releases the researcher and researched from generalising assumptions of 'categories' of knowledge. This then opens the opportunity for individual resistance through the awareness of the multiple, ever changing products from relationships between 'selves' and 'others'. I have argued that this does not collapse into an amorphous jelly of relativism slipping through critics' hands. Instead, it identifies the location for criticism and

analysis within the everyday individual experience where knowledge is created and used. With this in mind, it may be a step towards developing understanding of the complexities involved in delivering a facilitative service to young women.

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Notes.

(1) pseudonyms have been used throughout the text to protect the anonymity of the workers concerned.

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REJECTING THE THEORY/PRACTICE DICHOTOMY IN YOUTH AND COMMUNITY WORK TRAINING

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This article emerges from initial youth and community (Y&C) work training in a higher education (HE) institution. However, it is directed at all those readers, both in HE and in Y&C agencies who are involved in the management or delivery of initial and in-service training, and are currently engaged in debates about the nature and relevance of the training experiences they provide.

The last few years have seen considerable criticism of the youth and community work training agencies and their ability to deliver appropriate training and competent workers. This criticism has been both explicit (Jefferies & Smith 1993) and implicit in innovations such as the Apprenticeship Training Scheme which experimented with the transfer of control of training from the training agencies (Universities and colleges) to the employers. There have been a number of assumptions underlying these implicit criticisms which are repeated in many other forms of publicly-managed professional training, for example teaching and social work. These underlying assumptions encompass notions of a split between theory and practice with the theory of college teaching divorced from the 'real world' of practice. There are also strong ideas about 'learning by doing' as the best way to prepare for professional life, and the notion of 'competence' is paramount in much of this change. Initial teacher training is an excellent example of this trend as central government policy has increasingly driven it out of the colleges and into the schools. This change appears to be based on spurious and simplistic theories which seem to reject theory in favour of practice as the key to developing good practitioners.

Over the last 20 years the influence of the 'competency' movement in both education and training has increased considerably and an analysis of the roots of this movement locates it clearly within an employer/management driven agenda (Tuxworth 1989). With a Government wishing to make some fundamental changes to the whole nature of education and training it is hardly surprising that these developments have had influence throughout a whole range of professional training. In health-related professions (Baloch, Beattie & Beckerleg 1989) and in social work training (Winter 1992) the debates have taken place at both a macro and micro level. The debate about competencies is still dominant in the caring professions (Hodkinson and Issitt 1994) and initial training for youth and community work professionals is no different in this respect (Norton et al 1994).

The research discussed in this paper emerges from a different viewpoint which considers *understanding and critique* as crucial components of good practice. Of course, this is not new and has its roots in the Aristotelian concept of 'practical wisdom' (Carr & Kemmis 1986). We argue that the ability of practitioners to plan, reflect, analyse and develop requires them to have a critical understanding of what they are doing and where it fits into the overall aims of their work. We acknowledge this is a difficult area and that we offer here only some initial explorations. We believe that as professional trainers we are already engaged in the process of

measuring the abilities and potentialities of youth and community work students but often only in an implicit way and often these potentialities are hidden whilst embodied within the curriculum. Therefore any attempt to address the quality of the training experience must start by finding a way to make all the component elements of the curriculum explicit and therefore more amenable to debate, discussion and judgement. In this use of the term 'curriculum' we are clearly discussing a social construction that as trainers we can influence and change not just in content but in ideological source. The way in which we construct this curriculum and make judgements of its efficacy should also explicitly embody the appropriate ideology for the field. Through the construction of the curriculum and the learning experiences designed around it we can encourage students to develop an appropriate 'mind-set' for professional practice. This is not merely about ensuring that anti-oppressive practice is central to the content of the curriculum, nor indeed that tutors operate in styles concomitant with the content; but that the nature of the curriculum, the pedagogy and the ways in which we assess embed the overall ideology. The term we found most appropriate here would be that the curriculum is structured around an 'emancipatory interest' (Grundy 1987). There are of course some inherent contradictions here not least how we square ourselves with involvement in the training of workers for a profession that espouses both emancipation and participation within a higher education context structurally founded on a hierarchy of knowledge. How do we teach anti-oppressive practice when it clearly resides within a 'teacher constructed world' (Laurillard 1993)?

Grundy identifies three specific forms of curriculum which are informative in the debate around the theory/practice divide. 'Technical interest' is essentially about control and often focuses on skills, has a product orientation and is at heart reproductive. It is easy to see that a curriculum driven by this ideology carries with it notions about learning and training that view the student as deficient and the trainer as an expert. This form of curriculum approach can be seen replicated within much of the competency movement. The youth and community work training field has a long history of rejecting this positivist agenda. The second form of curriculum, 'practical interest' would seem more appropriate to the field and would probably encompass a lot of youth and community work training. A curriculum constructed in this way is about developing meaning and understanding to enable participants to take practical action. Reflection, judgements and meaning are central concepts here and inherent in this is some concept of 'good' although this is not defined in any specific or measurable way. We would suggest that this would seem to be the nature of much initial training within HE institutions. The final form of curriculum is 'emancipatory interest'. Embodied within this are such concepts as 'freedom', 'truth', finding one's own voice and a critical reconstruction of the social world. It is not difficult to see how this form of curriculum may be appropriate for youth and community work training. It is considerably more difficult to see how this form of curriculum can rest within both a higher education system with a disempowering hierarchy and external professional endorsement which also 'controls' curriculum content.

Giddens (1991) may provide some answers to both the contradictions of striving for an emancipatory interest within a HE context and why a new competency led agenda has proved attractive to government interests. Through the overt emphasis

on action and practice (and of course its measurement to national standards) the government have been engaged in a process of re-establishing control over a number of professional or 'expert' systems which they see as responsible for some of the ills of our late capitalist society (Jones & Moore 1993). The processes involved in devising competencies 'disembeds' social relations from their specific context and as such they de-skill and alienate. However, this is a criticism that could equally apply to our own professional context where the site and nature of the training constructs an artificial divide between theory and practice. Through HE training we create 'expert' systems that are perceived as removed from 'real' people and 'real' field experience.

If we wish to counterbalance this we have to construct learning experiences which can strive to maintain a more situated and organic relationship with the field. Previous responses to this issue have consequently focused on moving the learning site back into the field. However, our starting point was not related to geography or the site of learning but an exploration of the component elements of the youth and community work curriculum and from this the development of a means of judging the quality of our training in delivering this curriculum. This means of delivering and judging the curriculum should strive to encompass more of an 'emancipatory interest' as being the most appropriate ideology for the field of practice. It may also then allow us as trainers to be both more overt and accountable about how we measure what might be called the 'artistry' of practice (Schön 1983). Initial training, in particular, is well placed to provide the opportunity to develop this difficult concept.

Effective practitioners need to understand why they are doing what they are doing, how it links with other parts of their job and their colleagues' work, and where it fits into the overall purpose and philosophy of their practice. The most appropriate way of doing all this is by developing a critical awareness of practice. Consequently, we have rejected the notion of an academic-vocational or theory-practice dichotomy and strive to embed professional training within the lived experiences of the students and the communities in which they work. We try not to recognise theory and practice as opposite constructs but as inseparable elements of practitioner development. A 'theory stops being a theory when you start using it' (Biggs 1993). Therefore the challenge to youth and community work trainers is to allow those they are training the space, both in terms of time and academic freedom, to explore ideas and formulate critical questions but with a sufficiently integrated structure to ensure the learning is interlinked within the professionally validated context.

Developing and measuring the 'generic codes' of youth and community work practice

Our work drew on a range of theoretical and practical developments in the education of adults (see Ramsden 1992 for full discussion). However, our starting point was to find a methodology for curriculum development and evaluation that allowed us to reject the divide between theory and practice. If we were interested in judging the quality of our training, then we had to be able to identify what we meant by good quality learning. The starting point then was to attempt to codify all the component elements of the professional training curriculum and then to find a more explicit system of judgement which systematically evaluated this combination of various influences. We required a taxonomy that evaluated an integrated

combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes, their practical use *and* critique. This would provide us with a professional measure of the quality of understanding through the application of a critical social theory or more simply *understanding in action*. In many ways we were concerned to move away from habits, precedents and traditions about judging the quality of learning for the profession by devising a clearly articulated (and therefore open to critical discussion) process of holistic assessment (Carr and Kemmis 1986).

Within education there have been attempts to measure qualitatively (Bloom et al 1956, Schroder et al 1967 and Marton 1976, all from Biggs & Collis 1982) but the system we found more promising was the Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome (SOLO taxonomy) developed by Biggs and Collis (1982). The strength of this model was that although it offered a system based on a structured hierarchy, it provided a model of progressive complexity and a systematic development from the concrete to the abstract. More significantly at the higher levels it required learning to demonstrate relationships between concepts and the generation of self-principles, autonomy and independence of thought and action. It also seemed to progress to understanding that was communally and socially constructed as opposed to individualistic; all key components in knowledge being reflexive, social and integrated into a professional identity. It seemed that at these higher levels it was seeking to acknowledge culturally embedded collective understandings rather than technical and highly individualised skills measurement (Jones and Moore 1993).

The SOLO taxonomy indicates that learning can be split into two distinct categories:

- CONTENT - the facts/concepts/issues that constitute the *knowledge* of the subject area.
- PROCESS - the cognitive processes that constitute the *understanding* and the *application* of the subject. That is the appropriate ways of *critical thinking* for the subject area.

This notion of *process* is more complex than the idea of *skills* because it assumes a theoretical grounding to underpin the use of skills and it encourages a pedagogy that is congruent with the ideology of practice. It is also a concept that would correspond to the type of professional behaviour that inherently embodies cognitive dimensions of practice - Schön's 'Reflective Practitioner' (1983). The higher levels of the taxonomy measure how well both these areas of content and process are integrated and inform each other.

So in using this method of measurement our starting point became clear; we had to identify all the component elements of both the *content* and *process* required for professional training. These elements when ordered and clustered appropriately would constitute the *generic codes* of youth and community work training. These generic codes are the basic *content and process structures* that make up the subject area. The curriculum content of our training courses would implicitly embody the 'generic codes' and in moving students through this curriculum we would be explicitly making judgements about the level of acquisition and use of the codes whilst overtly acknowledging the value bases inherent within those judgements. Clearly, in redesigning our course, we were able to engineer learning opportunities

that consciously contained one or more identified codes and could be judged by ascertaining the level of student operation within the codes embodied in the specific exercise, assessment task or learning opportunity.

The key term here is *level* and this is addressed qualitatively within the SOLO taxonomy. It offers a methodology for judgement based on five distinct levels; pre-structural, uni-structural, multi-structural, relational and extended abstract. These levels provide the system by which we would judge the uptake of the generic codes. Obviously the process of arriving at the generic codes for youth and community work is a large undertaking and beyond the scope of this paper, yet we fail to see how we can engage in any debate about the quality of training without some explicit communal agreement about the content and nature of the actual curriculum that is professionally validated. This very same exercise has also been undertaken in broader, more representative forums (National Youth Agency Working Party 1993). As an illustration of how the SOLO taxonomy could operate, we show how one code we identified translates into practice.

Generic code - the concept of oppression

PRESTRUCTURAL

'What oppression?'

Inability to see it as a concept at all or one that has any reference to the youth and community work field. Inability to see self within this framework - either as oppressor or oppressed.

UNISTRUCTURAL

'I think the way we treat animals is awful'

Offers only one piece of relevant data that connects in some way with the 'cue' (oppression). Conclusions are jumped to on the basis of this one piece of data, often leading to generalisations and sweeping statements. May use the concept of self but only in a very egocentric and unconnected way - this is how I feel so it has primacy. Can be riddled with inconsistencies which do not appear to cause any problem.

MULTI-STRUCTURAL

'Yes, in my work the young men are a problem, so we have a girls' night once a week. Another example would be the way my boss treats me as a part-time worker.'

A number of isolated examples can be given in response to the cue and generalisations are made from within these examples - but understanding remains fixed within this limited data. Can often be given in the form of lists. There may be some self-awareness based on simple identity politics, but not to the extent of responsible ownership of an integrated identity. Conclusions can be reached from this limited data; there is a possibility that the conclusions could be different after a second look at the same data. A need to make sense of it all but not always achieving this.

RELATIONAL

'There is so much oppression in the world, it is difficult to single out any particular forms. The ones that concern me in my professional working life are...'

Clearly understands the different aspects and experiences and can link and inter-relate them to both the self and the wider world. May separate out professional and private worlds and not be able to integrate these into a coherent whole. All this is done within the given data and does not extend outside it. May seem too stuck within the realm of subjective experience. Within this response there is consistency but something from outside it may make it crumble.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

'My privilege is at someone else's expense - my life and work are about doing something about it. As a'

Understands the range and diversities of oppression at perceived, experienced and imagined levels. Able to generalise beyond the given data and situations and use this understanding to hypothesise about unexperienced situations. The translation of learning from one context to another. The full integration of self-awareness and openness about self-identity that works alongside the many contradictions. Conclusions can be held open to allow for diversity and alternatives.

There would seem to be a direct link here with the process of identity development closely associated with oppressed individuals and groups. Sensitisation, signification, subculturalisation and stabilisation (Plummer 1981) are clear stages of identity development that students in training would need to go through and, significantly, they are directly parallel to the processes their work with young people and community groups should follow if they were operating a model of anti-oppressive practice.

Our initial research therefore attempted to measure both these content and process areas and what follows here is one example of the structural alterations we made to the course design and pedagogy to encourage students to operate at the higher levels of the taxonomy. The samples of data presented here outline our attempts to begin to judge the understanding and critique developed in students through participation in these new course experiences. The example offered is not intended to be representative but provides a sense of how we may begin to redefine the judgement of quality in youth and community work training.

Course design; encouraging quality and depth

A *deep approach* to learning (Ramsden 1992) has been shown to be closely associated with the two higher levels of the taxonomy, relational and extended abstract. This is not surprising as a *deep approach* 'focuses on underlying meaning rather than on literal aspects, and seeks integration between components and with other tasks' (Biggs 1989, p. 26). Biggs & Telfer (1987) showed in their review of relevant research that

Teaching that gave evidence of deep learning contained in sharp form one or more of the following:

- i. An appropriate motivational context
- ii. A high degree of learner activity
- iii. Interaction with others, both peers and teachers
- iv. A well-structured knowledge base.

These, therefore, were our guiding principles in designing a new postgraduate youth and community work training course. Ramsden (1992) says 'We cannot train students to use deep approaches when the educational environment is giving them the message that surface ones are rewarded' (p. 64), and Boud (1989) points to the 'number of notable studies over the years which have demonstrated that assessment methods and requirements probably have a greater influence on how and what students learn than any other single factor' (p. 35).

Anyone having worked or studied in HE will know that, except for a very small minority, it is students' perception of the how the assessment works for any given course that effects the amount and type of work they do, and what they prioritise. For example, if attendance is not assessed, then students will make very clear decisions about whether attendance at a given lecture will help them write the essay or pass the exam! In other words, assessment provides the strongest external motivation to work. What we wanted to do was to ensure that the assessment tasks themselves encouraged and developed a study culture dependent on learning of a *relational* and *extended abstract* nature and learning that was embedded in practice. We wanted them to engage with the subject matter in an involved way; one that would require them to understand and link ideas, relate them to their own experience and apply them critically to their professional work. Given our working knowledge of students' fixed relationship with assessment, it became apparent that *we should re-conceptualise assessment not as a method of 'expert' measurement of a concrete object but the process which drives the learning and leads to a specific quality of learning.*

Therefore we reassessed what learning processes would encourage the sort of experiences we required for each area of study and then we redesigned and planned assessment tasks that would require the students to undergo this range of learning activities. In other words, the design of the assessment was congruent with and embedded in the learning experience. This refocusing of assessment also involved exploring ways of altering the power relationship involved in assessment where the students had more control over some of these judgements. Clearly power is a crucial concept in training and one that has significances beyond the simple boundaries of 'education' (Freire 1972) and we shall return to the contradictions of empowering and emancipatory experiences within HE contexts in our conclusions. We will now outline one particular example of a newly designed assessment task and some tentative results from the opening research interviews which focused, firstly, on the student experience of the process and secondly the initial steps to measure the quality of the outcome from this new course experience.

The matrix

This exercise was designed to cover the bulk of the curriculum in the first term of a Social Education Unit. The matrix, whilst clearly indicating subject areas and boundaries, was a very open assessment item structured to drive information collecting and learning and encourage groups of students to develop a critique of practice. Group work was important because it also encouraged them to share the data collection and discuss their findings. However, group work also embodied the ideology of both the field and the curriculum design:

Critical reflection involves more than knowledge of one's own values and understanding of one's practice. It involves a dialectical criticism of one's own values in a social and historical context in which the values of others are also crucial (McTaggart and Singh in Grundy (1987) p 124).

Figure One indicates the extent of both the structure and boundaries of the task.

	Voluntary provision	Statutory provision	Provision for young women	Provision for minority groups
<i>Brief History</i>				
<i>Analysis of underpinning ideology</i>				
<i>Relationship of this development to concurrent social changes</i>				
<i>Examples of current practice and its ideology</i>				
<i>Your personal view of this provision</i>				

Figure 1: Matrix of youth and community provision

The research and the results

Over the course of the year, and particularly in the last term, we collected a range of data in order to evaluate the impact of our innovations. This research involved quantitative and qualitative methods; the qualitative methods are the ones we focus on here. The qualitative approach to the research involved an independent interviewer carrying out semi-structured interviews with 12 students, over half of the course cohort. The interview schedule focused on the matrix task (amongst others) in order to collect data about specific experiences rather than generalised accounts. Furthermore, it was a task from the first term, so students were able to discuss it with the benefit of hindsight and in relation to their subsequent experience on a 12 week professional placement. The interviews concentrated on the process of the tasks (*motivation, interaction, activity and structure*) but they also sought examples of learning that students had retained in order to explore the depth of learning (as judged by means of our embryonic taxonomy).

Whilst not making any claims as to the representativeness of these comments they clearly indicate student perceptions, feelings and understandings related to the experience on the course and our interpretation of these responses is not value-free but via our understandings and interpretative categories as the teachers of the course under investigation. Carr and Kemmis (1986) stress the importance of combining the teacher and researcher role, whilst highlighting both the difficulties and the strengths of this dual role. For the purposes of this paper we will focus on the

data relevant to the professional development of workers through analysis of the quality of their understandings. The research results covering the redesigned *process* elements of the pedagogy of the course have been published elsewhere (Bloxham & Heathfield 1994). We concentrate here on our attempt to make some judgements about the quality of learning around our previously identified generic code of oppression which was structurally embedded within the exercise outlined.

Evaluating the quality of learning - the generic code of oppression

Data gained from interviews was used to attempt to measure at what level students were operating when given specific cues about their understanding of the curriculum content areas identified previously for the matrix. Clearly students did not enter the course as empty vessels and therefore learning outcomes identified may be a summation of various influences. However, the questions attempted to distinguish specific understandings gained from the course, or the interplay of course activity with previous experience and understanding. It is not possible to single out this exercise as the clear causal factor in these measured developments in students. It is just this problem that the competency movement crudely avoids; skills are measured as if removed from their specific context or directly relational to the particular people involved in the interaction. Within the limited bounds of this paper we suggest that the data here indicates the important contribution this exercise made to overall student learning. We would also have some serious reservations about attempting to measure the nature and quality of these human interactions whilst still operating within the limiting discourse boundaries rooted in positivism. Our initial research is an attempt to find a way of making these judgements outside and beyond this 'scientific' approach to educational research. We would wish to be wary of dismissing students' comments about their experiences as 'unrepresentative', whilst acknowledging the influence of our own critical judgements in assessing the insightfulness of such comments.

Responses were measured against the intended objectives of the exercises in the light of the five levels of the taxonomy. As stated at the outset of this paper, our intention was to engineer learning experiences that encouraged students to operate at relational or extended abstract levels. The previously outlined generic code of the concept of oppression was used here to attempt to measure the quality of understanding.

Although classifying responses in this way can only be subjective, we undertook our content analysis independently and separately before conferring. This method of assessment, of course, is no different to the way in which more standard academic work is actually assessed. We each classified the responses, seeking examples of multi-structural, relational and extended abstract thinking. In classifying responses, students' ability to deduce and generalise beyond the given experience was crucial in allocation to the extended abstract category. At the highest level we would be expecting students to integrate their knowledge and understanding and make it their own; that is develop a fully integrated professional identity.

This content analysis indicated that all those interviewed were operating at least at a multi-structural level with some at a relational level and half the sample at the extended abstract level. It would be fair to say that a large number of those operating at the relational level may also have been offering responses that could be classified as extended abstract, but the interview data here is not as clear cut as in the most obvious cases. The following examples show how students achieved the objectives of the exercise by identifying a personal philosophy and value base derived from an

analysis of youth and community work practice both now and in the past. It is important to remember that these students ostensibly followed a group and independent study programme to acquire their knowledge and understanding of this curriculum:

I've got a feeling of where I now sit in there which is my personal philosophy. Where I'm most comfortable. So I think I take that away. That was part of the matrix...I would say I sit...I wouldn't be extreme as like a radical paradigm, whatever they call it. I'd sit somewhere like social reform stage of it. I think things certainly need to be changed. It's no good just like fixing things up. I think things actually need to be changed, but I'd say it's more of an evolutionary process than a revolutionary process.

I've never been motivated towards history and things that happened even in this century. So it's given me a knowledge of what's happened. But then the analytical part - why did these things happen? And then you get the why and then you get some policies coming from this... some reports coming from this. For me, coming from the science and technology angle, I'm 100% more clued up.

This student concludes discussion of the matrix with:

[I'm] More political, because for many years I've been convincing myself that I'm not political and I'm not really interested in that sort of thing. But I think you have to be now. ...the matrix has shown us because it's part of the overall course, so the matrix has been one step in.

The evidence here suggests that the exercise has provided a clear opportunity for students to relate historical knowledge and understanding into a professional identity for their future practice within a critical social framework.

In analysing responses relating to the matrix exercise there are some key questions that help identify the knowledge base that the students have gained and their level of understanding about the curriculum areas the exercise was designed to cover. A number of these questions are also clearly useful in helping to locate the students' responses within the framework of the taxonomy. The questions you see outlined here were formulated to analyse the data and were not necessarily the questions used by the interviewer. They are the means by which we can judge the quality of the responses, not necessarily the cues by which the responses were elicited.

In looking for evidence of learning at an extended abstract level, we looked for links, coherence, integration and deduction. The following quotations would seem to provide evidence for this.

1) *Did the students make links, were they able to generalise and deduce across the whole curriculum span covered by the exercise?*

Yes, yes. I think if you have an understanding of oppression in the broader sense and a political structure and realities in a broader sense, you can see those patterns again and again in the statutory and the voluntary and the minority with women and black people, with all the rest. You can make links across the board.

Most students were able to make links across the various sections of the exercise.

2) *Did they understand the inter-relationships and the diversity of provision both historically and currently?*

I think probably the most important thing for me was that it hasn't been a recent thing. The youth and community service hasn't been a recent thing, and some of the ideology behind it these days isn't a recent thing either. That there have always been theories about how to help as such, do you know what I mean? What to do with people. That was interesting for me, looking at like the sort of philanthropy aspect, you know, because I've never really thought about that before, because I was very much in the present day, stuck in the present day. And I always wondered sort of how.... I always felt the youth and community service was just sort of there, and it had just been plonked on the 1990s and the 1980s or something, and I never knew anything about that. I always felt that was missing. I didn't know what the background was to any of it.

Here we see evidence of a diversity and range of understanding that has a historical perspective that is leading students to a more focused sense of professional identity and a specific reference to 'theories' being of use. As a professional training course we need to be able to monitor the development of student ability to deduce professional implications for their learning.

- 3) *Were there any indications that this new knowledge and understanding would inform their future practice?*

Well it's made me more aware of.... You see I've done a lot of work in the past, and I miss that gut feeling that that's good, that's good stuff and that's not, that's not so good. I like working this way, I don't like working that way. But if somebody asked me what I was doing, I couldn't really say - I'm doing this and I'm doing this because...And I'd no historical background or theory at all and I used to get really worried if people asked me what I did because...I'd have to actually describe what I did rather than telling them, you know I'm doing this and it's called social education and I'm doing it because....So learning about that and putting it into a historical context and seeing this stuff about character building, where that fitted into the matrix, and when and why the different style of work started to emerge, social education, and how that sort of developed was really useful.

It's going to be different for me because at the forefront of my mind it's the oppression of different peoples. Practice - my greatest fear is how on earth can I come to the understanding that I have now of the position of gay people in society...how on earth do I put that into practice? How on earth do I make an LGG group in Northern Ireland? ... But you know, how on earth do you really shake the apple cart like that? I mean that's for certain what I am challenged to do, but I do fear I think...because with learning and with change and development comes the fear and the realities...Oh OK it's great that you've learnt and great that everything's changed, but then the ball's in your court to do something about it.

Again here we have a very explicit indication of a changed understanding which is framed within a practice context. There is no separation of theory and practice, new insights, awareness and understandings are expressed through their embodiment in practice. Obviously a great deal of learning took place and seems to have been initiated by the nature of this exercise. These students all developed a stronger sense of their personal identity and how their understanding of the history and ideology of

practice would hopefully inform their future professional practice. Responses here also indicate a surprising depth of understanding which, within the terms of the taxonomy, was being transformed and integrated into a coherent professional identity. Of course there must obviously be many influences from the rest of the course and outside it, but the matrix exercise had been important in initiating and generating a bed-rock of understanding. This important function of the matrix is confirmed by other students:

I suppose doing the matrix and work before the matrix we did in the sessions, was useful in sort of like positioning yourself within the provision - your beliefs anyway, your values.

It is significant to note that these students were talking of an exercise they had completed a full six months before the interviews took place. In conclusion, the most effusive student (and one of the least practically experienced) had this to say:

- I've changed incredibly as a person.
- Really?
- Oh, unbelievable. But how do I get away from all that stuff which I can look at and which I can represent and relate to... But how do I get it to be in a place where I'd like it to be? That for me is the crux of the challenge.

The evidence cited here is encouraging in that these students appear to have achieved high levels of learning from this exercise. They were not untypical of the whole student group. These findings would seem to confirm the value of striving towards an 'emancipatory interest' driven curriculum despite the unavoidable contradictions it causes those responsible for its implementation. Students here may only be indicating an intention or a capability for a particular form of anti-oppressive practice but this is no more or less than they indicate in any other form of 'off-site' education.

Conclusions

This article has suggested a more systematic and complex approach to underpin training practice in youth and community work within HE institutions; an approach which pays attention to the quality of learning and understanding through a systematic re-evaluation of the processes and pedagogy involved. It is also an approach that requires a more explicitly defined curriculum. This desire for explicitness, of course, cannot be divorced from the need to evaluate and assess in the training of youth and community workers. We are not alone in this search for the more 'definable' yet we hope that we have indicated that our motivation is not driven by a need to control or police the profession. In advocating this approach to course design, evaluation and assessment, we have made a bid to purge from Y&C training the unhelpful distinction between theory and practice. In its place, we have promoted the concept of learning *generic codes*; codes which provide students with a fundamental level of understanding and critique to inform good, *competent*, practice. As trainers involved in HE we are looking for *understanding in action* not a simplistic, behavioural measurement of distinct actions devoid of their context, meaning or value. Exactly the same developments field practitioners strive for in their work context. We are all engaged in processes of developing *capabilities*.

Our model suggests that trainers in the pre-service and in-service education of Y&C workers need firstly to consider the ideology that drives the construction of the curriculum and secondly, consider how this may be reflected in course objectives, course design and pedagogy. Course objectives need to be carefully framed to pro-

vide for a broad understanding of a given area, but with the essential opportunity for participants to make the ideas *their own through a critical dialogue with others*. This educative process should strive to parallel the actuality of practice. It is not just that we merely teach such concepts as empowerment and oppression, nor that we operate a congruent pedagogy but that they are thoroughly embedded within the whole experience. It is through this that students encounter and assimilate the professional value-base and counterbalance the professional tendency to separate out theory and practice. This learning environment should parallel professional understanding in action when working with groups of young people or communities.

Within HE the idea of an emancipatory curriculum is complex and contradictory. Of course students have limited control over the curriculum and the ways in which they are judged, however it is significant that this curriculum is *peer* generated and endorsed (Norton 1994). It is not generated through an employer led system and without abandoning the whole concept of professionalism it would be difficult to remove this disempowering element of training. We feel this imbalance should not be a reason for avoiding the search for more emancipatory practices. The debates about power and control, expertise and professionalism, directly relate to similar practitioner debates. In what sense is there a balance or equivalence between a professionally qualified worker who is *paid* to work with young people on an empowering curriculum? How do practitioners ride the contradictions of their involvement in emancipatory or radical practice whilst receiving the government 'shilling'?

Overall, this research has shown conclusively that course design, pedagogy and assessment that are concomitant with both the professional ethos and the actuality of practice, can be used successfully to improve the quality of students' learning, certainly on college-based courses. More significantly, we feel that the research indicates that it is possible for students in professional training to conceive of education that does not split into distinct and often separate areas of theory and practice. We need to develop greater clarity about both the ideological drive and content of our curriculum, so that we can encourage sharing, judgements and critique around the social construction of knowledge to encourage 'artistry' in practice, holistic understandings and secure professional identities. As teachers we need to gain more clarity about our specific role in improving the quality of practice. We need to invest more time in understanding our own actions.

Clearly there are wider and broader implications for the field of professional training in general. We reject here the usual, and we believe unsolvable, dichotomy between theory and practice. The training discourse is often framed within these terms and therefore locked into a debate that can only attempt to provide solutions by mediating between these two oppositional constructs. What we have proposed here is firstly one route out of this discourse and secondly a theoretical framework which operates in a different realm. It is to be hoped that it may provide one antidote to the currently dominant ideology that favours 'objective' measurable actions as the best form of professional training.

It also finds resonances within the older debate about the academic/vocational divide. Again solutions can only be found within the boundaries of a limiting discourse. Our proposals outlined here and tested in our research on new developments in our training indicate that we may have found a route out of this stagnant and restrictive debate. If we can identify the *generic codes* for youth and commu-

nity work practice, these can form the core of both training and practice. On their own these are meaningless, they are given their life by being encapsulated within the mantle of the ways in which these codes are *actioned by both trainers and practitioners*. Training within HE can provide the necessary time and environment to encourage this more complex professional development and identity.

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BEYOND MANAGERIALISM:

An exploration of the occupational culture of youth and community work

GILL MILLAR

Introduction

Of the somewhat limited quantity of writing on the subject of management in youth and community work, a significant amount seems to focus on *structures* for management (Bradford and Day 1991, Bloxham 1993) rather than the occupational *culture* of youth and community work and the 'deep seated resistance to management' within it identified by Jeffs and Smith (1988). In this article I suggest that the debate on management should be broadened to include an investigation of youth and community work culture and the causes of youth workers' resistance both to being managers and to being managed. Unless this happens, the imposition of more suitable structures will not alleviate the management problems youth and community work is facing.

The findings and opinions discussed here are taken from research on the management training needs of youth and community workers. One aspect of the research involved interviews with a sample of senior managers and 'unit' managers from local authority youth services and voluntary organisations in the South West of England. Interviewees were asked to identify what management meant to them; what skills were required for management; to identify any particular management strategies which they had used and which they felt reflected youth and community work values, and to identify specific training needs for youth and community workers as managers. The training needs element of the research has been used to inform management teaching in my own institution. This article focuses on the views of interviewees on wider aspects of management and uses the interview responses as a basis for a discussion of the impact of the culture and values of youth and community work on management practice within that field. The research does not claim to be representative of views of youth and community workers in Britain in general: some demographic features of the South West, notably the lack of any metropolitan areas within the sample region, means that some experiences are not reflected. Within the sample, only one interviewee is Black, and I recognise that there is likely to be a separate black perspective on management which this study does not address. However, I believe the findings offer an interesting window on youth and community workers' views on management which can help in devising appropriate strategies to tackle the growing demands on youth and community workers in the 1990s.

What do we mean by management?

As a concept, management seems to be extraordinarily difficult to define, to the extent that many writers on the subject do not attempt to do so. Those who responded to my survey, or agreed to be interviewed, also have difficulties in defining what they meant by the term, although they found it easier to identify the *skills* required for management. One of the simplest definitions relevant to youth and community work comes from the Thompson Report, *Experience and Participation*, which states

There is no real mystery about good management. It has four basic aspects: defining objectives, assigning roles, allocating resources and monitoring performances;...where an appropriate structure, combined with the will and the skill to make it work exists, the service will function efficiently: but, where any of these are lacking, it will not. (HMSO1982, p.74)

I would suggest, however, that this definition is over-simplistic, adequate perhaps for a situation which is relatively static, but not reflecting the idea of responding to change, both internally and externally driven, which the youth service, along with other public services has experienced in the last decade.

It appears, however, that the youth service is not alone in its confusion over defining management. Willcocks and Harrow (1992), in reviewing management in the public service domain, find that while 'classical' definitions of management, for example, Stewart's (1961) view that management is planning and achieving work through the activities of others are sufficiently general to offer common ground between public and private sectors, their generality greatly reduces their usefulness in determining management practice in specific situations. As Burrell and Morgan (1979) point out, much organisational theory stems from a functionalist perspective which assumes that the power to effect change lies in systems rather than the individuals who participate in them, and that 'organisational systems are constituted by a normative consensus about their aims and purposes' (Elliott, 1993). Management theory which emerges from this approach views managers as 'systematic, reflective planners making decisions on the basis of hard information' (Willcocks and Harrow, 1992). Studies of management in practice, however, have found a lack of fit between this view and reality, where managers appear to be influenced by informal contacts and 'soft' information, and tend to respond to existing situations rather than boldly and systematically planning new ones (Stewart 1976, Kotter 1982). This failure of classical management theory to reflect practice in organisations has led to a more humanistic perspective on management which emphasises the part played by people within organisations. This has been popularised by the work of Peters and Waterman (1982) in which they studied successful American corporations and identified principles which underpinned their management. Contrary to functionalist expectations these appeared to focus more on culture and process than structural factors, and included productivity through people, autonomy and entrepreneurship, decentralisation and the ability to live with and manage change. Although Peters and Waterman's study was based on private sector organisations, the principles they advocated have been taken up with enthusiasm in some sections of the public sector, notably promoted by Local Government Management Board (1991) as a means of responding to changes in the environment in which public services operate.

A central concept in a person-centred view of management is the notion of 'organisational culture'. Handy (1986) identifies four distinct types of culture which emphasise different elements of an organisation; power, task, role and person cultures. The culture of an organisation is influenced both by external (environmental, features of the 'market') and internal (individual and group dynamics, tradition, politics) factors, so different organisations in the same field of work can exhibit different cultural forms. Until recently, the characteristic culture for local authorities was a 'role' culture in which roles are clearly defined and status is given for the

role one plays in the organisation rather than for personal attributes. Within this overall cultural framework, however, I would argue that many youth services operate in a 'person' culture, in which the needs and desires of individuals within the organisation take precedence over the demands of the organisation itself. The examples of 'excellence' cited by Peters and Waterman seem to advocate the development of 'task' cultures which value individual expertise and specialisms while encouraging flexibility, co-operation and multi-disciplinary team work: features of the changes currently being advocated by the Local Government Management Board (LGMB). I wish to argue here that there are features of the culture of youth and community work which fit particularly well with the development of task cultures and could be built upon to develop management strategies which could benefit the service and young people themselves.

One of the key strands of government policy for public services since 1979 has been the development of 'managerialism'. Hood (1991, p. 5) defines the main features of this concept as:

hands-on professional management; explicit standards and measures of performance; greater emphasis on output controls; shift to desegregation of units; greater competition, stress on private sector styles of management practice; and stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use.

The language and value base of managerialism sits uneasily with youth and community work, as with many other areas of public services, and the response of many workers has been outright rejection of the concept as being incompatible with youth and community work practice. In rejecting managerialism, however, youth and community work has tended to reject management as a whole. In part, this rejection stems from a confusion about the *meaning* of management which has not been clarified at a theoretical or practical level. My research provided evidence that many youth and community workers and middle managers in the youth service experienced confusion between administration (paperwork) and management (planning and directing). The completion of record sheets, book-keeping and monitoring systems were seen by many respondents as 'management' which prevented them from spending time on planning and implementing fieldwork. This led to a feeling of frustration and contributed to the view that management was an unnecessary intrusion into the 'real' work with young people and communities. From this perspective, it can be difficult for youth and community workers to see any positive value in management as a tool for planning and developing their work.

The impact of organisational culture on management

Much classical and systems management writing assumes that the managers have overall control of the area of work that they manage (Drucker 1964). Structurally this is often not the case in public services, where elected representatives frequently intervene at a day to day level as well as in policy formulation. Youth and community work often operates within particularly complex decision-making structures, where advisory bodies, management committees, inter-disciplinary steering groups all have a role in the process in addition to relevant local authority committees. One respondent to the survey described 'the multiplicity of accountabilities' to which youth workers are subjected as a factor which affected youth workers' attitudes to management. Such structural factors are significant in examining management strategies in youth and community work as they contribute to

the difficulties of applying private sector strategies in that particular domain. Structure, however, is often (but not always) merely the reflection of the culture of the organisation, and the survey results highlights three aspects of youth and community work culture which are not reflected elsewhere in public services, and which must be taken into account in devising management strategies for the area.

(i) A person-centred approach

At the core of youth and community work lies the ability to build relationships with young people and adults, to respect and value their experiences, and to help individuals and groups along the road to self actualisation. This is recognised as a key component of most, if not all, youth and community work training courses in England and Wales, and is acknowledged by authors examining the various values which inform youth and community work (Smith 1988, Butters and Newall 1978). While other areas of public services such as social work and elements of education provision would also claim a person-centred approach, youth and community work is unique in its freedom from statutory constraints on its work with individuals and groups. The emphasis on support for individual and personal development is not confined to work with young people and communities; there is a culture in youth and community work which supports the development of individual interests for workers themselves, as opposed to the interests of the organisation. Jeffs and Smith (1988) suggest that many workers enter youth and community work from other professions and spheres of work (eg social work, teaching) because youth work 'offers the opportunity to maximise freedom and minimise accountability'. In addition, the isolated and individualised nature of organisation within youth and community work, where often a single worker is solely responsible for the work of a particular project, can mean that youth workers have considerably greater autonomy in their work setting than is common in other professions. While this individual freedom to choose the focus of work can lead to great creativity, it can also mean that workers will be resistant to co-operating in more strategically planned developments. The expectation of individual freedom must be seen as a significant factor in youth and community work culture.

(ii) Participation

I initially intended to call this section 'Empowerment', but have decided to revert to the term 'participation' because of the ways in which 'empowerment' has been hijacked to mean so many different things in recent years. 'Participation', I believe, still retains notions of collectivity which have been lost in many recent usages of 'empowerment'. I am taking participation to mean the process by which individuals and groups are encouraged to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need in order to play an active role in decisions which affect their lives. For many youth and community workers this is a defining factor in their work, whether they work with groups of young people, tenants' associations, community centre users, womens' groups or with individual young people and adults in advice and counselling settings. Three factors which affect the management of youth and community work emerge from this culture of participation: responding to expressed need, the voluntary nature of participation, and mass involvement in decision making.

Several of those interviewed during the research experienced a tension between planning their work and responding to changing needs in their communities. A newly established community development project, for example, has had real dif-

faculties in establishing quantifiable targets to appease funders while sustaining its ability to respond to demands and needs identified by local residents. This kind of dilemma has prevented youth and community workers from establishing clear objectives and has often led to such diversity of work that workers have found it hard to achieve a sense of cohesion. There is evidence that this 'responsive generalism' may lead youth and community work agencies to lose their identity and ability to work effectively in particular areas (Schmidt 1992).

Similarly, the voluntary nature of participation in youth and community work encourages a culture which works against evaluation and management of projects based on the numbers involved. Attempts to introduce measurable performance indicators are often thwarted by the assertion that good youth work is more likely to take place with a group of six than with two hundred young people: a truism used to justify the limited contact made with young people by many projects. Where projects are evaluated effectively, the indicators are likely to be based on the personal development of those who attend rather than on the numbers involved. A major difficulty faced by youth and community work managers is the development of credible measurement criteria of youth work practice which take these factors into account. Another effect of voluntarism on the culture of youth and community work is to produce an expectation of failure. Students on placement from youth and community work courses often experience frustration when they have spent weeks planning for an event, then nobody turns up on the night. The response of fieldwork supervisors is often to point out that this 'happens all the time', and the students should not worry about it. Thus the foundation is laid for workers to hold low expectations of young people, and ultimately of themselves as workers. For some workers this can lead to complacency, and for others, to low motivation for the work.

Another more positive effect of the importance of participation for youth and community workers is the culture of shared decision-making. Youth and community workers spend much of their time involving young people, volunteers and community groups in decisions which affect their lives. As a consequence, expectations are developed that their employers will make similar attempts to involve workers in decisions which affect their jobs. Frequently this leads to conflicts with managers working from a traditional stand point who believe that they have the right to direct staff and impose conditions. An interesting comment made during the survey came from a group of part-time youth workers who were complaining about the insensitivity of their (full-time youth worker) managers. 'The problem is,' they said, 'that as soon as they think about management, they forget all about their youth work principles'. So strategies for managing youth and community work should take into account not only the 'multiplicity of accountabilities' to communities, young people and management committees, but also the expectations among staff who are skilled in enabling others to participate that they will themselves be able to participate in the decision-making process.

(iii) The worker as activist

Allied to the notion of participation is the longstanding tradition within youth and community work that the worker is an agent of social change. Although little has been added to this argument in the last decade, it remains a strong tradition, particularly within community work, but also within youth work where feminist

women workers, black workers, lesbian and gay workers have identified themselves with the same struggles as the young people with whom they work. This primary identification with young people and communities above identification with employing agencies has led to a strong 'anti-professional' strand within youth and community work (Davies 1989). Handy (1988) identifies elements of this attribute within voluntary organisations where he suggests professionalism is seen as creating dependency and is therefore to be avoided. The concept of management, therefore, sits uncomfortably with the values of many of those interviewed for the research. There are inherent contradictions on this issue within youth and community work, however, as Davies (1988) points out, as on the one hand youth and community work has struggled for recognition and comparison with other professions (notably teaching) while on the other hand resisting the constraints which would accompany a statutory base for the service. The worker's role as an activist often brings individual workers into conflict with their employers, and also contributes to a collective culture of suspicion where managers in their own organisations are seen as part of the authority which is oppressing the people with whom they work. Where this culture is strong, it will pose real problems for managers, whatever their own political persuasion. There are, then, some features of the culture of youth and community work which will affect the way in which workers respond to the process of management. These include individual autonomy, responsiveness to locally identified need, collective involvement in decision-making, supporting individuals in their personal development, an oppositional stance to authority and a commitment to social change. Obviously, all of these will not be found in every youth and community work agency, but some combination of most of these factors are present in the beliefs of all those interviewed in this survey. The fact that some of these features can be seen to contradict each other does not appear to stop them from having an impact. I would argue that managers of youth and community work must take these factors into account when devising management strategies. Structural change alone will not solve the difficulties of youth and community work; the occupational culture must be addressed.

Recognising the potential contribution of youth and community work culture to public sector management

Youth and community workers have a tendency to talk down what they do rather than sell it to the world. I want to argue that the issues outlined above as factors in the culture of youth and community work are not problems to be solved, but positive attributes which have relevance in other sectors of public service. The management strategies identified by Peters and Waterman (1982) as contributing to the success of top American corporations included getting close to the customer; autonomy and entrepreneurship, respect for the individual; value-driven approach; decentralisation of control. Many of these concepts have been taken up by public sector managers in Britain, notably by the Local Government Management Board which has produced a great deal of material aimed at bringing local councils close to their 'customers', and focusing on devolved decision-making (LGTB 1989, LGMB 1991). Similarly, researchers at Bristol University's Decentralisation Resource and Information Centre have explored these issues at an academic level and in practical research in local authorities (Hoggett 1993, Hambleton and Hoggett 1984). Many Local authorities are now changing the structures and culture of their organisations towards more open, flat and decentralised forms

(Habebullah and Slater 1993). For most officers in local authorities, this requires a fairly radical change of focus. Traditionally, local authorities have been hierarchical, departmental and bureaucratic. Systems and structures have been established over many years and have provided an illusion of stability. The 'client/user' has been defined in terms of how they fit the system, not how the system meets their needs. That is now changing, partly through legislation such as the NHS and Community Care Act and the 1989 Children Act which focus more clearly on individual client/customer needs, and partly by internally driven reviews which are seeking to present public services as responsive and caring to a public which has become increasingly sophisticated in its demands (Gyford 1991). For youth and community workers, however, responding to local needs, involving people in decision making, supporting and enabling individual choice and development are part of the day to day practice. Surely we should have a major contribution to make to these new forms of public sector organisations and management?

To some extent, the potential of community and youth work in these organisational areas is being recognised. A growing number of individuals with community and youth work experience are moving into senior management posts in local government. In Plymouth, three experienced community workers have recently been appointed to management posts in the Housing Department. One of the guiding principles of the (now defunct) Neighbourhood Services initiative in Rochdale was community development, and several former youth and community workers were appointed to senior posts in the authority. Yet while individuals have been able to transfer their skills to a new and wider area, youth and community work itself remains firmly on the margins. There is a degree of inevitability in this: youth and community work forms a small part of local authority provision, or is completely outside the local authority in voluntary organisations, and cannot expect to receive the attention given to larger spending areas like schools and council housing. Other small sections, however, do have influence disproportionate to their size: legal sections and equal opportunities units, for example, are consulted on a whole range of organisational issues. If authorities are serious about responding to their customers and involving them in decision-making, would it not be sensible to consult the experts either within their ranks or in local voluntary organisations?

There is one element of the occupational culture of youth and community work which I believe prevents this happening: that is, the oppositional stance youth and community workers traditionally take to their employing agency. Unlike other groups of council workers they do not perceive themselves as part of the organisation, partly for the reasons outlined in the previous section and partly for geographical reasons: youth and community workers are rarely based in main council offices, so are isolated from many of the formal and informal communication networks of the organisation. For similar reasons, council officers do not see youth and community workers as part of the organisation. Again this is partly geographical - they do not meet them in the office - and it is partly because youth and community workers are frequently not trusted by council officers who have come across them in meetings, working with groups who are criticising services.

If youth and community workers want to be involved in policy making and organisational change in the public sector there has to be a review of the way in which they relate to local councils. It is difficult for workers who may have spent years

working with groups campaigning for more accessible and responsive council services to have confidence when that same council claims that it now intends to be a 'listening authority', concerned to involve the community in its decision-making. Some will argue that such changes are purely cosmetic; that without extra resources and a complete change of staff, services will continue to be inadequate and alienating. To some extent, of course, this is true, as local councils are governed to a large degree by central government policies which have starved them of resources and limited their powers dramatically. I would argue, however, that within many local councils there is now a genuine desire to work more closely with local people to defend local services, and that youth and community work could make a valuable contribution to that process.

Management strategies which reflect youth and community work culture

Those who were interviewed in the survey were asked to describe any management strategies they had used or experienced which reflected youth and community work values. For many of the interviewees this was a difficult question to answer. For some this was because they felt that those values underpinned everything they did as managers, so it was difficult to identify specific elements; while others felt that they were constrained by the practices of their organisations to apply such strategies. Amongst the strategies which were identified, staff development policies were most frequently mentioned. In general they reflected the youth and community work culture in that they started by respecting individual workers and helping their development in the job and personally. One person described the very careful consultation process by which the staff development policy had been established as an example of involving people in decision-making and responding to expressed needs.

Another example given by several interviewees was the formulation of development plans for projects/centres. This was seen as a way of devolving decision-making to local level (usually within a central policy framework), involving people in decision-making - often young people and local adults were involved in the process - and responding to local needs. There was evidence that some organisations had progressed a long way in this area, and it was generally viewed by staff as an empowering process. A similar process in another authority, however, appeared to be less well received by staff - perhaps because it was given the title of Business Unit Planning!

Other less specific examples of management strategies reflecting youth and community work values included supervision arrangements which focused on personal development as well as progress in the job; a variety of consultation processes on specific issues; and constructive use of conflict. The worker who mentioned this was aware of dangers in trying to suppress all conflict, and tried to ensure that areas of conflict in the organisation were identified and openly discussed. Often solutions could be found once the problem was confronted.

Most interviewees acknowledged that all these strategies were time consuming, and often they experienced constraints on the extent to which they could involve people in decision making because of timescales imposed from outside. For local authority staff in particular, this was a real problem, as they were often expected to respond to directives within a very short timescale and were unable to consult staff. They were aware that this led to mistrust and division between themselves

and the staff they managed. Part of the problem here seems to be the marginal position of youth and community work within local authorities which means that deadlines are constructed for the benefit of other more powerful voices. Again, perhaps some of this could be resolved if youth and community work could develop a more mutually supportive and respecting relationship with its host authorities.

Conclusion

Youth and community workers and youth service managers operate in complex situations with a wide range of variables, both external environmental factors, and factors peculiar to the youth and community work process of participation and social education. Management strategies developed for use in commercial 'for-profit' organisations are rarely flexible enough to transfer easily to meet the demands of youth service situations. Thus the Youth Service must grasp the nettle and devise its own management strategies based in the experience of work with young people and communities and reflecting those aspects of youth and community work culture which value participation, collaboration and devolved decision-making.

Some will argue that it is pointless to swim against the tide in increasingly centralised authoritarian decision-making which has flowed through public services in the last fourteen years. There is, however, both theoretical and practical evidence to support the development of alternative styles of management. Many of the current management 'gurus' (Peters and Waterman 1983, Handy 1988) are promoting flexible 'flat', team-based management structures to meet the needs of industry and commerce in a post-modernist world, and many local authorities are attempting to integrate local people and front-line staff into management decision-making (Gyford 1991). For example, in the area of public housing management, initiatives like Estate Management Boards which involve tenants in the management of estates have made progress in changing traditional bureaucratic management. The Youth Service has a history of working collaboratively with its users and local communities on which to build its own, appropriate management strategies.

Responsibility for the development of new strategies lies with all those involved in youth and community work. Often good management practice exists in isolated settings with youth services, without being noticed and built on by youth service managers. Managers and fieldworkers could review their practice, share good ideas and devise strategies built on what works now. Initial training agencies too have an important role to play in encouraging a critical but positive approach to management amongst students and trainees. Management has long been ignored as a topic by those who identify themselves as operating from a radical or critical framework. This has led to a dearth of academic discourse on the subject, leaving the development of management theory in the hands of functionalists. If students are to see management as a legitimate part of youth and community work, it must be given the same kind of critical attention which is focused on other areas of youth service policy and curriculum. Youth and community work has much to contribute to a debate on management, and writers and practitioners in the field should initiate a debate to gain the recognition the area deserves.

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WORKING SPACE

BREAKOUT

School Holiday Activities and Their Impact on Youth Crime

DENISE BARNA

The needs and expectations of young people have, without doubt, changed immeasurably over the past ten years. It is not possible to indicate a specific cause and effect, however, rapid de-industrialisation linked with a lack of appropriate social provision and changes in benefits has, not surprisingly, had a detrimental effect upon estates such as Pennywell in Sunderland, Tyne & Wear.

Agencies working with young people and families are all too familiar with the problems that families face. Having to meet the ever-increasing demands and expectations of children and young people on a decreasing budget and lack of any real opportunities for the future has, understandably, exhausted and utterly demoralised many parents.

Work with young people in areas of need has traditionally been undertaken by youth work organisations in the statutory and voluntary sectors. The response has often been short term, uncoordinated and without a clearly defined community based strategy. The Breakout scheme, which was initiated in 1991, attempts to provide a planned and coordinated service for young people and their families which takes into account their needs and the wishes of the community as a whole. Local agencies across the city are committed to supporting Breakout and are convinced that the work has a positive impact upon their respective areas of operation.

There is a widespread and commonly held notion that if young people are given access to high quality and appropriate youth provision, targeted to meet the needs of particularly marginalised young people, then this will lead indirectly to a reduction in certain types of youth crime. This in turn reduces the fear of crime and improves the general quality of life within the community. It is with this notion in mind that the 'Contract' Youth Social Work Unit from Save the Children Fund was approached to carry out a detailed piece of research into the value of the Breakout scheme and to evaluate its effect on crime in the area. Save the Children Fund produced an evaluation report which was published in February 1995.

This article describes the Breakout scheme and attempts to summarise the findings of the evaluation report.

Breakout is not an entirely new method of working as many organisations are already committed to youth provision during school holiday periods. However, we feel that the Breakout scheme has successfully built upon more traditional holiday programmes enabling the delivery of a proactive and meaningful service which engages young people in the decision making and planning processes.

The Breakout Scheme

During the Easter school holidays in 1991 residents and organisations based in Pennywell became increasingly concerned at the high level of incidents involving large numbers of young people. These incidents consisted of; harassment of residents in and around shopping areas; stones being thrown at buses (services were withdrawn); shops and public buildings being increasingly vandalised; rowdy and antisocial behaviour by large gangs of young people; intimidation of residents by large gangs of youths.

Several local residents approached the Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre and Pennywell Youth Project, anxious to take positive action to alleviate what was becoming a very serious situation. Following a well attended public meeting, the Youth Project and the Neighbourhood Centre undertook to seek funding for a scheme to work with young people and children. The scheme became known as 'Breakout' and since 1991 it has operated every summer holiday period and during Easter and October breaks.

There are five elements of Breakout:

Minibus based work - a team of four detached youth workers and two local volunteers work from two minibuses. Each team operates a flexible eight hour day working with groups of 10-15 young people aged 12-18 years. A social education programme is negotiated with the young people which normally includes visits to leisure centres, mountain biking, ten pin bowling, horse riding surfing and so on.

Pilot project - from previous Breakout schemes it became apparent that a small hard core of young people do not wish to engage with the minibus based activities. It is often this group, of approximately 25 young people, who cause significant disruption to residents, shop keepers, the police and other young people during the school holiday periods. Two full time staff target this core group, and, using intensive group work, negotiate a programme which meets specific needs over a sustained period of time.

Play scheme - catering for the needs of 5-11 year olds the scheme operates from Pennywell Comprehensive School sports hall. It is staffed by a full-time Play Co-ordinator, six part-time play workers and four volunteers and operates every afternoon for the duration of the school holidays. The programme involves team games, arts and crafts, small group activities, soft play, bouncy castle, board games, themes and drama.

Two play care schemes - The scheme registered by the Social Services Under Eight's section has places for 32 children aged 5-8 years of age and operates from Quarry View Infant School. Seven places are allocated for children with special needs.

Quarry View Junior School provides a second scheme for 40 children aged 9-11. The scheme operates every weekday afternoon of the holidays and offers a range of creative and sporting activities.

Family work 'Days Away' - there was a demand from local residents to participate in family days, an element of Breakout which benefits the whole family. Family days operate each week during the school holiday and cater for up to 150 people per outing. The outings have a very positive effect in that they raise a sense of community belonging.

The Evaluation Process and Results

There were five main areas of interest focused on in the evaluation; life in Pennywell, crime in Pennywell, the Breakout scheme, Breakout and crime and costs and benefits.

Life In Pennywell was researched using the 1991 census data supplemented by a survey conducted with the following groups; young people attending Breakout, other young people contacted through detached youth workers, parents of young people attending Breakout, adult members of local groups, local agency representatives.

Results demonstrated that compared with Sunderland overall Pennywell has; a larger youth population, significantly fewer households with a car, a much higher proportion of lone parents (who are much less likely to be employed on a full-time basis), a higher percentage of economically active in the 16-24 age bracket who are in unskilled jobs, are unemployed or on a government scheme, and a majority of households renting from the local authority.

The majority of local residents thought that Pennywell was a good area to live in. The reasons given were 'good neighbours' and 'friendly people'. Reasons given for Pennywell being a 'bad' area to live in were mainly linked to crime in the area, lack of facilities for young people, the stigma attached to living there and that the area needed cleaning up.

Local agencies identified poverty and unemployment as the most pressing concerns as well as the poor reputation of the area, and their main concerns for young people were lack of opportunity, drug use and crime. Facilities for young people were generally poorly rated and perceived to be aimed at 'well behaved' young people.

Crime in Pennywell research used quarterly crime figures provided by Northumbria Police. The figures were used to compare crime trends in Pennywell with the Sunderland West Area Command. Local perceptions of crime were obtained by survey and a victimisation study was also carried out.

Survey results demonstrated that the majority of young people living in Pennywell think that there is more crime in Pennywell than in most other areas. Parents and local groups thought that Pennywell was about the same as other areas in terms of the crime rate. Local agencies all thought that there was more crime in Pennywell than elsewhere. Burglary and car crime were identified as crimes causing most concern by local agencies. There was a large peak in 1992 in the number of crimes reported in both Pennywell and Sunderland West followed by a general decline. This pattern of crime is similar for burglary and car crime. For all the groups surveyed, the crime most people had experienced as a victim was burglary. This ranged from 27% for local groups to 44% for young people not attending Breakout.

Breakout - projects reports and evaluation sheets were used to help describe the scheme and record the number of young people involved. The young people also recorded their perceptions of the activities using diaries and cameras. The diaries were also used to record what the young people had done on the days they were not involved with Breakout.

Results showed that the Breakout scheme has worked with 26% of young people within the target age group living in Pennywell.

The majority of comments written by the young people in the Breakout diaries were positive when speaking of their time on the scheme compared with negative comments regarding the days not spent on the scheme.

The majority of local people had some knowledge of the scheme. Only 17% of young people not attending the scheme had not heard about it. The best known component was the playscheme at the comprehensive school. Most people who had heard of the scheme thought that it had been developed to give young people something to do and keep them off the streets and out of trouble. It was also seen as offering young people the chance to participate in activities they wouldn't normally be able to. Some people saw the scheme as offering support or respite for children and their families. Local agencies saw the scheme as providing purposeful activities, personal development and diverting young people from crime and formal intervention.

Young people thought the scheme could be improved by going out more than once a week. The majority of parents said that Breakout was fine the way it is. Local agencies commented that there was a need for a predictable funding base and also mentioned that co-ordinating the efforts of different agencies could be improved.

There were clear links between the scheme and local agencies in terms of mutual support, congruent goals and a shared value base.

Breakout and crime research measured the scheme's impact upon crime. The Police provided data relating to reported incidents involving young people and a detailed self report study undertaken with young people using the scheme was contrasted with a control group of young people contacted through detached youth workers. Local opinions of the effect of the scheme on youth crime were obtained by survey.

Results demonstrated that the pattern of incidents involving young people that were reported to the police differed in Pennywell compared to the Sunderland West area. In particular, the number of incidents reported within school hours during the school holidays rose considerably in other areas compared to Pennywell. The number of incidents reported outside normal school hours was much higher than those reported during the school day.

When asked about their offending in the past, and during the school holidays, fewer young people attending Breakout reported being involved in offending during the school holidays than in the past. For young people not attending the scheme, when asked about their offending, more reported being involved in offending during school holidays than in the past. This implies that some young people had offended for the first time. Comparing the young people who attended the scheme to those who did not, more people attending Breakout reported having been involved in offending in the past than young people who did not attend the scheme. This infers that the scheme worked with a group of young people who were at greater risk of being involved during the summer holidays.

There appears to be confusion among young people surveyed regarding what is and is not against the law, implying a need for some work around crime awareness.

86% of young people who took part in the Breakout scheme over the summer holidays thought that it had helped them keep out of trouble. 70% of all groups surveyed said that they did think that Breakout had helped to make

Pennywell a better place to live during the summer holidays. All local agency representatives interviewed expressed a belief that the scheme had helped reduce crime in the area. Some agencies claimed to have first hand evidence that the scheme had prevented some young people from offending. Others saw the scheme as at least having an indirect effect on crime.

The use of a range of research methods, was effective in demonstrating that the project had not only a positive effect on the behaviour of the young people attending, but also, that by working with those most at risk of offending, it had prevented an increase in youth crime over the summer holidays.

Apart from the effects on criminal and antisocial behaviour, the scheme has contributed to reducing the fear of crime, demonstrated by responses to the resident's and local agencies' surveys. This in turn has contributed to the generally optimistic attitude of local people to life on the estate, a very valuable outcome of the work.

Costs and benefits were evaluated by contrasting programme costs with the marginal cost of youth crime, using the findings of the ITV/Telethon/Princes Trust report 'Preventative Strategy for Young People in Trouble' (Coopers and Lybrand 1994). An estimate of prevented youth crimes, abstracted from the self report studies, was used to demonstrate cost effectiveness.

The operating budget for the Breakout scheme is £28,760.00. Relating this to the cost of youth crime, (the ITV/Telethon/Princes Trust report defines the marginal cost of a youth crime as 'the amount of money estimated that society would actually save in the short term, if a single youth crime were prevented'.)

The marginal cost of a youth crime	=	£2,900.00
The total cost of the Breakout scheme (all five elements)	=	£28,760.00
Cost per person attending the Breakout scheme	=	£49.51

With regard to the Breakout scheme as a whole, we can estimate that 19 of the 661 participants would need to be diverted from committing one average youth offence to be cost effective.

The cost benefit analysis shows, on the basis that the scheme is preventing youth crime during the summer that, purely in terms of the probable number of crimes prevented, the scheme was operating cost effectively. This did not take into account the contribution made by the scheme to reducing the fear of crime on the estate and adding to the feeling of optimism identified from the survey.

Conclusion

We believe that the research carried out has validated the contention that giving young people access to high quality and appropriate youth provision leads to a reduction in youth crime. It has been demonstrated that the cost benefits can be cost effective and economical. In addition, it is clear that the scheme meets the social needs of young people who experience considerable deprivation. The fact that young people have been identified as the victims of crime is an interesting point to note. The quality of the scheme was demonstrated by the high levels of attendance, and the comments of young people, parents and local agencies on the estate.

The provision of quality youth work during school holiday times should only be seen as part of any overall strategy for community development. Provision for young people which attempts to meet their real needs must have the support of the community and the agencies working directly and indirectly with young people.

A commitment to working together, sharing resources, and building upon expertise must underpin a genuine partnership approach.

The lack of a stable and predictable funding base does present serious problems to any group wishing to undertake work of this nature. This obviously hinders development and creates a survival culture which feeds upon pockets of funding as and when they arise. Local and national charities have seen an enormous increase in applications for social and welfare causes. The amount of time and energy sustaining levels of provision is considerable and the skill and expertise in securing additional funding by voluntary sector projects is often not recognised.

Opportunity to gain support from the Local Authority is becoming increasingly difficult. However, the impending review and inevitable restructuring of the Community Education Service in Sunderland will have a direct impact upon youth work agencies especially those located in the voluntary sector. With sustained and realistic levels of Grant Aid funding, the capacity to undertake successful initiatives such as Breakout will be greatly increased.

Denise Barna is employed by Save the Children Fund and is based at Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre.

Copies of the Evaluation Report are available from Youth Issues North, Dean Street, Newcastle. Tel. 0191 2323258.

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Apology

We apologise for any misunderstanding caused by a misprint in Issue 49-Black Perspectives, p 109. The last line of the first paragraph of the review by Angela Lamont should read 'unemployed' and not 'employed' as it appears.

Virginia G. Weisz

Children and Adolescents in Need: A Legal Primer for the Helping Professional

Sage 1995

ISBN 0 8039 4660 0

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John Adcock

In Place of Schools

New Education Press 1994

ISBN 0 946947 62 7

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The Making of Men : Masculinities, Sexualities and Schooling

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Sandra Acker

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Outcast England: How Schools Exclude Black Children

Institute of Race Relations 1994

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Paul Chapman Publishing 1994

ISBN 1 85396 115 9

£10.50 (pbk)

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Unfair Shares: The effects of widening income differences on the welfare of the young

Barkingside: Barnado's 1994

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£5.99

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Routledge 1993

ISBN 0 415 04349 2

£35.00 (hbk)

£13.99 (pbk)

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Russell House Publishing Limited 1994

ISBN: 1-898924-25-2

£9.95

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John E.B. Myers (ed.)

The Backlash

Sage 1994

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Virginia G. Weisz

Children and Adolescents in Need: A Legal Primer for the Helping Professional

Sage 1995

ISBN 0 8039 4660 0

pp 281

JOHN HORNCastle

We are frequently reminded of Shaw's dictum that the United States and Britain are countries separated by a common language. However, the case studies and examples in this description of the North American legal system make it clear that the schism is not only linguistic.

Case study: A 16 year old runaway stood trial as an adult in criminal court and was found guilty of first degree murder. He was sentenced to death after the trial judge refused to consider the boy's immaturity, turbulent family history, parental beatings and emotional instability.

Although the U.S. Supreme Court eventually commuted sentence in this case, one wonders what a British juvenile justice gatekeeping group would make of such events and attitudes. It would surely be outraged at the number of juveniles Weisz reports as being in U.S. adult jails - 60,000 (comfortably exceeding our total adult inmate population); and probably show grave concern about U.S. proposals to reduce the age at which juveniles are tried in adult courts.

However, it is not only in the arena of juvenile justice that significant inter-continental differences are found, as shown by the following U.S. example of parental desperation.

The parent may want medical treatment for the child but be unable to afford it. Some parents have been known to relinquish custody to the county to qualify the child for medicaid.

It may be that these are the sort of grotesque legal convolutions that Hillary Clinton's efforts are aimed at preventing, and where hopefully our own crumbling but universalist Health Service would still offer provision.

Weisz further offers an example of the potentially corrupting effect payment for services may have on children's rights when she suggests that in the U.S. 'many (professionals) would pause before intervening when a distressed parent commits a daughter to a mental hospital because she has started experimenting with marijuana'. She hints that the fact that parents are paying the bill may affect workers' attempts to balance the wishes of parents with the rights of the child.

From Weisz's account, the liberation ideals of the United States also appear compromised in some States by the attempts to identify and even incarcerate mothers who take certain addictive substances during pregnancy. (The practice here is varied, though, as in other areas, because of the powers invested in individual States to implement their own legislation as they wish.)

However, despite such dramatic differences in law and practice between the United States and Britain, the main part of Weisz's text covers what would be readily understood by British practitioners as core social work areas: there are chapters describing practice responses to parental abuse in either its physical, sexual or emotional forms, and discussing mental health and delinquency issues. There is also a section (imaginatively entitled 'Remediation') which considers family support, fostering and adoption.

The most substantive section covers child abuse situations. Here, as throughout the book, legal aspects are lightly painted on to a canvas composed of sociological, psychological, medical and economic background information, invariably supported by references and case examples. Sadly, Weisz describes features all too familiar to British social work: the prevalence of abuse, its traumatic effects, and the vexed problem of whether to attempt to re-unite abusing families. In describing North American practice, Weisz does not seem to portray the hunted feeling typical and understandable in similar British literature, nor is there mention of landmark inquiries which have done so much to affect the psyche of British child protection social work.

However, the book lacks the critical approach typical of writing on this side of the Atlantic, especially with regard to issues of discrimination, where it falls well short of gaining the kitemark. There is brief mention of the role of poverty in producing family stress, but Weisz (a lawyer by training) appears to favour analyses based on general family dysfunction and individual pathology, in attempting to identify a personality type prone to abusing family members.

There is little reference to gender perspectives, even in the chapter on child sexual abuse (which is headed by a tasteless and devaluing quotation from 'Lolita'); and no acknowledgement of the attempts to restructure our understanding of the nature of abuse developed by British writers such as the Partons.

Similarly, ethnic minority issues are rarely touched on - surfacing chiefly in the chapter on delinquency, where we are informed that two-thirds of the population of juvenile custodial institutions are from minority groups. There is also a brief discussion of the various merits of trans-racial and inter-racial adoption. The lack of reference to ethnic minority issues - particularly African American - is something of a disappointment, since one imagines that there must be a considerable corpus of examples from the U.S. experience which would be a useful contribution to other countries' understanding and policy-making.

Nevertheless, there are many other areas in the book where either innovation or well-developed practice is usefully described. For example, the substantial American experience of using child witnesses produces a brief, informed section, and the positive results of some targeted pre-school education programmes suggest the need for replication here. The well-documented and successful closure of offender institutions in

Massachusetts is mentioned, as is the success of a Kentucky bail scheme. A seven-day per week intensive family support scheme (with workers sometimes two to a family) actually saved a state money through preventing the removal of children from their families.

Not so much a narrow legal tome in the mould of Ball, Weisz offers a wide menu of relevant background information which makes palatable the pill of legislation and regulation. The book is a considerable tour de force, and is a primer not just for law, but for related sociology and social policy too. However, despite its inherent attractiveness, the focus on U.S. federal and state law limits its interest for British readers; it is possible to view the text as a contribution to comparative study, but it falls to the reader to make the necessary comparisons. And the language? Contrary to the tenor of Shaw's epigram, there is no linguistic problem, and in fact the style of the text as a whole could provide a model for a British equivalent, or the basis for a truly comparative primer.

Ball, Caroline (1989) *Law for Social Workers*, Wildwood House, Aldershot, England.

Parton, Christine (1993) *Women, gender, oppression and child abuse*. In *Violence Against Children Study Group (1993) Taking Child Abuse seriously*. Routledge, London.

Parton, Nigel (1985). *The Politics of Child Abuse*. Macmillan, London.

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John Adcock

In Place of Schools

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pp112

MALCOLM PAYNE

John Adcock, in his 'novel' plan for the 21st century, invites you to suspend disbelief and to engage with him in his fantasy of a society without schools. Couched in the form of a short novel set in 2029, it flashes back to the Very Select Committee set up in 1999 and to the anachronisms (as seen from 2029) of earlier educational practice in schools.

1999 marks the year when '...the school-based structure began its collapse...there was no money to pay a promised health and safety allowance for teachers in dangerous localities...a scheme to patrol some schools on a twenty four hour basis to curb violence and vandalism was

postponed...truancy-check teams were withdrawn...and a proposal to bring a poorly qualified staff as temporary teachers had brought the threat of a strike from the teaching unions.'

This is the somewhat prosaic start to a process of disintegration which, according to the history lesson which provides the vehicle for the tale, was followed by emergency measures to find an alternative to a now (that is, then) completely discredited schooling system.

In the chapters which follow, Adcock - rather skilfully it must be said - develops his alternative vision. The elements are unsurprising. So unsurprising his characters suggest, that is it difficult to understand why no-one had thought of them before. First, no more schools. Instead, children are offered tuition partly in their own homes (building extensions are provided for all who need them out of the savings made from selling off the schools). Next, teachers are transformed into personal tutors who work in local panels, each tutor building individual learning plans with their twenty students (and their families). Literature and the liberal arts are central to the curriculum which is built upon the availability (through information technology of course) of a national data-bank: the National Media Library.

And so it goes on...

It is a very developed fantasy and a well-told tale; of the decisions and compromises of the Select Committee (which, I am afraid, is rather packed with stereotypes: the reactionary trade unionist, the humane Tory, the bumbling peer of the realm. You know the sort of thing if you've ever watched *Yes, Minister*), the development of local Resource Centres for students, personal tutors and the public (seen through the eyes of a visiting teacher from Germany). There is even the hint of a romance in the air.

And as the tale is spun, so the utter absurdity of the system we experienced as normal back in the dark ages (the 1990s and before) is made inescapable. If it were a work of philosophy, the technique would be known as *reductio ad absurdum* (no translation needed I think). And of course, the underlying message is a serious one: that schools as institutions are inefficient, inhumane and controlling. They fail to provide what many young people need. Their horizons are limited. They do not actually work very well.

But hang on a minute, you might not have read the novel yet, but isn't the story just a bit familiar?

Wasn't there someone back in the 70s? Illich, wasn't that his name, who talked about deschooling society? And that other book, *School is Dead*. Who wrote that? Reimer wasn't it, Everett Reimer?

Everywhere in the world school costs have risen faster than enrolments and faster than the GNP; everywhere expenditures on school fall even further behind the expectations of parent,

teacher and pupils. Everywhere this situation discourages both the motivation and financing for large-scale planning for non-school learning.

...we must recognise that it (obligatory schooling) is, in principle, economically absurd, and that to attempt it is intellectually emasculating, socially polarising and destructive of the credibility of the political system which promotes it.

(Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society, Penguin 1970, p.17)

Of course, Illich was thinking in much broader terms. For him the school was a paradigm and symbol of the institutionalisation of work, health, education and welfare which led to the conclusion that only the reverse, disestablishment, was either feasible or justifiable; that educating through schooling serves to increase rather than ameliorate inequality. Schooling was seen to restrict imagination and creativity.

As an educationalist, Adcock meets Illich part-way. There is not, I think, a developing philosophical base which directs itself towards challenging the institution of education itself - only school as its embodiment. Adcock's vision, although intended to give parents and students a more integral role in the educational process, nonetheless retains teachers - in the form of personal tutors - whose role is widened to embrace a social pedagogy directed towards families. Teachers retain the expertise - and much of the power.

It is a liberal rather than liberating alternative.

Much of the detail of how the scheme might work (and there is no doubt I believe that we are being invited to take Adcock's ideas seriously, despite the format) is offered through the deals and machinations of the Very Select Committee. Whilst this is what makes the book entertaining, it is also its downfall. If we are to be convinced that an alternative is both possible and desirable - and that it is this one we should choose - we need more than the absurdity of the past-present and a technological revolution to go on. That must mean spelling out how any scheme will begin to reverse the inequalities which we currently institutionalise through schooling. And Adcock really has very little to say about that. Instead, he wishes us to believe that by removing schools from the educational equation, we will liberate the potential of learning and allow it to be nurtured to the benefit of all. That, I am afraid, is simply naive...

Malcolm Payne is a lecturer in youth and community development at De Montfort University.

Mairtin Mac An Ghail

The Making of Men : Masculinities, Sexualities and Schooling

Open University Press 1994

ISBN 0 335 15781 5

pp. 181

TIM WARREN

'83% of women say they do not believe most men understand the basic issues involved in making intimate relationships work....91% of divorces are initiated by women'

The above statistics do not come from the book but from 'The Hite Report on Love, Passion and Emotional Violence'. Nevertheless I am using them to provide an appropriate context within which I can review 'The Making of Men'. On a personal level, I had some reservations about whether the book's obvious emphasis on men would divert us from the important things that women are saying to men as some 'new man' writings tend to ignore these. Accordingly I have looked at the book from a perspective which attempts to address these issues as well as issues raised by the book, itself.

A review in my mind is not about judging a book against some academic benchmark, but is more about giving people a sense of what they might get out of reading the book for themselves. Accordingly I have decided to focus on some of the issues that were raised for me by reading 'The Making of Men'.

One crucial issue is the centrality of sexuality to the schooling experience, investigated by Mac An Ghail at Parnell school. Several comments from young people illustrate how sex and emotions are a main focus for non-lesson time but remain ignored within the curriculum and are denied when evidently impacting on classroom relationships. Some telling interviews with male teachers also highlight this issue, illustrating their denial of any use of sexual put-downs to maintain control, and emphasising their inability to cope with 'precocious' young women. The young people, of course, see clearly through it, but it reveals a core element of heterosexist masculinity as it is constructed through the schooling experience. It engages only with the success curriculum, and runs scared of anything which might lead it into the unknown area of emotion and intimacy.

Men's general fear of sexual contact linked to emotion is further illustrated by other poignant references. The use of the football match to cement father/son relationships is an excellent example. At the match, emotions can be voiced and projected collectively onto the team and in addition everyone can have excuses to contact each other physically. Done collectively this is acceptable! Lads in the book comment positively on those fathers who could do this with their sons, but it's a long way from intimacy. Elsewhere it's striking to note the contrast between the intimate nature of some conversations young men have with their mates and their behaviour as a group. Also revealing is a view of rela-

tionships with girls being about sex but not intimacy. Many quotations reveal a well constructed ability among young men to separate emotional contacts from sexual contacts.

What I find worrying about these insights is that they seem to continue and be reinforced throughout men's lives structured by the over-riding fear of being 'rubbished by our mates'. Men's social groupings are dominated by either sport (where emotions can be projected and defeat collectivised) or drink (where emotions can be escaped or drowned). The need to be strong emerges as the dominant essence of the constructed heterosexist masculinity. Being strong means controlling emotion, putting down weakness and using the societal structures in place to reinforce strength. 'Getting on' in life becomes vital and the examination orientated success curriculum is the ideal way to do it. A successful job enables men to engage in what might be termed emotional kite-flying: 'Look how high I can fly!' It doesn't seem to matter that the kite can no longer be touched.

In this sense, the book begins to help us see through some of the complex difficulties experienced when trying to grapple with anti-oppression issues that inter-relate and defy simplistic power analysis. The white male heterosexist agenda fundamentally constructs our schooling and forces other agendas to locate themselves within or against this dominant context. Men play on home territory and secondary schools are well and truly constructed as the territory of heterosexist masculinity. Of course the worrying dilemma for many men today is that feminist successes combined with a reconstructed capitalism have enabled many women to play away on the same territory and win (Margaret Thatcher is the most obvious example). That is why Sunday papers are now headlining articles 'What are young men for?! If they can't win at home and won't play away, then the question is highly pertinent. This book, through a delightful set of quotations from young people does begin to open up this debate in ways that most other publications miss entirely.

There are some drawbacks with the book. Predictably a man interviewing young women means that young women's voices are not heard with anything like the same power of those of the young men. Moreover, the refreshing quotes are sometimes drowned in highly intellectual academic language which both belies and confirms one of the central issues raised by the book. We all need to 'get on' and academic style reflects the same promotion of heterosexist masculinity by education professionals. Such structures and practices continue to address intimate issues as if they are 'out there' (perhaps on the football field?) rather than 'in here'. Finally, the author's failure to move outside of some left/right political language is also a disappointment, given that doctrines at both ends of the political spectrum are well and truly constructed within the agenda of heterosexist masculinity.

Despite these reservations, my overall inclination is to say thanks to Mac An Ghaill for a very worthwhile publication. I enjoyed the book immensely and am very glad I agreed to review it.

Tim Warren is an Education Policy Officer in Wigan.

Sandra Acker

Gendered Education

Open University Press 1994

ISBN 9 780335 190591

£37.50 (hbk)

£12.99 (pbk)

pp 193

MAXINE GREEN

Sandra Acker has addressed the issue of gender in education with clarity and scholarship. She defines the field of study and shows how basic gender assumptions feed into every level of education and remain largely unchallenged. The book spans twenty years of Acker's work and includes essays from this time which are excellently fused together to give a coherent, competent and well written book.

A broad and witty picture of what interests Acker can be summed up by the impressions that a martian coming to Britain would get from reading articles in sociological journals. She writes 'The Martian would conclude that numerous boys but few girls go to secondary modern schools; that there are no girls public schools, that there are almost no adult women influentials of any sort; that most students in higher education study science and engineering; that women rarely make a ritual transition called "from school to work" and never go into further education colleges. Although some women go to university, most probably enter directly into motherhood, where they are of some interest as transmitters of language codes to children. And except for a small number of teachers, social workers and nurses, there are almost no adult women workers in the labour market'. Her analysis of sociological journals makes interesting reading and the picture that emerges is one of women's 'invisibility' both in terms of women as writers or subjects, with gender thinly represented as a major or minor topic in the articles. Acker concludes that 'the under-representation of women in these collections could well reflect their exclusion from social and intellectual networks'.

In the first section of the book called 'Mapping the Field' the reader is given good background tools with which to address the rest of the book. There is a brief history of the development of the British Sociology of Education, an excellent analysis of feminist theory and how it relates to the study of gender and education, and a section on the criteria by which feminist research can be defined.

Acker extends this enquiry into women and teaching and draws from considerable fieldwork in two schools. She explores the underlying assumptions which operate within schools; the deficit model of women - where the victim is blamed; the low regard for intellectual capacities of teachers especially women; the women seen in family terms; the oversimplified view of causality; and the pervasive ideology of individual choice.

Her fieldwork is extensive and she has both qualitatively and quantitatively evidenced her case. Acker builds up a picture of the individual woman

teacher as a person who maximises her potential in a context of not only family situations and wider social constraints but in the culture of the workplace. As Acker says ‘...careers are provisional, kaleidoscopic constructions, made up of everyday events and interchanges, part of “the search for meaning in a world of contradictory information”’.

She goes on to identify resistance to moves which address gender inequalities in schools and suggests ways of tackling this.

In part three of the book ‘Women Academics’, Acker opens the debate with evidence of discrimination and profound difference in career progression for men and women drawing on her own experience and providing empirical data to back her argument.

What impressed me most about this book is its multi-perspective approach. When the information and evidence uncovered is dense and difficult, Acker is able to think laterally and find new comparative perspectives. I particularly liked the way that she used the three feminist positions, the radical, the socialist and the liberal/bourgeoisie perspectives and developed strategies to deal with the issue of gender inequities from each of these ideological points. Often one feels powerless when reading about inequality and being confronted with huge immovability of the status quo. However, on reading Acker, although I was left aware of the immensity of the problem, I have been given tools for thought and some definite strategies which I can take into my working practice. It is an important book for those of us committed to keeping gender an active issue in education.

Maxine Green - National Youth Officer of the Church Of England.

Stephen Hutchens

Living a Predicament: Young People Surviving Unemployment

Avebury 1994

ISBN 1 85628 641 X

£32.50 (hbk)

pp 256

RICHARD BARBER

This is a qualitatively based text founded on research undertaken in Norwich and Norfolk villages. Hutchens contacted forty young people and carried out in-depth interviews with them in order to portray how they saw their situation. They had originally been approached outside DSS offices and asked to take part in a survey questionnaire, interestingly undertaken by female students who, perhaps because they were perceived as less threatening, had more success at this than the author. However, in the text most inference is drawn from the interview data.

The book has fourteen chapters and covers all the topics that people would look for in a book on this issue. In effect there is something for everyone. This enables the reader to dip in and out of the book if that is what is required. There is a useful appendix which is a 'potted biography' of each of the interviewees which assists in placing the young people concerned in context. A similar biography of the writer would have been useful since he mentions his own experiences on three or four occasions but it is only after a few chapters and by working it out for themselves that the reader is able to place Hutchens as some sort of college lecturer. Another omission is an index which would have been very helpful. As the book is only published in hardback it will be more or less confined to library shelves and people may be put off by the fact that there is no way of finding out at a glance if Stephen Hutchens's book will be useful to them.

Hutchens commits himself to maintain particular themes throughout the book, for example the specific experience of rural unemployment and to highlight the experience of young women in the text. These are important since as the author notes, most literature has consistently focused on the experience of urban, working class, white, adult males. However, the drawback of the way space is dedicated to these themes is that sometimes the materials seems repetitive. On the whole though, and because most people, I feel, will dip in and out of the text, this emphasis is valuable.

In general I found the book easy to read, which I think is a definite bonus for a book dealing with such complex issues. Hutchens sets out to present the reader with more than description, aiming to articulate the experiences and definitions of unemployment by the young people concerned. In short how they view their situation, their 'predicament'. The book does not use a great deal of dialogue of those interviewed and as such is not an 'in their own words' book. Hutchens has collected and explored a variety of factors affecting young people's experience or circumstances endured by them. In his words his sample 'consisted of "ordinary" "employable" intelligent people, most of whom wanted desperately to work' (p.2). I have considerable affinity with what I think Hutchens is trying to do here. He is trying to elaborate on the fact that many young people find themselves in this situation through no fault of their own, who in different circumstances (for example in times of 'full employment') would clearly not be in this position. In some ways this is similar to Springhall's plea to begin to develop 'theory of normality' around young peoples lives rather than construct images based on a minority of extreme experiences (1986, p.227). The theme of ordinariness is pursued from two perspectives, the aspirations of the young people and the restrictions placed on them. Not unexpectedly young people emerge as being conventional, particularly in search of a 'normal social life' with unemployment and the consequences of a limited disposable income making it difficult for them to achieve it.

The book tackles other important issues which have been sensationalised by the media and in the absence of concrete evidence to the con-

trary have fuelled popular opinion. For example do some young women deliberately get pregnant in order to secure independent lives via council accommodation? Unfortunately on this question the conclusion reached by Hutchens is that 'no definitive answer can be expected on the small number of interviews but the impression gained is a complex and varied combination of accident, choice, trying to make the best use of one's situation and post hoc rationalisation' (p.114). Other issues are tackled such as theories of an underclass, political influences and, interestingly for me based in the North East, the assertion that 'in some ways' the experience of the young unemployed in Norfolk is 'worse' than young people in Liverpool or Newcastle (p.2). Call me territorial but I think the use of the word 'worse' (probably) draws the wrong comparison. The crux of this argument seems to rest on social isolation which the author argues is greater in Norfolk. I would agree that the experiences are different, but 'worse'?

On the basis of his research Hutchens has developed a 'core model of causally related factors' which he states 'should be seen as an aid to understanding rather than as a complete coverage of all the negative effects of youth unemployment' (p.7). I usually find models helpful and this one is no exception. It is useful to see how factors inter-relate and where each can lead. At times it was difficult to follow, but mainly because of the use of two types of brackets {} and () which may be simply a typing error.

Overall then I'm not sure this book tells us anything absolutely new, but it does offer us something. It is a worthy addition to the available literature for those with an interest in the issues it covers. Certainly I will refer back to it.

Reference:

Springhall, J. (1986) *Coming of Age; Adolescence in Britain 1860-1960*
Dublin: Gill and Macmillan

Richard Barber is a development officer with *Save the Children*, based in Newcastle.

Barbara Rayment

Confidential - Developing Confidentiality Policies in Youth Counselling and Advisory Services

Youth Access 1994

ISBN 0 9515443 7 3

£12.50 (inc. p. & p.)

pp 41

MARY TURNER

This publication provides a clear and well-informed view of confidentiality in youth counselling and advisory services. It provides some appropriate guidelines for agencies needing to develop their own policies in this area.

There are chapters dealing with: need and context; definition of confidentiality; the legal position; issues and dilemmas; and communicating policy. Appendices provide: a checklist for developing a confidentiality policy; case studies with questions for consideration; and some examples of existing agency policies.

Rayment's discussion of confidentiality reflects her experience in the field. Her defining of confidentiality is particularly helpful. I too have noticed that many youth workers, counsellors, and others, hold onto various myths about what confidentiality means. As she points out, confidentiality is often confused with secrecy, with workers vowing 'absolute confidentiality' for anything that a young person confides in them. She exposes the myth of absolute confidentiality and shows how this approach leaves young people, workers, and their agencies vulnerable.

Having defined confidentiality, she goes on to focus upon the issue which often causes the greatest dilemma for workers and agencies working in the counselling and advice field - i.e. when is it necessary to breach confidentiality? Which situations or information give rise to the need to break confidentiality? This is an issue which is likely to face those working in confidential services comparatively rarely. However, when it does arise, it usually creates great anxiety and uncertainty.

The author argues that unless agencies have a clear policy on confidentiality, they can be of little support to their workers, who are left to deal with emotive and confusing situations without any clear guidance. Many agencies tend to simply 'hope for the best', but, when the problems arise, this is just not good enough.

In my experience, no amount of policies and guidelines take away the stress and anxiety experienced by workers and agencies in situations where confidentiality may need to be breached, but they can help to contain it, enabling workers and agencies to make measured judgements, rather than emotional responses 'on the hoof'.

In addition, policies need to be backed up with good training and supervision. This will make it more likely that informed, appropriate judgements will be made when such situations arise.

The author makes it clear that in agencies dealing with young people, issues of confidentiality will need to be viewed in a way which is age-specific, taking into account the needs, and legal positions of different age groups. She presents information on such issues as parental consent and child protection, linking them to case studies which appear in the appendix. This is helpful in encouraging the reader to relate the information to situations which could arise in practice.

Overall, this book presents a clear rationale for the development of effective confidentiality policies in youth counselling and advice agencies, and for the setting of boundaries which are known to young people using them, as well as to the workers.

She gives much practical guidance as to how such policies can be developed and communicated, and what they need to cover.

Although the book is written specifically for advice and counselling agencies, there is much within it that could be helpful to those in other areas of youth work, and who may, from time to time, face similar dilemmas

Mary Turner

Kevin Feaviour

Who's Really Listening?

Youth Access 1994

ISBN 0 9515443 8 1

£12.50 (inc. p & p)

pp 59

MARY TURNER

This publication is an adaptation of the author's research project completed as part of his MSc Psychological Counselling course, entitled:

The attitudes of clients and providers of youth counselling and advisory agencies towards the dimensions of confidentiality, informality, specificity to youth, and independence.

These were the elements which the author's reading of previous research and reports suggested were essential to a successful youth counselling and advisory agency. The aim of his own research, some of which is described in this publication, was to consult young people on youth counselling and advisory work, to find out their views and opinions about current provision, and identify areas for future development and improvement.

The author begins by looking at how young people are viewed in society, suggesting that they have become a yardstick - a measure against which society is assessed. He examines the way in which a groundswell of concern about young people as 'problems', has resulted in a range of charities and projects being set up - amongst them the growth of youth information, advice and counselling agencies.

He goes on to provide an overview of current youth information advice and counselling services, what they provide, and how they operate.

He discusses each of the elements which, it has been suggested, are key characteristics for the success of such agencies, namely self-referral facilities; confidentiality; informality; independence; specific to young people; and a generic approach.

A large chunk of the book is given over to quotations from young people, taken from the author's own research, and based around their views about what they themselves see as the most important elements of a youth advice counselling service.

Most of the views young people expressed tended to support the outcomes of previous research and reports, with a high proportion of respondents expressing considerable enthusiasm for such services, and appreciation of the help they had received.

However, as the author points out the young people targeted for the research were present or past service users. He suggests that these findings need to be balanced by further research into the attitudes of the many young people who have not used such a service, and who may be unwilling to do so. This might produce a means of evaluating the services more critically, and, therefore, help to develop them.

Because of the almost entirely positive findings of this piece of research, the book is in danger of becoming rather bland and uncritical. However, it is saved from this by the final chapter which looks at the way ahead. In this Kevin Feaviour raises a number of concerns, looking critically at his own research and drawing out some points which need to be addressed if youth advice and counselling services are to continue to develop. Amongst his concerns are the general confusion surrounding confidentiality; the nature of 'informality' in services; and accessibility.

He offers a model for advice and counselling services, and challenges the simple provision of information for young people. Whilst information is important, he sees giving it as more complex than simply handing out a leaflet or showing a film '...information giving requires a relationship to enable people to examine (it)... and make it relevant to their experience....young people need the opportunity to talk and discuss in relationships that are safe and secure' (p.49)

This seems to me an important issue, not only in youth information advice and counselling, but for youth work in general. Over recent years - perhaps due to the emphasis on curriculum and issue-based work,

many workers seem to have moved away from working through relationships, starting from where young people are, to becoming providers of information and 'agendas' for young people. There has grown up an emphasis on making sure certain issues are 'covered' with young people - as though giving information, or running a session on a topic, were enough.

The author provides a challenge for workers, and others, to *listen to* young people, to spend time with them, understanding the issues that concern *them*, and not imposing the issues that the adults think are important.

The book provides useful background reading for anyone interested in this field of work.

Mary Turner.

Pam Carter, Tony Jeffs, Mark K. Smith (eds)

Social Working

Macmillan Press Limited 1995

ISBN 0333 609115

£35.00 (hbk)

£10.99 (pbk)

pp182

CHRISTINE NUGENT

It is refreshing to find a social work text which makes practice its central focus. 'Social Working' aims to provide a framework for thinking about the daily round of social work through examining the key processes which practitioners undertake. As such it cuts across the usual divisions of client groups, methods or settings.

The key processes identified are teamworking, records and record keeping, counselling, policing, educating, advising and advocating, living alongside, supervising, managing staff and organising the daily round. Each of these processes forms the basis of a chapter written by a practitioner. Of the ten practitioners involved only one identified herself as a blackworker. In addition to the practitioner accounts the three editors have included two chapters of their own, an introductory chapter on the nature of practice and a concluding chapter which draws out key issues from the wider social and political arenas in which social work takes place. All chapters conclude with a number of questions which are intended as a useful trigger for discussion in teams and in seminars.

In their opening chapter on the nature of practice the authors are critical of the common distinction made between theory and practice, where

theory is privileged as 'real' knowledge and practice is reduced to the mere application of skills. They argue instead for an acknowledgement that practice 'is soaked in theory' and define it as 'the interaction of theory making, judgement and action' (p5). They describe social workers as artists 'able to improvise and provide new ways of looking at things' (p2). Social workers both reflect in action and reflect on action. The authors are aware that describing social work as an art might sound rather pretentious. However, for me this opening discussion on the nature of practice is a useful antidote to those reductionist tendencies which see the social worker as little more than a collection of competencies, an increasingly regulated follower of bureaucratic procedures. The authors' clarion call for the importance of the creativity and to some extent the autonomy of the reflective practitioner is to be welcomed.

Although the editors draw our attention to the significance in these debates of racism, sexism, heterosexism and other forms of oppression, with the exception of Lapompe's excellent chapter on managing staff and Marshall's account of policing, these issues are rarely given more than cursory attention in the practitioners accounts. Indeed this is one of the major disappointments of this text. With a few exceptions there is little emphasis on the role of the social worker in combating oppression. For example in teamworking, Chapman describes a sense of powerlessness within the team leading to a resigned acceptance of poor working conditions (p20). In this all white team, race 'is not a high profile issue' (p27). Though the team is described as aware of the issues, Chapman concludes 'we never address them in any comprehensive ways'. The question why not is unasked and an opportunity to reflect critically on obstacles to good practice is left unexplored.

Nonetheless, I salute the practitioners openness and honesty in exposing their practice to scrutiny in this way. Many chapters give a sense of workers struggling in difficult circumstances to practice well and often succeeding. I particularly liked those chapters which offered some analysis of the significance of power and power relationships in social work. Stirling's account of advocacy work where she stresses the importance of clients achieving the maximum degree of power and direction over their lives is one example and, Stirling is also one of the few workers to note the value of working collectively by joining campaigns such as Mind.

Little, in her chapter on recording, argues for more client involvement in the process of recording as a means of client empowerment. Lapompe considers management from the point of view of those managed as well as their managers. Though I do not share his predominantly psychodynamic perspective, Walker's chapter on counselling provides a thought provoking account of his practice which makes explicit his theoretical framework. Though Walker points out that most of his clients are lone female parents with material and financial problems he does not focus his analysis on how he, as a male worker, developed anti-sexist practice with this group. I searched his account, unsuccessfully, for some positive attributes of his clients variously described as 'confused', 'with personal difficulties' or 'operating at a level beyond awareness'(!)

I found that some accounts were more successful at drawing out the theory underpinning their practice than others. For me, the most interesting chapters were those which made very explicit the theory behind the practice such as those on policing, managing, supervising and advocacy, counselling and educating and less successful were those which tended to a more descriptive account such as living alongside.

None of the accounts made reference to the role of the trade unions. Indeed the only reference is by the editors and refers to the way trade unions can work to protect their members interests at the expense of vulnerable clients. Are we to deduce that trade unions have no impact on the practice of social work in the 1990s? Or no progressive impact?

The decision taken by the authors to provide a short introduction to each practitioner account seemed rather to undermine the general contention that workers are themselves theory builders and reflective practitioners. Was it necessary to have this authors buffer between the reader and the practitioners text?

While the focus is mainly on the micro level of practice, the final chapter successfully sets the issues raised within a broader socio-political context, and highlights key concerns for social work in the 1990s.

Notwithstanding my reservations about the lack of emphasis on anti-oppressive practice in this text I recommend it as a useful addition to the literature and a pointer to all of us trying to develop ourselves as reflective practitioners.

Christine Nugent: *Senior Lecturer in the School of Social and International Studies, University of Portsmouth.*

Jenny Bournes, Lee Bridges, Chris Searle

Outcast England: How Schools Exclude Black Children

Institute of Race Relations 1994

ISBN 0 85001 046 2

£3.00

pp 48

CARL PARSONS

This is one of those uncomfortable books to read. That makes it a bit difficult at times to mount criticism because you know there is a case to be fought and there are wrongs to be righted. Yet there needs to be a vigorous intellectual debate if the best case is to be made in the fight against an injustice. The best case is not always made here.

What we know is that too many pupils are excluded from school. The government's own National Exclusion Recording System found permanent exclusions in all types of schools rising from 3,000 in 1990/91 to 3,800 in 1991/92; even they had no faith in those figures and eventually only published them as a press release. Other research has placed the numbers of excluded children considerably higher, and rising even since the 1993 legislation came into force from September 1994. We also know that most of the excluded are boys, most of them are secondary (about 85%) and a proportion have statements of Special Educational Needs (though many more were probably in the process of assessment). A larger proportion of black pupils is excluded than white pupils. We also know that pupils excluded are not spread evenly over the social class spectrum.

This book does not address at all the class factor and the 'social well-being' factor. If comparisons of a more sophisticated kind were made it would be helpful. For instance, if comparisons were made between secondary male pupils from social class 5 or from unwaged families or from 'reordered families' would the same differences between black and white be found in the proportions excluded? The racist explanation may in the end be substantiated but it is not by this slim, colourful and heated book.

The book is certainly interesting, fairly heated in its presentation and in its organisation of points and evidence. It's a campaigning book running only to 48 pages with some sparky contributions within it. What one worries about is that the undisciplined campaigning of Outcast England may be counter productive.

Chapter One by Bridges contains a lot of good background material on exclusions in general. The anti-Thatcher, anti-Tory, Anti-1988 Act comes through more strongly than it need. There is a nice sentence which sums up the position that Bridges takes which is that, 'accountability has been stripped of its political and collective content, so that it no longer embraces the democratic expression of the community's need to provide a decent education for all of its children, but is channelled instead to the much more narrow mechanism of individual "choice" as operating in the educational market place' (page 9). In his concluding paragraph Bridges' fear that Pupil referral Units will become the educationally subnormal schools of the 1990s is certainly a 'watch this space' remark.

Chapter Two is by Searle, Head Teacher of Earl Marshall School Sheffield, who courageously established a no exclusions policy. People will admire the stand he has taken, I do. And I would have been much more interested in how the policy was working out in his school and an account of the racial issues confronted there. This chapter is a mix of passionate caring weakened by some dated material and insufficiently backed by the anecdotal material presented. Searle refers to Sterling's work on unofficial exclusions and trades the term 'tip of the iceberg' about those that are actually recorded; it is not helpful to make it sound that spectacular and that exclusions might be five times as great as those recorded (page 21).

Talk of black students being 'up to six times more likely to be suspended from schools than their white peers' is using wording that is a bit like a

Persil advert - 'Up to six times cleaner...' and can in fact mean that it is only 2 or 3 times cleaner/more likely, or whatever. To quote the 1985 NAS/UWT pamphlet that must be something of an embarrassment to the Union even 10 years later helps very little and other scenarios described rather colourfully contribute fairly unhelpfully to the discussion.

We all should take note, however, of the way National Curriculum content appears biased against inclusion of knowledge and human experience of ethnic minority cultures. Whether one can call it, as Searle does, 'blatantly racist exclusion of the cultures, histories and languages and perspectives of Britain's black people' may be just a matter of judgement.

Jenny Bourne's 'Stories of Exclusion' in Chapter Three are very readable but in many cases uncorroborated. Some are certainly so ridiculous that one is tempted to say 'surely that didn't happen' - but we know it probably did even though we don't have the other side of the story. The 12 year old African Caribbean boy sent to school in designer gear told that his trainers were too expensive and his white shirt had too many pockets. It's either a trivial joke or a horrible representation of an ignorant reality.

Jenny Bourne's 'Facts and Figures' in Chapter Four are fairly accurate but one always worries about the top figures for exclusions - an estimate of 66,315 children in one year according to a MORI survey - being offered with so little reservation. That figure is well over twice any other estimate.

The recommendations in three groupings on pages 45, 42, 48 are very useful. Whatever the heat of the proceeding material there is in the recommendations an administrative clarity and practical strength about the proposals which is most encouraging. The proposals address the problem at LEA level and at school level, looking behind the reasons for exclusion particularly of black children and involving the community in prevention and management of exclusion. There are contributions in the book which join the growing body of opinion that says the 1993 Act won't work either in reducing exclusions or in combating the unequal representation of black children in exclusions.

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A.V. Kelly

The National Curriculum

Paul Chapman Publishing 1994

ISBN 1 85396 115 9

£10.50 (pbk)

pp 163

TED HARVEY

This is a revised edition of a book that first appeared in 1990. However, as the author points out in the new final chapter, little has changed. This penetrating and illuminating analysis was obviously written before Sir Ron Dearing slimmed down the monstrosity but, such is the extent and depth of the author's critique. I doubt if he would see such a move as anything more than a mainly cosmetic accommodation to the undeniably valid criticisms concerning the unworkability of the monolithic first version.

The analysis here is both rigorous and scathing. Kelly systematically exposes the lack of conceptual depth and consistency of the National Curriculum and highlights the point blank refusal to take into account the results of research into curriculum design. In chapter two he examines the four concepts of education which he sees have historically been evident in the design of schools and curricula, he clearly favours a 'developmental' model where the key aim is self-determination, but in the conceptual mishmash of the National Curriculum this notion seems most noticeable in its absence. In contrast Kelly identifies instrumentalism, commercialism and elitism as constituting the underlying philosophy of the 1988 Act.

The 'developmental' or, as I know it, student-centred concept of education is surely crying out to be acknowledged as an idea whose time has come, we need a system of schooling which produces autonomous, flexible people who can find and evaluate what they need from the information explosion rather than memorise and regurgitate some small predetermined part of it. Moreover we are now in a position to implement such a system, advances in humanistic psychology and knowledge of group dynamics, together with our understanding of curricular design put us in a position to devise a student-centred system which, contrary to popular myth has never been attempted on a meaningful scale, at least in secondary schools, where alienation, disaffection and under-achievement are so rife. Kelly points out that the process model he advocates would also deal effectively with the issue of equal opportunities, unlike the National Curriculum which tries to make each child learn the same regardless of different starting points and interests.

You do not have to be some wild-eyed 'progressive' to take such a view, Tom Peters, the 'management of excellence' guru has recently written that most of our educational reforms are proceeding '180 degrees in the wrong direction'.

I found reading this book something of an emotional roller-coaster, while feeling relief and even delight at the clear and thorough critique, I also experienced the consequent anger and frustration at having to live and work with such a blatant piece of maladministration, perpetrated by what a recent leader in the Independent referred to as 'lobotomised rogue elephants' (having rejected the metaphor of headless chickens, as they are relatively harmless). As the onslaught continues with Chris Woodhead's banal comments on teaching methods and a new round of savage cuts in spending, it seems the teaching profession has become punch drunk and speechless at the difference between government rhetoric and classroom reality, so effectively has our self-esteem been demolished.

My only criticism of Professor Kelly's book is that perhaps in his detailed attention to every aspect of the National Curriculum and the bulk of his criticism seeming to rest on the government's pig-headed refusal to listen to professional advice (he quite reasonably points out that a civil engineering project would not be undertaken on the same basis) I feel he misses an opportunity for even more fundamental analysis.

The National Curriculum, even though it is, in terms of intellectual quality, 'a mile wide but only an inch thick', is still supported, albeit subconsciously, by an ideology which has dominated our national life for more than a decade and a half. This ideology is underpinned by a basically pessimistic view of human nature, the same bleak paradigm from which emanates the belief that only market forces can be relied upon to regulate human affairs, that criminals can only be corrected through punishment and the unemployed should get on their bikes. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that education is seen as a matter of training young people to jump through hoops rather than helping them take control of their own destinies.

In such a context, it is important that criticisms and alternatives are articulated with clarity and power, and this is where Professor Kelly's book is so helpful, as it so convincingly and devastatingly exposes the inadequacies of the National Curriculum. I would like to think this book will be widely read and discussed, it should be compulsory reading for the opposition front bench who seem lacking any fresh big ideas on the subject of education, it is almost certainly too much to hope that any member of the government will even glance at it, they do not listen to professionals.

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Paul Francis
Boys will be Men
Shropshire County Council 1994
£5.00
pp 43

BREN COOK

I don't know if I'm becoming more stingy in my old age or whether I've absorbed one of the flavours of the age in which we live, for whenever I look at book like 'Boys will be Men' the first thing I wonder is 'will it be useful?' or 'how can we use this material?'. This indeed was my first reaction to this slim volume and I didn't get beyond the introduction when I decided that 'Yes!' this was going to be a very practical piece of work indeed. 'Boys will be Men' is an immensely accessible set of material, primarily aimed as PSE teachers, that is clearly set out and couched in uncluttered plain English.

Paul Francis sets his stall out in the introduction entitled 'A Necessary Compromise' and in it he has struck the balance between his ideals and meeting the resistance that may well come when embarking upon boys work. In the text Mr Francis comes over as calling for justice and humanity rather than being dogmatic or entrenched in a blame culture. This may seem rather grand, however his style and arguments for tackling this increasingly complex area of gender roles are convincing and would encourage newcomers to this area of work. Within this section the debate about single gender groups is raised and some of the issues laid bare for the reader to decide which approach is best considering the context that they may find themselves in. I thought this section was refreshingly handled and wasn't prescriptive.

The book is in A4 format and uses an easy to read typeface, which gives the book an informal air, and this I think could be an important factor in it's approachability. I found Francis' style very easy to read and found myself nodding in agreement on many occasions.

After the first few introductory pages that set out rationales, issues, possible structures, pitfalls and resources, the book moves on to the actual material contents for the 'tutorial' sessions themselves. All the material is photocopyable when you buy this book.

There are three types of material or assignments:

- A. Talking assignments - a set of discussion material which may include some reading, however the tasks would be more likely to succeed in a group.
- B. Reading assignments - There is obviously some reading to be done here, but it isn't too threatening and has been used in classes that contained people with severe reading difficulties; this material may be used in pairs or threes which can generate a lot of learning too.

- C. Research assignments - enables people to work on their own without a teacher/worker always there and encourages young men to talk to young women about some of the issues. This section encourages team working and presentation skills as well.

An example of a talking assignment highlights the simplicity of approach and accessibility of the material. A.4 Men Behaving badly - is a page of newspaper quotations citing examples of times when men have used, abused and otherwise exploited women, to which the participants are asked to simply describe (using a proforma) what happened and asks how this could have been avoided. It is easy to use and clearly written and is broad enough in content to lend itself to adaptation for other uses. I can see the material being used in a youth work setting and engaging young men in some challenging activities.

The challenges Mr Francis puts forward are not aggressive, are non preachy and clearly point out the ludicrous nature of sexism which benefits no one in the long term and eventually damages both the oppressed and the oppressors. Questions are framed in an open ended way that encourage the participants to think things through for themselves, which is what education is all about.

The third part of the book gives notes on the various assignments taking teachers through each exercise giving hints and tips on how to handle each one and sharing some experiences of their usage with the reader.

This is not a theoretical tome which is not much use in practice but a sharing of experience and materials that have worked. If I have a criticism about this book it is that it can leave you with a 'what next?' but the more I think about that then perhaps that's exactly where you would want to leave people.

This book is an excellent place to start and would provide support for those who want to do something but don't know where to begin and although the text refers to a school context there is something here that can teach the Youth Service something and could be used very easily by those workers full or part time that are searching for a place to start.

Bren Cook is a trainer for Lancashire Youth and Community Service in Preston.

The book is available from Shropshire County Council, Abbeyforegate, Shrewsbury SY2 6MD.

Terry Philpot

Action For Children: The story of Britain's foremost children's charity

Lion Press

ISBN 0 7459 31367

£5.99 (pbk)

pp 192

MICHAEL LAVALETTE

At the beginning of 1994 NCH, the second largest voluntary child care society in Britain formerly known as National Children's Homes, changed its name to NCH Action For Children. This change coincided with the organisation's 125th anniversary and represented a formal recognition of its changing role. In particular there are three major developments which have affected its work. First, they are no longer primarily concerned with residential child care but are involved in a range of child, youth and family activities. As Philpot emphasises the society's: 'work with families takes place not only in its family centres' but also via 'mediation schemes for couples who are divorcing' and a range of activities such as:

Fostering, adoption, family centres, work with homeless youngsters and those leaving care, alternatives to custody for young offenders, care for children who have been sexually abused - this constitutes the majority of its work in the 1980s and 1990s (pp7/8)

Second, the society is a powerful agency advocating a more child centred focus and approach to welfare provision. The name change clearly represents a recognition of its political role in this regard.

Finally, such changes to the range of NCH Action for Children's activities have been reinforced by recent political changes which have affected the modern British 'welfare state' with its developing and altering mixed economy of welfare: increasingly voluntary organisations are having to play a larger role in the provision of welfare services.

Philpot's book therefore comes at a very important juncture for voluntary welfare providers and it is an important source which addresses three broad themes. First, it provides a concise history of the organisation, second, it offers an overview of the range of NCH Action for Children's activities and projects and finally it analyses the changing role of voluntary organisations as welfare providers in the 1980s and 1990s.

The first theme in the book is to offer a history of the organisation. Philpot starts by looking at the organisations roots in the Methodism of the mid-nineteenth century. The charity's founder was Thomas Bowman Stephenson, a Methodist preacher who opened the first children's home in London in 1869. According to Stephenson's brand of Methodism one showed respect for God not simply by one's faith alone but by one's acts, by performing 'good works'. In this context Stephenson's philanthropic works are discussed and his genuine concerns at the plight of poor orphaned children outlined. Disappointingly, however, the contradictions inherent in such philosophies are not really developed. The

'moral project' of nineteenth century philanthropists was often to educate/socialise the poor to accept their station or at the very least look for only minimal and gradual reforms to the worst excesses of laissez faire liberalism, to instil the bourgeois family form as the only appropriate mode of living and to instil notions of godliness and cleanliness as the essential requirements of social living. The activities of charitable organisations helped to improve the life of the receivers of aid but such help was structured by conventional concerns which ignored the structural causes of the recipient's plight. That such contradictions were present within Stephenson is clear from a number of brief references in the book. Thus we learn from Philpot that: Stephenson was a radical who actively campaigned for the Liberals (p15), yet the Liberals (or Whigs) were, for the majority of Stephenson's life, the Party of the laissez faire bourgeoisie; one of his long term concerns had been one of 'taking faith to the people' (p16); and that a solution for the abandoned children was to let them learn from the experience of agricultural labour. As one of Stephenson's colleagues stated in justification of the policy of child emigration to Canada, the farm produced the virtues of:

health of body, and wholesome living; contentment, freedom and the rewards of honourable toil (quoted on p 37)

Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that the severe poverty and exploitation faced by working class families in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries meant that there was always a need for support for the poor and an alternative to the workhouse. As a result the organisation's activities developed and expanded. Even before adoption became legal in 1926 the Home was involved in informal adoption and fostering arrangements. They expanded work with children with disabilities, were involved with the education of young offenders, provided a refuge for children escaping the Nazis and established themselves as a truly 'National' and significant organisation with homes and outlets throughout the country. Yet one is left feeling that a more critical history of the organisation's work is necessary and especially a critique of their guiding philosophy (and in particular their perspective on the ideal of family life).

The scale of the organisation's activities is the second theme within the book. In 1994 they ran 215 projects in Britain. Philpot provides an outline of 12. The projects selected are all relatively small scale, picked to emphasise the organisational move from large stately orphanages to small, intimate and disparate activities, and emphasise both the social and geographical breadth of their activities. The examples cover mediation, minority ethnic community projects, work with young offenders, children with special needs and counselling with victims of sexual abuse.

Such activities have developed as new welfare problems have emerged or gained recognition in the late twentieth century. However, the voluntary agencies increasingly are having to cover such activities as a result of wider political changes to state welfare provision. Funding cuts to local authorities and state social and welfare providers have left a void into which the voluntary agencies have had to step. Further, the Government's

commitment to the mixed economy of welfare, with a plurality of providers competing within quasi-markets, has led to voluntary groups being run on more traditional business lines and competing with (rather than complementing) existing state provision. Many voluntary organisations remain deeply ambivalent to such developments yet NCH Action for Children seems to have uncritically accepted the changes as the logic of welfare provision of the 1990s. Thus Philpot describes the changes (briefly) and their consequences (the adoption of a more 'managerial' hierarchy) without really taking issue with the underlying *raison d'être*.

This book is well written and accessible but I am left feeling rather uneasy. It attempts three tasks: to provide an institutional history; a description of the wide range of tasks covered by the organisation today and a focus on the changing political climate in which voluntary organisations operate. But it does so in 192 pages and by necessity therefore curtails much interesting discussion. The three themes do not hold together particularly well and I am left wondering who the intended audience is.

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David Thorpe

"Evaluating Child Protection"

Open University Press 1994

ISBN 0335 157521

pp. 218

STEVE ROGOWSKI

David Thorpe's 'Out of Care'⁽¹⁾ greatly influences social work practice, not least in terms of ensuring community alternatives to incarceration were developed for young offenders. One hopes that his latest book, drawing on research from Australia and to a lesser extent Wales, leads to another positive development, this time in the child protection field.

In an excellent forward Parton points out that policy and practice in relation to child abuse, now called child protection, is dominated by cases which have gone wrong. After over forty enquiries, priorities and guidance are based on work scenarios where children have died or have wrongly been removed from families. This, rather than day to day cases informing practice there is a 'rear end led' system. Thorpe's research focuses on the mundane and typical rather than the exceptional, and this is a welcome change. Much child protection work is concerned with the observation and categorisation of parenting behaviour and the moral character of par-

ents, and utilises techniques of normalisation. This work involves commonplace problems associated with rearing children in stressful situations typified by, for example, deprivation, poverty and racism and *not* children who have been seriously physically or sexually abused. Ironically and sadly, services are directed at the latter rather than the former. Thorpe argues that child protection needs to be recontextualised, it needs to be more precise and restrictive and there should be a shift in resources to child welfare work rather than child protection per se.

Chapter 1 gives the origin of the research along with an outline of the development of child protection legislation in England, North America and Australia. Not least it is noted that the driving force behind the child protection movement of the 1960s-1980s was specialist paediatric, clinical and social work professionals who dealt as experts predominantly with those children who were so traumatised by physical and sexual assaults and neglect that they required medical attention. There was also skilled use of media representation of the problem, especially the most tragic cases. Hence the development, it is rightly argued, of a 'rear-end led' child protection system.

Other chapters look at outcomes in child welfare research noting the limitations of 'scientific' outcome studies, as well as designing a child protection information system for monitoring child protection policy and practice.

As for the research itself a key finding is that 50% of child protection investigations examined drew a blank in terms of discovering abuse or neglect, and that one fifth of all allegations arose in a conflictual situation, where, for example, there are custody/access (now residence/contact) disputes involving parents or disputes with neighbours. The careers of the children in the substantiated child abuse and 'at risk' cases, a total of 325, are covered. There are chapters on : those who entered care at or shortly after the investigations began; those who received home-based services; those who began with home-based services but then had to be admitted to care; and those where no further action occurred. Important findings include 'at risk'/neglect cases feature significant numbers of children and families suffering from structural disadvantage with Aboriginal people and single female parents being over-represented. Indeed there are chapters on Aboriginal people and child protection, and gender issues and child protection. Thus, for example, it is pointed out that even some of the normal child rearing practices of Aboriginal people (e.g. often allowing the care of children to be undertaken by the extended family and community) are likely to be seen as evidence of child abuse when seen through Eurocentric child protection eyes! It occurs to me that similar comments sometimes apply in England when middle class social workers view working class child rearing practice - the normal child rearing practices of the latter can be seen as evidence of child abuse (for example, using older siblings to care for younger ones).

It is, however, the concluding chapter 'Redefining Child Protection' which for me is the most interesting. It comments on the child protection activities as they emerged in the research. Child protection services do protect children who have already been harmed, injured or significantly

neglected, but there is less success when 'at risk'/neglect cases are considered. The question arises as to what price has to be paid for the rather narrow success rate referred to. In fact, the majority of child protection cases are dealt with by investigation and some form of admonishment. This activity consists of policing and investigating the routine parenting practices of a substantial number of people. What is more, there is no norm set for the minimum standards of parenting, rather the onus is on social workers to demonstrate that the allegations have substance.

As stated, for Thorpe, and I agree, the phenomenon of child protection needs a reconceptualisation of child protection itself, one which distinguishes between child *welfare* (those measures which promote the care and well being of children) and child *protection* (those measures which act directly as a barrier between children and significant harm). The new ideology of child protection as it stands at present has distorted the types of services and levels of services required. This new ideology has changed the role of child welfare agencies from predominantly one of service provision to one of policing and normalising. Instead of viewing children in the context of carers being encouraged and supported by the state to look after and protect children, there is now a view that the state only intervenes to protect. Parents are not seen as nurturing and supporting with difficulties and structural disadvantage which require compensation, but as potential threats from which children require protection. In concluding, Thorpe gives a brief and simple guide to the recontextualisation of child protection which he advocates. This amounts to child welfare practice which focuses on, for example, the difficulties carers of children face and the services needed to ameliorate these, thereby ensuring the care and well being of children.

If a criticism of the book can be made then perhaps the change in child abuse/child protection work could have been placed in the context of ideological changes at the economic and political level of the last twenty years. Mention could also have been made of the Children Act 1989 with all its references to the responsibilities of parents while at the same time successive Tory governments have systematically stripped parents of the practical means of carrying out these responsibilities - cuts in income maintenance, child care and education, the dismantling of the health services, and so on.

To conclude, as the blurb on the cover states, child abuse cases are products of complex processes of identification, confirmation and disposal rather than being self-evident in the child's presenting condition. Research tools are needed to help those involved in this work and Thorpe's computerised child protection information system should greatly help in this. Perhaps his latest book may not have the profound impact of 'Out of Care', but it is still essential reading for all those working and interested in the child protection field.

Reference:

- (1) Thorpe, D., Smith, D., Green C. and Paley, J. *Out of Care; the community support of juvenile offenders*. George Allen & Unwin 1980.

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Richard G. Wilkinson

Unfair Shares: The effects of widening income differences on the welfare of the young

Barkingside: Barnado's 1994

ISBN 0 902046 16 0

£5.99

ANDREW WEST

This is an important report for those concerned with the position of young people in society, both for what it says and for the context of its publication. The opening sentence of the Overview sums up the thesis: 'This report presents new evidence which shows that *relative* poverty has absolute effects and is a much more destructive social force than is generally recognised' (p vii). But, when the report was published 'far from taking (the) message seriously, Virginia Bottomley ... sent a sharply worded private reprimand to Barnados' (Dean 1995).

Wilkinson's report addresses the notion that relative poverty does not matter while there is no absolute poverty. Rather, he argues that relative poverty in itself is dangerous to health and cannot be lightly brushed aside under the banner 'inequality'.

His focus throughout is generally health and statistics based. Whilst the report does concern children and young people Wilkinson has also to devote much space to a general articulation of the social and economic links that show the damaging consequences of relative poverty. Part of the difficulty of his approach is the general absence of useful and directly relevant hard statistics for children and young people (except, for example for accidents, crime, suicide) and he has to use more general statistics regarding health, explain how they relate to relative poverty and link the whole up to youth.

Wilkinson begins with some 'dry' statistics to ask his questions about what the trends of the 1980s indicate. The figures, he suggests, 'show adverse influences affecting children and young people during the 1980s', a period chosen 'because the rapidity of change during that decade provides an opportunity to discover what lies behind them' (p 1). The statistics concern crime, drugs, deaths from solvent abuse, the proportion of children on the Child Protection Registers and the numbers in care, the decline in reading standards, increase in exclusion of children from school and the massive increase in suicide among 15 to 24 year old young men in the late 1980s. These 'trends ... together ... provide evidence of deteriorating social and psychological conditions among children and young people' (p 2). He suggests that the 'national standards of health in the developed countries are ... powerfully affected by how equal or unequal peoples incomes are' and, therefore, the best way of improving health is by reducing income differences, and that such a strategy is more important than specific programmes for example, to combat smoking.

Having set the question and indicated the thesis, Wilkinson goes on through succeeding chapters to link it all together with evidence. His material is interesting in that he pulls together a wide range of predominantly medical statistics to set alongside economic or social figures. He includes a graph showing changes in death rates among young adults, children and infants: the steady decline being arrested in the mid-1980s 'when income differences widened so dramatically' (p 5). Wilkinson's problem is linking up disparate data. He attempts this in two ways: first through making use of international comparison and second in exploring trends in the U.K. in some detail. Throughout, one of his key statistics is the use of death rates because, unlike some other statistics (such as crime) they are not so influenced by differences in definition and the reporting system. Basically, it transpires that death rates fall according to increasing income: life expectancy 'in European countries was (1975-85) related to changes in the extent of relative poverty' (p 18)

Following on from international data, he looks at trends in the U.K. particularly regarding health, reading standards, welfare, homelessness and suicide. The fourth chapter goes on to examine longer-term trends, covering the period from 1950 and including some international comparison, on proportion of the population affected by relative deprivation and crime, drugs and depression. He indicates the importance of examining not just the poorest 10% or 20%, because, as he shows, 'in effect, knowing the income share of the bottom half of the population would lead to a better estimate of life expectancy in a country than knowing the share of a smaller, more extreme group' (pp 51-52). The arguments are, thus, quite dense and not open to 'soundbite' reports. Further, as he goes on to suggest, whilst the statistics are important in demonstrating the thesis, in the end it is how people feel about themselves and their lives which, whilst it may stem from economic and social factors, influences their state of health. For example, in a discussion on the consequences of absolute and relative poverty, he suggests that 'after societies have reached a certain level of affluence, the general increase in the absolute standard of living resulting from economic growth no longer makes much difference to health...' while the 'scale of relative deprivation (as measured by income differences ... within the same society) continues to be a powerful determinant of health' (p 54). Here is where peoples feelings come into play: 'The fact that it is relative rather than absolute material standards which influence health means that cognitive and comparative processes must be involved. Rather than people's material circumstances having a *direct physiological* impact on them - as with exposure to toxic material for instance - what matters now is what people feel about their circumstances and what the differences in their circumstances makes them feel about themselves ... a matter of how their circumstances compare with those of others' (pp 55-56).

Wilkinson concludes with the need for income redistribution in order to combat the effects of relative poverty. Not a startling and new idea, but one which has fallen out of consideration in recent years and could now

sound quite radical! He shows the costs of failure to solve problems: in the 'developed' country, the U.S.A., the death rates for most ages (except the youngest) in Harlem, New York is higher than in 'undeveloped' rural Bangladesh.

Such an example brings us back to the production of the report. It is A5, compact and very full: more time could have been spent on design which seems to have had problems of importing graphs into the text, as the Errata slip (five missing lines) reinforces. In the Foreword, Barnado's say they are publishing the report as a contribution to the 'vital debate' around income inequality, and the report 'contains some challenging and controversial ideas, which do not necessarily represent the policy position of Barnado's ... (but) we believe these ideas merit urgent consideration' (p vi).

Charities are in a problematical position, needing to be careful about their publications in order to retain their status. Dean wrote that the 'Barnado's board went into a dither over publication (of this report). Belatedly - after some anguishing and delay - they released the report at a conference jointly sponsored by The Guardian' (Dean 1995). Whilst it is easy to throw stones at this, because the report is academically respectable, it would seem that the 'anguishing' was justified given the 'sharply worded private reprimand' sent by Virginia Bottomley (Dean 1995). This is a matter of some concern. Charities which seek to look to the welfare and rights of children, young people and others, must of necessity raise money for their work from various sources. The images which may have popular appeal are usually those which do not correspond to real perspectives of cause, rights and welfare: and, to be effective, a charity must need to have and develop a critique of social circumstances. Pressure on such development stifles new or different approaches to social issues. In this case, these issues are apparently not a problem for some but the response to and context of this report suggests that they are a problem to others - and one to be kept hidden. So, make up your own mind. Read this report while you can. I reprimand you now in advance.

Dean, M 1995 'The Taboo Subject' *The Guardian* 1st February

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Leo B. Hendry, Janet Shucksmith, John G. Love, Anthony Glendinning
Young People's Leisure and Lifestyles

Routledge 1993

ISBN 0 415 04349 2

£35.00 (hbk)

£13.99 (pbk)

pp 209

STEVEN MILES

Reports of empirical research that serve to illuminate the contextual experience of young people's lifestyles in contemporary society are few and far between. This book proves to be an admirable addition to the fold. The reader is presented with an in-depth analysis of the findings of a University of Aberdeen project looking into the importance of leisure in the development of young people's lifestyles throughout Scotland. The authors present an impressive body of data gleaned in three stages in 1987, 1989 and 1991, from a survey of an original sample of 10,000 young people between the ages of 9 and 20. In addition, perhaps the most informative material presented here arises out of a more qualitative longitudinal portion of the research, incorporating in-depth interviews and group discussions with 250 young people. The prime focus of this material is the extent to which leisure affords young people a social context in which they can develop their identities and negotiate their independence during the transition to adulthood.

The book is divided into a series of chapters each of which addresses a specific aspect of young people's lifestyles. In this respect, it might be suggested that the title is slightly misleading in that though leisure is prioritised by the authors they also manage to consider broader aspects of young people's lifestyles including school and work, families, peer relations and health. As such, the authors succeed in constructing a reasonably comprehensive picture of what it is to be a young person in contemporary Scotland. This is achieved by combining empirical insight with a discussion of the relevant literature and a consideration of the appropriate theoretical context.

The authors lay much weight on a focal model of youth experience that sees the transition between childhood and adulthood as being characterised by substantial adjustments of both a psychological and social nature. Arguing that in fact young people are extremely resilient, it is suggested that different relationship patterns become important to young people at different times and as such the transition to adulthood is eased by the fact that the need to adapt to new models of behaviour are rarely experienced simultaneously. An attempt is therefore made to present a psycho-social conception of young people's lifestyles, notably in relation to 'the fragmentation of the adolescent tradition', in light of the breakdown of traditional socialising institutions such as the family, the school and the church.

The authors go at least some way towards achieving this goal. However, the in-depth consideration of survey data is not always discussed completely effectively in relation to the theoretical context. The reader is often obliged to plough through large chunks of material that attempts to transmit the projects statistical findings. Often such material is not effectively contextualised until later on in the relevant chapter, by which time the impact of the data is lost.

Such stylistic points should not serve to undermine the richness of the findings collected by the Young People's Leisure and Lifestyle (YPLL) project. This is particularly true of insights provided by the project's in-depth interviews and group discussions. Indeed, one cannot help but wonder if this aspect of the projects findings are under-utilised. To a certain extent the richness of the more qualitative data (presented largely through occasional quotes), which tells the reader much about the individual meanings with which young people endow aspects of their lifestyles, tends to overshadow the less immediate statistical material. Perhaps it is merely a matter of personal taste to suggest that the context within which young people's lifestyles operate may have been better understood by focusing more directly upon those individual meanings evident in the project's qualitative findings, even though this may, to some extent, have been at the cost of generalisability.

One other concern about Hendry et al's analysis of young people's lifestyles is their inability to come to any real conclusions about the significance of leisure in the construction of youth identities. To a certain extent the reader is left guessing at the significance of the relationship between leisure and identities despite a useful discussion of identity and the self-concept early in the text.

Despite such reservations the four authors present a significant contribution to the debate over young people's leisure and lifestyles which will be stimulating to practitioners and academics alike. Above all they illustrate the rich rewards available to researchers prepared to utilise the complex inter-relationships evident in young people's lifestyles as an analytical framework. In this context, the chapters on young people and leisure and young people, peers and friends, are especially informative. Overall the book discusses with some panache the interplay of issues of social class, gender and age, and the lifestyle variations that relate to such issues in the transition towards independence and adulthood. The authors fulfil their fundamental aim, in that they present an illuminating analysis of young people's lifestyles in contemporary Scotland. By doing so they highlight the extent to which young people play an active interpretative role in the construction of their lifestyles in contemporary culture.

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Alan Smith

Creative Outdoor Work With Young People

Russell House Publishing Limited 1994

ISBN: 1-898924-25-2

£9.95

pp 165

KENNETH MCCULLOCH

This is not actually a new book. The main substance including most of the drawings which are such a central feature, is reproduced with minor changes and additions from the Author's earlier *Working Out of Doors with Young People* (Smith 1987). Only part of the first chapter, on Planning and Safety, and the second chapter on Outdoor Work and the National Curriculum are actually new. The final chapter, for which co-authors are credited, is also an addition to the original text. Anyone who already has access to the earlier work is going to be more than a little disappointed if they spend money on this book. It might have been more honest to represent this as a revised version than as a new title.

Chapter one gives a useful framework for planning expeditions and activities, with an emphasis on residential trips and expeditions. My main problem with this chapter was the lack of serious discussion of purpose. It doesn't seem to me enough to assert the importance of educational aims, and not then to explore in more depth what aims may be served by outdoor and adventurous activities. The second chapter is a four page outline of aspects of outdoor work in the Physical Education and Geography programmes of study in the National Curriculum for England and Wales; as a Scottish educator I don't feel particularly qualified to comment, except to say that the suggestions for activities related to particular curriculum areas seem reasonable enough in themselves.

Chapter three, Finding the Way, covers techniques for land navigation, with some basic ideas for teaching activities. I was somewhat puzzled by the advice on magnetic variation when using a compass; I checked some OS maps and it does indeed vary from place to place as I was taught many years ago rather than being a constant as suggested in the text. Chapter four develops some of these approaches using an orienteering framework to provide some useful ways of teaching confident wayfinding in a variety of contexts.

Chapters five and six cover camp activities and problem solving; none of this will contain many surprises for most readers although some may, as I did, wonder at some of the activities. It is a basic principle for most youth workers that nothing we do is value-free; there is always learning taking place. What do young people learn, I wonder, from being encouraged by adults to role play guards and prisoners as suggested here?

Chapter seven suggests some activities for environmental investigation, using both rural and urban contexts. No specific mention however of investigating transport patterns, energy use or environment and health.

Chapter eight presented me with some problems. It is entitled canoeing activities, and suggests a range of activities to make canoeing more interesting. Most of these activities will be wholly familiar to qualified, competent canoe instructors, and therein lies the greatest problem this book presents. If you are not already skilled in the activities described you should not be out on the moors, in the woods or on the water in loco parentis with young people. Ironically enough the press release accompanying the review copy refers to the Lyme Bay canoe tragedy as a reason for increased interest in the safety and relevance of outdoor work with young people, and although the text contains many exhortations to ensure only properly trained and experienced staff are involved, it doesn't fully clarify the question of who the book is really for. Chapter eight does nothing to answer this question, consisting of an idiosyncratic selection of other activities.

Overall this was a disappointing experience, the book seeming to promise much more than it succeeds in delivering. Sold in part in response to concerns about safety particularly since the Lyme Bay tragedy, and partly as a National Curriculum resource, it never quite meets the too many and varied targets the author seems to have set. It is neither a technical manual of any great merit, nor is it a serious attempt to theorise purpose and methods in outdoor activity. The intended readership apparently includes both adults and young people, the various elements not always sitting comfortably together. The choice of activities is not explained in terms of a rationale or framework, in that canoeing, for example, is included but sailing, rock climbing and caving are all excluded although potentially equally or more useful as activity media, it could be argued.

There is much that is useful and interesting in the book. Many of the activities are well thought out and the materials for use with groups are engaging, although other readers may share my irritation at the constant diet of cartoon character drawings. I will treat it like a cookery book, picking out the few recipes that appeal and that can use my skills and the other ingredients to hand, and ignoring the rest. It will be a potentially useful addition to any collection, but only after some basic texts have first been acquired.

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John E.B. Myers (ed.)

The Backlash

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HELEN BUCKLEY

'The Backlash' seeks to bring the reader a 'thorough sampling of perspectives' of the 'countermovement' against child protective (sic) services, which has apparently been at work in the USA since the late 1980s. It has been defined by the editor, John E B Myers, as 'the escalating chorus of criticism directed against professionals working to protect children'. The work consists of a sample of papers given at a conference held in Sacramento, California, in November 1992, some of which were presented by Myers himself. Myers and Finkelhor each have chapters examining different dimensions of the countermovement. Finkelhor gives clear and interesting analysis of this movement, first tracing the origins of the child protection movement, illustrating how the problem of child sexual abuse is even more powerful than child abuse in general as it unites the three current preoccupations: sexuality, changing gender roles within the family, and crime and justice. Finkelhor still considers the social bases underpinning the child protection movement as strong and not seriously threatened by the countermovement. Child abuse, he feels, is not a lucrative enough area to encourage the involvement of influential members of society such as those few attorneys who support the 'backlash'. He also considers that the 'backlash' is not politically correct enough to attract academics in any serious way. Finkelhor advises the child protection movement to guard against 'social problem fatigue' by capitalising on its successes, invoking flexibility and allying itself with other social movements. He cautions wisely against the child protection movement going 'too far beyond a prevailing social consensus', thus rendering itself vulnerable.

Myers also looks at the origins of the backlash, and examines the notion of criticism of the child protection movement; he acknowledges that certain aspects of child protection can be legitimately criticised, ie exaggerated statements such as that children never lie, failure to learn from critics, letting advocacy get ahead of knowledge for example in claims about satanic or ritual abuse, and the low status and underfunding of the child protection service. The two chapters from the perspective of administrators of the county and the state, one by Pizzine and the other by Wilson and Caylor Steppe tend to raise and defend against criticisms of the child protection system, both claiming that child protection is an underfunded activity which is misrepresented and scapegoated by critics. A chapter by Pyke of the Netherlands tells the story of 'Oude Pekela', one of those Cleveland type events which aroused such politicised and polarised reactions that the true nature of what happened was obscured.

The book includes a chapter written on behalf of the pressure group,

Vocal, that is 'Victims of child abuse Law' which was critical of the legal framework, the reporting system, the calibre of child protection workers, and the misuse of power by professionals. The tyranny of false accusations by children, and the failure of the state to recognise the negative aspects and real dangers of the care system were also addressed, although unfortunately not examined in enough detail to encourage a helpful response. Finally Myers includes two more chapters of his own, on the literature of the backlash, and one which seeks to tackle the backlash head on.

One of the weaknesses of this work is the complacency which runs through all the perspectives on the backlash, according to which the proponents of the countermovement are misguided, either opportunist academics, lawyers or journalists, or aggrieved parents. The patronising attitude with which the above are regarded has relieved the writers of the necessity to give serious discussion or consideration to the notion that the backlash movement may have identified some valid flaws in the ideology as well as the practice and policy of child protection. Although Myers claims in his introduction that he takes 'a frank look at the faults of the child protection system' and asserts 'that professionals are to blame for much of the backlash', the evidence that he has done so is not convincing. The fallibility of the social construction of child abuse is not acknowledged. The issues of discriminatory practice (Milner, 1993 on 'gendered' practice) or of error theories in child protection as discussed by Howitt (1992) are largely ignored. There are references to the possibility of confusing neglect with poverty, but this is almost justified by the suggestion that poor people do neglect their children by being unable to provide baby-sitters or medical care. The neglect of the overrepresented poor and marginalised families who come to official attention but are given no service because they fail to conform to the norm of substantiated abuse (Thorpe, 1994) is not adequately addressed. The significant number of unsubstantiated allegations of child sexual abuse made in the context of custody disputes, which must pose a threat to the credibility of the system, are not mentioned. The main concessions to weakness in the system given by the authors of this book are allusions to poor funding and inadequate training.

In an interesting way, the perspectives of policy makers illustrated the weakness in the child protection system caused by the detachment of management in their assumption of the orthodoxy of their mission. Paradoxically, although most of the authors advocated the building of bridges between the child protection movement and the countermovement, they themselves failed to do this, and quite happily dismissed one criticism after another. The reader was left with the feeling that the confidence displayed by the authors was based more on an unshakeable faith in their own infallibility than serious reflection and satisfactory resolution of the issues raised. However, if they were unable to reach out to the present, they did show an ability to reach forward to the future in some of the constrictive suggestions they made for a better service.

The strength in this work manifests itself in an important theme which was echoed throughout. This was the emphasis, for a change, on the dissemination of information about the child protection services, and the publicising of success. A challenge was made to one of the most irritating features of the system for its workers, that is, the failure of officials to respond to criticism for reasons of confidentiality. The writers made constructive and refreshing proposals on the promotion of a positive image of the child protection service in the United States. Their application could be equally relevant to the statutory services in Ireland and Britain.

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