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TRANSITION TO WHAT?

How planning meetings for young disabled people leaving school conceptualise transition

KAY TISDALL

You know, they [the professionals] listened to me. Which I thought was surprising but good.

You know, a lot of tests are so slanted towards disabled people, either working in a low-level helping profession or a secretarial stream, that I think they forget there are other options. And you know, I think there's a sort of stigma attached to a person. Maybe the person wants to, well, I don't know, they want a Master's in philosophy. They get voc [ational] tested at the age of 16, most of them. So then everything is slanted towards what their voc test said. I don't think that's right.

(Two young people's experience of transitional planning quoted in Tisdall, 1994b and 1990 respectively)

Introduction: the 'transitional problem'

The transition from school to 'adulthood' may be difficult for any young person. With the changing world - for example, considerable youth unemployment throughout the Western world, young people's often extended financial dependence on their parents well into their twenties, the tendency to marry and have children later - many of the markers generally considered part of adulthood are achieved later in life, if at all (for example, see Coles, 1995; Jones and Wallace, 1992).

For young people with disabilities¹, the transition can be even more problematic. The imposed logistical and social limitations of a disability can block paths commonly followed by nondisabled young people: for example, finishing one's education, holding a job, being physically and emotionally intimate with someone, and moving away from home. Many young disabled people - although they overwhelmingly want to achieve these dimensions of 'adulthood' (Gallivan-Fenlon, 1994; Tisdall, 1990) are presently not able to succeed in all or many of these areas. (For descriptions of the lack of post-school opportunities, see Hirst and Baldwin, 1994; Landreville, 1992; Pearson, 1994; Tisdall, 1994b; and Ward et al., 1991).

This paper provides a brief consideration of how the 'transitional problem' is modelled in the literature. Through a case study of transitional planning meetings, the paper then describes how the 'transitional problem' is modelled in practice. At the end, theoretical and practical comments on transitional problem-setting and problem-solving are raised.

Transition for young people with disabilities: the literature

In the 1980s, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), a branch of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), carried

out a ten year study of young people's transition from school to adulthood. The reports from CERI make a distinction between the phase and process aspects of transition:

The 'process' aspect refers to the psycho-sociological development of the individual whereas the 'phase' aspect refers to the pattern of services provided for individuals during transition. (1986, p. 15)

Both the phases and the processes of transition are sites of problem-setting and debate in the transition literature. The following discussion considers two 'process' models that are representative of both the extensive literature on transition and the different directions taken within this literature. (For a comparison of two 'phase' models, see Tisdall, 1994a and b)

CERI's list of processes includes both practical goals (e.g. productive activity) and more psycho-social goals (e.g. personal autonomy). The 1991 CERI report summarises them as such:

- 1 *Personal autonomy, independence and adult status;*
- 2 *Productive activity;*
- 3 *Social interaction, community participation, recreational and leisure activities;*
- 4 *Roles within the family. (p. 137)*

These criteria are abstract and require further breakdown. For example, the term 'independence' can mean several different things for someone with a physical disability. Does CERI advocate physical independence: one's own home? being able to do day to day tasks for oneself? Or does the report mean psychological independence: feeling in control of one's life? With CERI's term 'independence' in its present imprecision, knowing when a person achieves independence is difficult to ascertain. Most, if not all, of the report's criteria listed above beg further delineation to give the criteria practical meaning.

In contrast to CERI's abstractions, Ward et al. (1991) gather a more practical list of transitional 'milestones', summarising conclusions made in a range of literature and through the team's research:

*These were the **legal** aspects of adult status, such as the right to vote, to marry, to receive welfare benefits, to pay Income Tax, to attend jury service, if eligible and summoned; the **role of employment** as a key determinant of adulthood, in terms of the opportunities it afforded for **living independently** of family support and outwith the family home, and the ability to sustain adult relationships. (p. 130)*

Attainment of (most of) these criteria is easier to judge. For example, a young person is either living outside the family home, or s/he is not; s/he either has the right to vote or s/he does not. But in return for their very precision, some people would more openly disagree with these criteria, finding them too exclusive or inclusive (why is community participation not included?) or unrealistic (many young people,

let alone young disabled people, cannot find permanent employment in the present conditions of widespread unemployment). However Ward et al. expand their list², others may or may not agree; any disagreements with their criteria are likely to reflect the debates within the 'transitional field'.

Which list is a more suitable basis for the conceptualisation of transition? The abstract list of CERl's 1991 report captures more of the psycho-social elements of adulthood. Working for a wage, for example, is not advocated but 'productive activity'; marriage is not suggested but 'social interaction'. The criteria listed are justified, in the 1988 CERl publication, by a psycho-sociological concept of adolescence:

Ideally then, adolescence is a period when new roles are taken on, one's self-image, after some turmoil and conflict, is consolidated, independence and autonomy from one's parents are gained (after considerable battle in many cases) and one is ready, with the support of one's peers, to envisage entry into adult life. (p. 22)

This psycho-sociological approach emphasises roles and role conflict, social expectations, and the interaction between these roles/expectations and the adolescent's sense of identity.

The concept of 'adolescence' has its drawbacks. Stemming from the sociological and psychological theorising of 'adolescence', young people risk having any difficulties devalued as 'just part of that age group' and individualised to their hormones and transitional stage-and thus their views ignored or devalued. (For further discussion of 'adolescence', see Anderson and Clarke, 1982; Coleman and Hendry, 1990; Davies, 1986; McGinty and Fish, 1992; Tisdall, 1994a)

On the other hand, psycho-sociological justifications have certain advantages over Ward et al.'s more practical list. Such justifications could be used to criticise and challenge the status quo facing each adolescent. The justifications could be universalised across cultures more easily (although perhaps not correctly, as the concepts may be unavoidably ethnocentric), which is especially pertinent as societies become increasingly multi-cultural. They could be used as societies change: employment, for example, may become less important but developing a sense of identity through adult roles may still be valued.

Problematic Issues

Several problematic issues can be extracted from the discussion above:

- 1 What is the effect of transitional models' *individualisation*? Individualisation may be viewed positively, as being client-centred rather than service-centred, as actually meeting the needs of clients (for example, see Hubbard, 1992). Individualisation can also be viewed negatively, as camouflaging and diverting attention away from the political or social context that is perpetuating the 'social problem'.
- 2 Should *employment* be a transitional goal? The transitional goal? On one hand, many disabled people themselves consistently state that employment is essential to their quality of life: not only in terms of income, but also self-esteem, socialisation,

and daily purpose. On the other hand, unemployment statistics are high, and young people and disabled people are particularly vulnerable in labour markets. Employment may be an unrealistic goal. Further, perhaps society places too much emphasis on employment in general and should expand its valuation to other types of productive activity, such as volunteer work.

- 3 How *prescriptive* should transitional models be? Particularly if the concept of adolescence underlines transitional models, young people's own views can easily be ignored because adolescence is considered a 'troublesome' time period of lower status than adulthood. Should all disabled young people work towards achieving the list of transitional goals? What if they do not wish to fulfil certain goals or would like to work towards other goals? What if the young people's goals are considered 'unrealistic'? Who determines whether such goals are 'realistic'?

Transitional models put into practice

Repeatedly, the transition literature criticises the lack of service continuity when the young people leave school, the bewildering array of agencies and eligibility requirements, and the failure to make coherent plans (Disabled Persons' Community Resources (DPCR), 1991; Hirst and Baldwin, 1994). Repeatedly, the transition literature urges professionals, parents and young people to work together:

Successful transition depends on inter-agency co-operation, collaboration and planning. Specialist and sector concerns result in a narrow focus. Individuals and agencies cannot on their own support effective transitions. Professionals working in education, social service, health, employment and voluntary organisations can make an effective contribution to transition only by working with other professionals, with parents and with the young people themselves. (McGinty and Fish, 1992, p. ix)

Attempts to co-ordinate young people's transition from school have developed in various countries. For example, the Kurator system in Denmark appoints a key worker, working with other appropriate professionals, to advise and support young disabled people from the age of fourteen to their early twenties. In the United States, Wehman et al. (1988) have extensively developed the concept of 'individual transitional plans', to aid young disabled people in leaving school. Scottish legislation requires professionals to consider young disabled people's transition, through the Future Needs Assessments (FNAs). In Ontario, the Sheldon Rehabilitation Centre (SRC)³ brings together an inter-disciplinary team to help young disabled people plan their futures post-school, through the Educational-Vocational (EVs) Assessments.

Such practices allow a window into how transition is modelled *in practice*:

- What are the conceptualisations of the 'transitional problem' developed?
- What are the solutions suggested to the 'transitional problem'?
- Who contributes to these conceptualisations and these solutions?
- To what extent are participants satisfied with the answers to these questions?

Description of research methodology

(for further description of methodology, see Tisdall, 1994b)

This research sought to address these questions through case studies of two different types of inter-disciplinary collaborations: the FNAs held in Colbourne Region's Robertson School and SRC's EVs.⁴

FNAs are legally required by Scottish education and, to some extent social work, legislation. All young people who have formal 'Records of Special Educational Needs' must have such assessments, beginning at age fourteen. Practice differs between areas, but all assessments are inter-disciplinary collaborations that require the production of a report on future provision for the young person. In Colbourne Region, young people, parents and professionals (from education, health, social work, careers, and further education (FE)) come together for a series of FNA meetings.

EVs are a voluntary service offered by the Rehabilitation Centre's Young Adult and Adolescent Team to its clients, typically one to two years before the young people leave high school. Eligibility is based on local residency and having a physical disability. Young people go through extensive inter-disciplinary assessments for one week at the Centre. Several weeks later, professionals (team members from the Centre and sometimes outside professionals) meet to discuss the assessments and make recommendations. Following this 'team' meeting, young people and parents enter and the discussion is repeated.

Two sets of the FNA meetings were attended in a Colbourne Region special school, Robertson School: one in the fall and one in the summer. This resulted in fourteen meetings being attended. Seven meetings constituted the case study of Sheldon EV meetings. All the meetings that could be feasibly attended during the time of fieldwork (autumn 1991-summer 1992) were included in the research (with the exception of one FNA meeting where the family did not wish to participate).

All meetings were attended, with the exception of four EV meetings that took place after I was required to return to Scotland to attend meetings there. All meetings and interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Interviews were held with young people before their meetings, and after the meetings with young people and with parents. Professionals completed a written questionnaire after each meeting, and were interviewed about the meetings in general. All written information brought to or resulting from the meetings was collected.

This research was undertaken with a fundamental assumption: that the young people were the most important people in the transitional process. Such an assumption is particularly important for young people with disabilities. Young disabled people may have three negative statuses attributed to them when they face transitional services: of being crisis-ridden adolescents, of being needy clients, and of being marginalised members of society. The young people, as a result, may be treated with little respect and given little control in transition decisions (for example, see Anderson and Clarke 1982, pp. 189-190). As one young woman with a disability once said to me:

I never get the chance to say what I feel. They always make up their minds before asking me. And that really bugs me, because I feel if you don't say what's on your mind, you're not human. (quoted in Tisdall, 1990)

Findings of Research

Given the limited space in this paper, detailed data presentation is not possible (for this, see Tisdall 1994b). Findings are highlighted, which address the four questions asked above. Further, the findings for FNA meetings are emphasised, with EV meetings only used as contrast.

What were the conceptualisations of the 'transitional problem' developed in the meetings?

Certain subjects were almost always raised in FNA meetings: medical details (diagnosis, functioning and treatment) and education (present school and college opportunities). Conversely, certain subjects were raised in a minority of meetings. Even though a social work report is legally required for those fitting the legal definition of 'disabled' (which would have fit all the young people in this study), such a report was only mentioned six times out of fourteen meetings. Completion of a social work assessment for the report was only mentioned in one meeting. No details of the social work assessment were given at that one meeting. Social work placement was raised in two meetings. Work experience and job opportunities were mentioned five and four times respectively. Young people's social lives, housing and recreation were seldom mentioned.

Four professional participants stated their inability to extract adequate information from the meetings. These professionals then felt unprepared to participate in the following discussions. For example, the FE college representative worried that she was asked to give an opinion of the young person's suitability for specific college programmes, without fully knowing the young person's mental and physical functioning. Sometimes she felt forced to give such an opinion, but she firmly believed: *'It's not good professional practice.'* At least to some professionals, the poor quality of information detracted from the quality of the following discussions. Five young people and seven parents said that their expectations had not been met. They had expected that more would happen both in terms of recognising young people's capabilities and future action.

What future options were typically raised? The same options regularly appeared in all meetings: FE college (almost always Miller College) or staying at school. Sometimes a suitable FE college course was specified by the college representative or the specialist careers officer. When the college courses were described, they were never described in terms of what skills they might offer the young people but whether the young people would be eligible. Young people appeared to be directed to specific college courses by their perceived (dis)abilities rather than for skill opportunities. Only at one meeting were educational options other than Miller College or staying at school discussed.

What would be discussed at the meetings did appear to be constrained by the short time scheduled. Due to legal and bureaucratic requirements, all young people had to

be seen in one day. The time pressures on the meetings were therefore strong. The observed FNA meetings ranged from 4.5 minutes to 22 minutes, with the average meeting being 9 minutes long. One young person commented: 'Nothing much ever happens. *I mean, you can't decide much on your future in ten minutes, which is idiotic?*'

Exactly what decisions were made at the meetings was difficult to discern but, if written records and participants' recall are used, patterns were evident. Staying at school was overwhelmingly the most common decision: stated two times more than the next most common decision, FE college. Other decisions were noted much less consistently. These other decisions ranged from college links to social work referrals to reviewing the situation next year. Decisions were never made about housing, recreation or other social activities. Decisions about work experience were made in two of fourteen meetings. The subjects for decisions were even more restricted than the subjects raised at the meetings or the options described by professionals.

In short, the FNA meetings tended to focus on educational placement (particularly in decisions) to the exclusion of other possible transitional goals. The decisions did seem most concerned with *where* young people would be rather than *what* they would be doing there. The FNA meetings thus demonstrated a narrow conceptualisation of transitional goals.

In comparison, the EV meetings covered a wide range of transitional issues—from employment to housing to emotional well-being—and had time to consider any particular issue in depth (average length of a 'full' meeting was 30 minutes). Recommendations closely matched the subjects raised, both in number and content. Of all subjects, employment appeared to be the one most often raised by professionals and the one most salient to parents and young people. Ironically, actual employment opportunities were outwith the remit of all professionals present. The number and specificity of recommendations indicated a comprehensive and thorough conceptualisation of 'transition'.

What were the solutions suggested to the 'transitional problem'?

While the insistence on parental and disabled children's rights might have politically influenced the original education legislation, the resulting legal framework of the FNAs did not seem to provide a strong political framework for parents or the young people. The legal framework did guarantee the rights of young people to FNAs and various components within them. The legal framework, however, was only successful in ensuring FNAs meetings were held and decisions made on young people's educational provision; only half of the required components were definitely fulfilled in the meetings observed. As one professional criticised:

I think that a lot of people regard that Future Needs as a chore. It's a thing we have to go through, but we don't do this, the work we need to, in any other way.

Rather than political, the legal framework resulted in a bureaucratic structure that enhanced professional control—while discouraging professionals to see themselves as responsible for the meetings (Tisdall, 1994b and Tisdall, 1997).

The bureaucratic structure brought professionals together to assess and plan young people's futures. Professionals would largely decide what provision would be provided

for young people in the future. Only in one decision was a young person mentioned by one professional as partially responsible for implementing a decision. In these ways, the FNA meetings addressed the risk of professionals failing to co-ordinate their services. If appropriate provision were made for young people when they left school, then a *smooth and planned transition* would be ensured and young people would not be left at home, with professionals asking, *'Where should they be?'* (Louise, FNA professional).⁵

In contrast, the EV meetings offered inter-disciplinary professional collaboration in *assessing and advising* young people about their futures. One professional explained the EV meetings' mandate:

When these young people are reaching the stage, 'Well, what do I want to do?' you're trying to give them some idea, at this particular moment in time, what their strengths are, what their weaknesses are, what they perceive their interests to be, and how do [these] match with the resources that are, the possibilities that are, available.

Young people (and their parents) would largely decide what advice would be followed. Within the EV meetings, participants thus defined the 'transitional problem' in a particular way: young people lacked sufficient and useful information. The meetings provided this needed information, based on professional assessments and advice.

Who contributed to these conceptualisations and these solutions?

At FNA meetings attended by young people (thirteen of fourteen meetings), the headteacher always asked the young people what they were hoping to do in the future. If the young people did not have an immediate answer, the headteacher commonly asked more and more specific questions to try to elicit some information. When the young people did raise a particular interest, the professionals interacted with it. The professionals might react to it negatively, as with John Mitchell's desire to become an accountant or graphic designer. The professionals might explore the possibilities by which young people could fulfil their proposed objectives. For example, Tom Akroyd stated his desire to go to college at the beginning of the meeting. Over half of the following meeting was dedicated to exploring the details of this option. While the young people did not typically add to the discussion much beyond their initial statements, the subjects they raised provided the subject matter for the following discussions.

In the FNAs, professionals and young people tended to raise the subjects upon which decisions were made. Parents' comments were usually ignored. Professionals sometimes questioned statements but young people and parents rarely did. Parents' questioning did not usually lead to any change or additional decisions, unlike those of the professionals. Young people lacked the opportunity to disagree with the formal letter of FNA decisions. Such letters were to be sent to parents-although few copies of these could be found in files, and only one file contained correspondence over a parent disagreeing with the formal letter. Whether these letters gave power to parents (or young people) over decisions was thus questionable: parents may not have received such letters,

or found nothing with which to disagree in the general statements, or have not taken active decisions to disagree. A concern over inter-professional conflict was voiced by some professionals, but in this fieldwork I only observed parent-professional conflict. The lack of social work contribution was notable.

In the EV meetings, professional disagreements were resolved in the 'team' meetings by consensus. Professionals at the team meetings would develop a co-ordinated package of recommendations and a collaborative approach, to be presented at the full meetings to the young people and parents. In only one meeting did young people and parents appear to work actively together at the meetings with professionals, to construct a consensual plan. Young people, and to a lesser extent parents, collaborated more with professionals *before* the EV meetings-through their contributions to assessments-than at the EV meetings themselves. Thus young people seemed most involved in the construction of the 'transitional problem' and less involved in the construction of the 'solutions'.

To what extent were participants satisfied with the answers to these questions?

After their meeting, participants were asked whether they were satisfied with the meeting, and with the decisions. Using the categories of young people, parents and professionals, the following generalisations can be made of the participants:

FNA meetings

- young people were almost as likely to be dissatisfied as satisfied
- more parents were dissatisfied than were satisfied
- twice as many professionals noted dissatisfaction as noted satisfaction

EV meetings

- young people and parents were generally satisfied
- professionals were slightly more likely to note satisfaction than dissatisfaction

Young people and parents seemed less well satisfied with their FNA meetings than those involved in the EV meetings. As with young people's and parents' opinions, EV professionals appeared more satisfied with the EV meetings than FNA professionals did of the FNA meetings.

Young people's involvement appeared to be the axis on which most FNA participants' satisfaction depended. Considerable satisfaction was expressed by some young people. For example, Gillian Stone was surprised and delighted at the attention given to her views by FNA professionals. Other young people exited their meetings in tears. Traci Miadich, for example, three times emphasised to me in her post-meeting interview: *'It was a total disaster'*. Traci's father felt her involvement was seriously curtailed by the meetings' process: *'You know what I mean, she wasn't given enough time to prepare for it, she wasn't give enough time to speak her mind.'* In comparison, EV young people and parents rarely praised or critiqued their involvement in the meetings, focusing more on the (lack of) potential for further action. This may be explained by the structure, process and attitude of participants in the meetings. For example, EV professionals made conscious efforts to ensure the comfort of young people within the meetings. (For further discussion of young people's involvement, see Tisdall, 1996.)

Conclusion: management or challenge?

The FNA meetings addressed the risk of professionals not co-ordinating their services, and thus failing to provide a day-time placement for young people to go once they left school. The FNA meetings addressed this risk by bringing professionals together to ensure a smooth and planned transition took place for each young person. The proceedings of the EV meetings suggested that the problem was the lack of appropriate and sufficient information and advice, and the EV meetings offered inter-disciplinary professional collaboration in assessing and advising as the solution.

Both types of meetings had the possibility of including young people's views and contributions in the conceptualisation of, and resulting solutions to, the 'transitional problem'. The EV participants constructed a broader view of the 'transitional problem', to include a range of areas from housing to employment to recreation. The FNA participants constructed a more limited view of the 'transitional problem', typically only offering decisions on school or Further Education college placement.

Were these conceptualisations of, and solutions to, the 'transitional problem' sufficient to address the situation outlined at the beginning of the paper?

By individualising the 'transitional problem' and offering inter-disciplinary collaboration as the 'solution', the observed meetings arguably 'managed' the social problem rather than changed it.

A discourse of 'management' could be seen to typify the FNA meetings. This discourse was filled with terms of professional management-such as 'appropriate provision' and a 'planned and smooth transition'-rather than terms of empowerment-such as young people's 'control' and 'matching abilities with opportunities'. The meetings were typically dedicated to the smooth processing from provision to provision, rather than to examine the value of such provision or to explore opportunities.

Many parents and certain young people appreciated the FNA meetings' offer of even limited provision and managing the 'transitional problem'. Some parents and young people feared that no help would be offered to them when the young people left school. To know that a large number of potentially influential professionals were interested in ensuring that the young people 'did not fall through the cracks' surely provided young people with hope for the future. But compared to the disability advocacy movement's challenge to the status quo (Oliver, 1990), the FNA meetings' reliance on managing the 'transitional problem' failed to empower young people significantly.

At a micro level, the EV meetings could be seen as empowering. Surely young people were empowered by improved information, self-awareness and a positive knowledge of their abilities. The EV meetings could provide these factors. Further, the young people's own need to control their futures was recognised by young people's responsibility to implement most recommendations. The EV meetings' practice met one of Hubbard's most strongly expressed recommendations for FNA meetings: that FNAs be 'user-led' and thus focus on the personal and social development of individual young people, and their future service needs (Hubbard, 1992).

On the other hand, many EV young people and parents noted that the information provided was not new. What some young people and parents hoped for was concrete support and action from the meetings (even though the meetings were officially advertised as providing assessment). The EV participants, though, were largely not composed of future service providers. The EV meetings could provide advice, not plans. In this way, young people were not actually 'matched' with opportunities, but advised on opportunities. Resources were not provided, but suggestions for resources. Were young people significantly empowered if nothing was likely to happen from the wealth of advice and recommendations?

After this research, I think that inter-disciplinary meetings at best are only a small part of any solution to the 'transitional problem'. Certainly, the inter-disciplinary meetings observed in this research could be improved. Perhaps inter-disciplinary collaborations can productively inform individual young people about opportunities. Perhaps determining and debating transitional goals help such collaborators better direct their resources. But what is the point of the professional expertise, resources and time put forward through inter-disciplinary meetings when opportunities are so limited? At worst, the meetings may be diverting attention and resources away from substantially solving the 'problem'.

Over and over again, young disabled people have listed what they want. They want accessible housing, employment, transportation, services and communities. They want to participate, to be included, to be independent, and to have control of their own lives. (Gallivan-Fenlon, 1994; Landreville, 1992; Pearson, 1994; Tisdall, 1990; Ward et al., 1991). Young disabled people do not always state the exact same list-but why should they be expected to? Even when disabled people construct the lists (which I suggest they should), the debate could continue endlessly about the 'proper' list of transitional goals. How many of us, labelled disabled or not, fulfil any list of transitional goals provided within the literature? Why should young disabled people be expected to follow a set list many people never meet?

Too much is being done on changing the individual young people and too little is being done on widening the present dearth of post-school opportunities. Too much is being done professionally and too little is being done politically. Professionals working with the young people need to act politically, to challenge local environments. Politicians should be lobbied and enlisted at all governmental levels to legislate change. Central and local governments in both Canada and Great Britain are presently funding disability advocacy groups' work: monies could be available to such groups interested in liaison and working with young disabled people. Perhaps most importantly, young disabled people (and their parents) should be encouraged to see their environment politically and agitate for change.

Merely 'tinkering' with the professional and bureaucratic frameworks of the EV and FNA meetings is not enough. Young people cannot simply be 'added on' to structures that formerly excluded them, and be instantly empowered. The structures at the very least need to be changed substantially, and, at the most, radically re-thought.

As one young person in Canada declared:

All this talk about supports for this and supports for that - as if we are constantly in need of support. Maybe if we can get rid of some of the barriers, and change the system so it really meets our needs, we wouldn't need so much support. (quoted in Landreville, 1992, p. 28)

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Notes

This paper was originally presented at the ESRC British Youth : A New Agenda Conference, in January 1996.

- 1 Terminology has considerable importance in the fight against society's discrimination and negative attitudes. Everyone should be sensitive to what groups of people wish to call themselves. However, in Ontario the broad consensus of people with disabilities rests with the phrase 'people with disabilities' whereas in the UK debate continues about this phrase versus 'disabled people'. In this paper, I have used the phrases 'disabled people' and 'people with disabilities' interchangeably.
- 2 Thomson and Ward (1994) have recently completed a continuation of their original Scottish Office project, which presents a modified list of 'important indicators of 'successful' transition to 'independent adult status'' (see pp. 17-18).
- 3 Throughout this research, names and places have been anonymised to protect the identity of participants. Ontario and Scotland are named because the policies and opportunities available are particular to these areas, and the relatively large areas covered by Ontario and Scotland do not exactly pin-point the location for fieldwork.
- 4 The considerable help from participants and supporting agencies, in both Ontario and Scotland, in undertaking this research is gratefully acknowledged.
- 5 While M. Hubbard's 1992 thesis was read only after the first analysis and interpretation of the data, her own characterisation of the FNAs was remarkably similar.

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CHANGING MASCULINITIES?

Single-sex work with boys and young men

LYN TETT

Introduction

This article considers the way in which practitioners who are undertaking same gender single-sex work with working class boys and men within an equal opportunities framework conceptualise their practice. In particular, it considers how underpinning theories about the social construction of gender affect practice. All practitioners possess a 'theory-in-use' (see Argyris and Schon, 1974) which serves both to explain and direct their practices although their conscious awareness of it may be slight. Once people are aware of the ways in which they theorise their practice they are much more likely to become critically reflective practitioners.

Goffman (1975) and others have shown that the way in which experience is 'labelled' and action undertaken, will determine the type of 'sense' that can be made of events. In any profession this 'framing' determines what is seen and heard, and thus constrains the ways in which practitioners can interpret and change their practice. As Schon (1983, p 301) points out:-

when practitioners are unaware of their frames for roles or problems, they do not attend to the ways in which they construct the reality in which they function, for them it is simply the given reality.

Once practitioners realise that they construct their reality from a limited set of frames, they can begin to see the need to reflect on the possibility of alternative ways of thinking and acting, and so their practice can change. It is thus an important task for practitioners to identify and challenge their assumptions and explore alternatives. However, the impetus to engage in such critical thinking does not normally arise out of 'a person's self-willed decision' (Brookfield, 1987, p 24). Practitioners therefore need to be aware of their implicit 'theories-in-use', rather than just their espoused theories, which may well be different, since practice is grounded in theory and, as Collins (1991, p 47) has argued, that awareness involves 'putting ourselves into practice'.

I have chosen to examine work with boys and men because, as Segal (1993, p 630) argues 'we need to focus on the *differences* between men, and the situations men find themselves in if we are to struggle for change'. Education has an important part to play in changing both attitudes and structures which promote gender differentials, (see Hass, 1993; Mac an Ghaill, 1996; Taking Liberties Collective, 1989) although the type of interventions that are made will reflect particular ideologies. These ideologies of work with men could be categorised as falling within three broad areas: pro-feminist work which has its roots on the women's movement of the 70s and acknowledges men's role in women's oppression (Chapman and Rutherford, 1988; Jardin and Smith, 1989); men-centred approaches that rely on building solid relationships with young men and then challenging sexism on the basis of trust and respect (Boyle and Curtis,

1995; Lloyd, 1994); anti-feminist work which extols the traditional virtues of patriarchal, hierarchical visions of 'true masculinity' (Bly, 1991; Moore and Gillette, 1992)

This article investigates the assumptions regarding the construction of gender of practitioners undertaking same gender single-sex work in one geographical area. The major purpose of the work that I have examined is to bring about change in the attitudes and structures that underpin policy and practice in addressing gendered inequalities. It thus falls mainly within the 'man-centred' approach outlined above and the focus is very much at the 'low key' end of the spectrum, concerned with sexism and sexual oppression rather than sexual violence. It is, however, typical of the type of work that takes place under the auspices of community education in the geographical area I am focusing on. My examination of how practitioners consider the inequalities of gender are fostered or subverted is intended as a contribution to the theorising and discussion of 'masculinities'.

Single-sex work with boys and young men

There are at least two contrasting perspectives on gender and equal opportunities, one which identifies inequality as a problem of equal importance to males and females and one which regards women's lack of power in the economic, political and educational structures as part of a far broader pattern of female subordination. (Spence, 1990; Walby, 1990; Weiner, 1994) These perspectives are generally referred to as the 'liberal' and the 'radical' approaches. These different explanations and analysis of sexual inequalities have generated different solutions and strategies for change. Liberals have tended to focus on increasing access for girls and women to traditionally male areas of education, employment and leisure combined with an examination of factors such as prejudice, traditional values or the lack of proper role models that act to sustain this situation. Radicals, on the other hand, have put the relationship between patriarchy, power and women's subordination at the centre of their thinking and action. Underpinning educational interventions in both cases, however, is the basic premise that girls and women are disadvantaged and oppressed by boys and men and steps should therefore be taken to expose this disadvantage and challenge and change it. One strategy for doing this has been to develop same gender single-sex work with boys and young men designed to challenge sexist stereotypes in ways that address issues of power and inequality both individually and structurally. It is this strategy that I intend to examine in this article since, as Askew and Ross (1988, p 74) argue in the context of schools:

while girls are the chief victims of sexual oppression and therefore more resources need to be allocated to meeting the particular problems of girls, boys also need 'anti-sexist' education as a way of both undermining the brutalising effects of the construction of masculinity in this society and, by implication, challenging the effects of male sexism on girls.

The impetus to undertake such work within informal community education has arisen both from feminists' challenge to men to address their own sexist practices (see Smith, 1984; Spence, 1990) and, more recently, from advocates of men-centred approaches

(Lloyd, 1994). Some feminists have argued that in order for men to take responsibility for change there is a need for anti-sexist strategies to be developed with boys and men by men rather than women. Others have suggested that women's oppression cannot be changed by focusing on women alone and therefore 'feminists must include direct work with men as part of an agenda for change' (Cavanagh and Cree, 1996, p 87)

In this article I am reporting on same gender single-sex work projects with boys and young men so it does not include direct work by women with men. Single-sex educational work with boys and men has been justified on a variety of grounds. A major justification from an anti-sexist perspective is that making participants aware of their sexist assumptions will enable them to take on responsibility for challenging and changing the oppression experienced by girls and women. In recent years the HIV epidemic has raised a number of issues for educational initiatives and some projects have made anti-sexist work a focus on the grounds that a vital part of this work is to address the subordination of women within conventional sexual relations.

Within the youth work projects I have examined anti-sexist practice has mainly been concerned to question the assumption of male power and to provide co-operative, rather than competitive, activities. Some work has focused on issues of sexuality and of violence in ways that question the masculinist and heterosexist expectations of young people (see Kent-Baguley, 1990). What all these approaches imply, as Jordan (1995, p 72) has pointed out, is that there is a clear distinction between 'the acceptance of a gendered world in which everyone is either male or female, and the attribution of a gendered meaning to attitudes, objects and activities'.

The attribution of gendered meanings is not, however, a neutral activity and many authors have argued that the power to define gender-roles is in the hands of men who are organised for domination and are resistant to change. (see Blundell, 1992; Coats, 1994; Segal, 1990; Weiner, 1994). Others have argued that not all masculinities are powerful and Connell has coined the term 'hegemonic masculinity' to describe the ways in which the dominant masculine form is constructed in relation to and against femininity and subordinated forms of masculinity. He defines hegemonic masculinity as:-

the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women....Within this overall framework there are specific gender relations of dominance and subordination between groups of men (Connell, 1995 p77-78).

He draws on the Gramscian argument that dominance is never secure but must always be won by the gaining and shaping of consent and shows how this results in a dominant gender view strongly structured by relations of power within which 'choice' of gender styles are made. From this perspective masculinity and femininity are not fixed but rather are contradictory and paradoxical categories, internally fissured by class, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity and other systems of inequality.

If educators are to tackle the issues raised by hegemonic masculinities then, as Redman (1996, p 70) argues, 'they will need ways of working capable of getting to

grips with boys' and men's investments in the positions of power that they occupy'. However, particular forms of masculinity are subordinated within wider social relations and as hooks (1989, p 22) points out 'sexism, racism and class exploitation represent interlocking systems of domination'. This means that working class boys and men are unlikely to experience themselves as powerful in all situations and it is important to take account of their lived experience if change is to take place. Thus educators are left with 'the uncomfortable tension between the need to address the oppressive consequences of heterosexual masculinities and the need to respect the lives of those with whom they are working.' (Redman 1996, p 71). One method of theorising this tension is to examine the ways in which people inhabit multiple locations and identities which are not fixed but are continually negotiated through interactions with others (see Connell, 1989; Mac an Ghaill, 1994). This means that essentialist notions of a single, one-dimensional male subject can be broken down, thus allowing for a more critical exploration of the social construction, meanings and consequences of male identities in ways that allow opportunities for change. The ways in which such change is conceptualised in the literature and by practitioners is the subject of the rest of this article.

Methodology

In order to explore interventions designed to promote equal opportunities practice I examined the work of ten male practitioners undertaking same gender single-sex work with boys and men. They were working in eight different projects based in working-class communities situated in a variety of locations in the Lothian Region of Scotland. All were operating either under the auspices of the Community Education Service or in voluntary organisations that work in non-formal education. These projects and practitioners were selected to represent a cross section of the range of single-sex work practice that was described in policy documents as addressing equal opportunities or anti-sexist practice. The focus of work under the auspices of community education is generally on communities and groups that are socially and economically excluded. The participants in the projects are predominantly white and mainly live in local authority provided rented housing. This work is part of a larger project which is investigating same gender, single-sex work with both males and females (see Tett, 1996) and therefore excluded projects where women were working with men and *vice-versa*.

The eight projects were:

- A: A voluntary organisation focusing on young men whose disruptive behaviour is in danger of leading to their exclusion from school. The organisation is jointly funded by social work and community education to work with small groups of these young people. Although participation, following reference by social workers, is compulsory the group activities are designed to be fun rather than punitive. (Two workers)
- B: The provision of informal educational opportunities for young men living in a working-class peripheral housing estate. These activities are part of general youth work provision but occur within a designated 'boys night' and during short residential stays in a variety of rural locations. Members of the group

studied are now in their late teens but have been together for the last three years with the same worker.

- C: A community school in a new town focusing on 18-20 year old unemployed men. This school has a worker to organise informal education opportunities. He began this provision once he realised that the existing opportunities were dominated by younger age groups. The starting point was activity based but since then the group has tackled a range of issues that include the development of a board game designed to raise anti-sexist issues in ways that are 'fun'.
- D: A social education project run in a school by community education staff for third and fourth year pupils. This school had decided that this programme would be more effectively delivered by male non-teaching staff and that the boys were more likely to be responsive to a male worker. The worker had substantial control over the curriculum and had decided to develop an anti-sexist programme focusing on the boys' relationships with each other and with girls.
- E: An HIV/AIDS project which offers programmes on sexual health to groups in Urban Aided Areas throughout the City of Edinburgh. This project offers sessions in youth clubs and other informal settings to single-sex groups of boys on issues such as 'safe sex'. (Two workers)
- F: Community-based education for unemployed men. This provision was originally established two years ago because of the absence of this group from existing provision and it was felt that special programmes run by a male worker would be attractive. Over the past year the group has developed a more anti-sexist focus with a particular emphasis on the men's relationship with their children.
- G: An Urban-Aid funded centre that offers education, training and guidance on drugs issues. The worker here is particularly interested in the ways in which abusive young men can be confronted with their violence and has established a discussion group about this issue from the participants in the project.
- H: An HIV/AIDS project working mainly with young men in prison, in hostels and ex-offenders and other sites where men were likely to be present in single-sex groups because of their circumstances. This is part of a larger project that has a similar programme for women.

Before visits I read project reports, equal opportunities policies and other documentation to familiarise myself with the stated aims of the project. I had three to four 'structured conversations' with all the practitioners. They were asked to comment on who participated in their projects, what issues/topics/themes were covered in their work, what they expected participants to gain from their involvement in the project and which individuals and authors of key books had influenced the way in which they worked. The conversations were transcribed and analysed. Observational visits were rejected on the grounds that my presence would influence practice. The overall aim of the reading and conversations was to gather data on how practitioners' implicit models of gender affected their practice in terms of the strategy they used to develop their interventions.

Models of Gender Used in Single-Sex Work with Boys and Men

My hypothesis is that the strategies that will be seen as effective in seeking to challenge male sexism and the brutalising effects of masculinity will be significantly affected by educators' 'theories-in-use' about the construction of masculinities. In this section I will examine a range of literature about masculinities, link this to theories about the construction of gender, and illustrate these different conceptions from my interviews with practitioners. The material resulting from the interviews shows that practitioners' own beliefs can be contradictory and conflicting and do not fit neatly into boxes so I have presented the results in terms of 'ideal types'.

Sex-role stereotypes

One way of constructing masculinity is based on sex-role theory which suggests that identity formation comes about through the passive internalisation of stereotypes. This perspective places the construction of masculinity firmly in the realm of the social, in 'expectations', 'stereotypes', or 'role models' in ways that allow for change. Such changes are seen as coming about through role strain, conflict within or about the role, shifting role definitions. This perspective allows for a certain amount of diversity since role theorists can acknowledge that the middle class male role may be different from the working class male role. Writers on masculinity who take this position (e.g. Brod, 1987; Nelson, 1990; Seidler, 1992; Tolson, 1977) have contended that male socialisation restricts the personal development of boys and men. This results not only in damage to men themselves but can be even more destructive to the people they interact with and their relationship with their environment in so far as it involves a tendency to physicality; which is often expressed through violence, competitiveness, and emotional restraint. Particular emphasis is given to the limitations imposed on men by the societal pressure to differentiate masculinity from femininity where, in order to be seen by society as masculine, men have to be aggressive, sexually active, work oriented and unemotional. This stereotyping is seen as the cause of men's inability to express their own feelings or to participate fully in traditionally female tasks such as child-rearing.

Many of the male practitioners that I talked to appeared to construct gender in this way, as I illustrate with the following representative quotes. (Each project is identified by its initial)

Young people take on board extreme views of what being male or female means...We see that as quite a negative thing, a very restricting thing and so our project is about trying to create opportunities for young people so that they experience things that otherwise they wouldn't. (A).

I think at its best [this group] is a chance for people to talk about what their lives are really like, it's an occasion for men to talk quite personally. Sometimes it's been safe enough for a man to show a lot of emotion, something that he may not have talked a lot about to anyone else before. (F).

Young men have to be seen to be experienced sexually so they say all the things that back that up, but inside they know that they are living a lie and feel really bad about doing that (E).

These practitioners see their key task as finding ways of overcoming these stereotypes by providing opportunities to do things which would normally be associated with females or by helping young people to reflect on their taken-for granted worlds.

We give them the opportunity to make soup or pizzas or try making curries or something like that. This gives them something to take home as well as showing that it's OK for lads to do this kind of thing (B).

We help them think about issues at home such as what their mothers or girlfriends do so that we can discuss what they think men can and cannot do. (C)

Most of the workers also tried to change stereotyped views of masculinity and sexuality by providing alternative role-models through their own lack of aggression, or their open emotionality, or by 'coming out' as 'gay'.

Around here it is mainly single parent families with the mother looking after their sons, so young men don't have much contact with older men. We provide a lot of encouragement that it's OK to be an individual and not conform to the assumptions about the kind of relationships they should have with their friends or older men'(E).

They are all completely homophobic so when I 'came out' to them they had to think again because they knew me as a whole person and I wasn't anything like their image of a 'poofter' (A).

Like it or not lads are going to look at older men to get a sense of somebody to copy. Generally around here they see that the only emotion they can express is anger. If they can see that we can talk about our feelings, be physically close to them and each other and even cry, then they can see that there are other ways of behaving (A).

These workers argue that addressing gendered inequalities and finding 'non-sexist' models of behaviour are crucial tasks for them. Change is, however, seen as taking place within the individual and as a personal, rather than a structural, issue and this is why providing different experiences is seen as so important. What is not addressed is the actual power dynamics between men and women or, indeed, any other concrete social relations.

For example,

I am personally involved with them and they realise they have the potential inside them to have a caring, nurturing relationship with somebody which is a very powerful feeling which has a significant effect on people's lives. (H)

From this perspective then professional interventions are based on providing alternative 'role models' but the ways in which dominant gender stereotypes are created is itself seen as unproblematic.

Skills Training

A second way of conceptualising masculinities has been to see gendered behaviour as arising from learned behaviour which can, through training, be supplanted by new

and alternative skills. Based in social learning theory's influential accounts of gender acquisition (see Bandura, 1965) skills training has been seen as a way of changing inappropriate behaviour, for example, by equipping both men and women with the skills to negotiate safer sex as part of the response to the AIDS epidemic or using alternatives to violently aggressive behaviour. The assumption here is that men have underdeveloped skills or have learned inappropriate ways of relating to women. The intervention strategy then involves role play and other exercises designed to encourage new ways of interacting with girls and women. The following representative quotes illustrate this approach.

We talk about alternative ways of being and get them to look at the ways that they are different from each other and get them to practice being different people. During the session they thought it was impossible that they would ever do anything different from their friends but they were obviously thinking about the fact that they could take on other peoples' roles during the week because they would come back much further forward. (A)

What we try to do is to look at their behaviour and see where it is dictated from. So we give them exercises where they have to think about what they would do in situations where they were under peer group pressure to do something and how they would say 'no'. They live under the fear of being different and the exercises are designed to help them learn new skills with our encouragement. (D)

Basically [the boys] need help to think about other people. We gradually work our way up to sessions where they start to examine why it is they try to pressure their girlfriends into having sex. We had them acting out situations where they had to really listen to what other people were saying to them, not what they wanted to hear, and so they, hopefully, learnt that 'no' meant just that. (E)

The major purpose of such work then is to shift the ways in which boys and men behave so that they become less oppressive by being helped to act out such situations in a 'safe' context. The reasoning behind it is similar to that lying behind assertiveness courses for women and it contains the assumption that since behaviour is learned it can be changed. Like sex-role theory, however, it does not address issues of power nor does this approach examine how particular forms of masculinity are inhabited and reworked in particular local contexts.

Complex gender identities

A final way of constructing masculinities is to focus on the complex and diverse interactions between institutions, such as the school, and economic, social and cultural processes. Davies (1989, p 229), for example, has argued:

The individual is not so much the product of some process of social construction that results in some relatively fixed end-product but is constructed and re-constituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate. Within

this model who one is, is always an open question with a shifting answer depending upon the positions made available between one's own and others discursive practices, and within these practices, the stories through which we make sense of our own and other's lives

This analysis allows a move away from simple sex/role socialisation to complex sexual/gender identities which are experienced within interconnected systems of oppression and power. It thus enables working class males' experience of oppression to be addressed within a framework that is not just concerned with change at the individual level. This involves analysing the investments men and boys have in the forms of masculinity they occupy in order to make problematic their taken-for-granted gendered social world but in ways which make it possible for them to retain an imaginative sense of social identity and difference.

From this perspective, accounts of the production of masculinities (see Heward, 1996; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; 1996;) focus on the ways in which they act as attempted collective solutions to social contradictions that are inhabited and reworked in the specificities of local conditions and social moments. This involves understanding the complex ways:-

in which relations of age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender and sexuality are refracted within particular social sites (for example; particular schools, [localities], segments of the labour market, types of family) (Redman, 1996 p175)

A few practitioners constructed gender in this way as I illustrate with the following representative quotes.

If you're going to survive here you have to be a joker, a fighter or a very good thief, otherwise you go under. We have to recognise that in our work, and find ways that will enable the lads to interact with each other and with women without totally subverting their survival strategies.(G)

We were talking about being different and I asked the boys group what would be the most different and one said 'to be a poof'. That meant that we were then really able to talk about the way they experienced the oppression of always having to be tough and 'manly' and from these beginnings we were able to go on to look at the ways in which they oppressed others.(D)

[The philosophy of this project is that] community work practice must be dialectical, involving political action and collective reflection. Collective action is not simply analytical it is also emotional. Much work with men has been either political, focused on action and analysis, or emotional, focused on personal feelings and individual behaviour change. In our work we try to integrate these changes. Feelings shared collectively can initiate and motivate a political strategy for change. (G)

By integrating both the political and the personal practitioners can deconstruct masculinity and challenge sexism. From this perspective, then, the practitioners' task

is to find ways in which working class boys and men can sustain an imaginative sense of identity and difference without recourse to sexist constructions that subordinate women and gays. Practitioners who adopt this approach understand that bringing about change is an ideological, political and social struggle which requires a knowledge of the socio-political context in which projects are operating. Gender stereotypes can then be challenged in ways that address issues of power and inequality both individually and collectively. As Harvey (1993, p 116) argues this means finding a way of:-

relating the universal to the particular in the drive to define social justice from a standpoint...which prevents groups imposing their will oppressively on others.

Discussion

In this article I have argued that the ideology justifying action in same gender single-sex work with men and boys is linked to the way in which gender is constructed both by individual practitioners and through policy frameworks. For this reason a number of theories about the ways in which gender can be constructed have been outlined.

These are:-

- 1 theories that assume that gender is a cultural construction but that boys and men smoothly internalise gender stereotypes in ways which generate male/female dualisms;
- 2 theories that assume that gender stereotypes and gendered behaviour are learnt and can be changed through appropriate skills training;
- 3 theories, framed within a political understanding, that assume that masculinities are not historically fixed but that people are actively involved in constructing them through complex social interactions and therefore collective change is possible.

As I suggested earlier, reality is complex and contradictory and there is no neat fit between these theories and individual practitioners and projects. Indeed some individuals and projects straddle more than one category. Rather they are 'ideal types' which provide a framework, a structure of ideas, through which individual practises can be explored and challenged.

What is particularly interesting about most of the practice and the literature that I have examined is the emphasis on change at the level of the individual which, practitioners argue, results in new ways of understanding the relationships between men and women. Professional interventions are seen as instrumental in bringing about individual change.

For example,

I think that the relationship I've developed with the group over the years has enabled us to change together. (B)

If this is so what policies have framed this practice? One source has been the Region's equal opportunities policies which are premised upon a liberal approach which interprets achieving gender equality as helping girls and women gain their

rightful place in the existing order through 'ensuring the needs of all sections of the community are taken into account' (Lothian Regional Council, 1993, p 5). There is therefore no emphasis on educational processes as *producers* of inequality. These policies have generally been supported, my male interviewees argued, because of their moral and political commitments to ending oppression. However, anti-sexist work is still interpreted as being about expectations and attitudes focused on personal styles and face-to-face interactions with little attention to the arguments about economic inequality or institutionalised patriarchy which some theorists have seen as crucial.

Interviewees stated that they had been influenced by the Women's Movement but only a few evidenced any understanding of feminism as a political movement and instead focused on their own personal change which involved considerateness for women, emotional openness and the rejection of 'mainstream' or hegemonic masculinity.

For example,

I feel that it is vital to be open about myself and share my emotions in ways that most men find difficult otherwise I can't be effective in the Project (H)

The ways in which men, it has been argued, continue to benefit from the oppression of women and the threat of women's challenge to their power are unacknowledged and instead the 'costs' of being a man are emphasised.

For example,

boys and men find it very difficult to express their emotions and being seen to be engaged with their children is problematic around here because it makes them appear 'soft' or different (F) Men are very isolated...they don't trust each other and they suffer emotional damage because of that (H)

We can see, then, that for many practitioners there is a consistent approach to anti-sexist work which focuses on individual change and personal development with an emphasis on marginal shifts that will not affect the status quo. The prevailing discourse excludes from consideration the socio-political and economic power relationships which sustain the unequal distribution of goods, services and wealth. It seems that by concentrating on meeting individual needs the appearance of equality of opportunity is engendered. However, as Edwards (1991, p 93) has argued:

In focusing our practices on the individual, we are reproducing the fragmentation of collective experience and social relations which is part of the wider social, economic and political changes in our social formation. The collective nature of experience, its foundation in unequal relations of power, is not addressed in programmes to meet the individual needs of individuals.

Conclusion

What is chosen as 'good practice' explains as much about the dominant ideologies within a profession as it does about past and present practice. In the projects that I have examined the dominant paradigm is that of individual change with little emphasis on institutionalised patriarchy. In a world permeated by patriarchal, sexist

and racist attitudes, however, it is vital that the socio-political context is explored to examine how it places limitations and constraints on action. Unless single-sex work problematises practitioners' understandings and examines the ways in which practices and ideologies reflect pre-existing unequal relations of power it will merely reproduce the status quo.

Giroux has argued (1983, p 203) that it is important that practitioners 'delve into their own biographies and systems of meaning' by questioning what is taken-for-granted and addressing their experiences critically within a framework that acknowledges that the powerful have vested interests in defending their power. Without an analysis of the ways in which power is inscribed and manifested in our understandings of ourselves, our practices and the world (see Foucault, 1979) there is a danger that, instead of concentrating on men's behaviour and political practices, masculinity is reified and the solution to change is instead a 'reconstruction of masculinity' at the level of personality and individual behaviour. As Connell (1993, p 603) points out:

Different masculinities arise in relation to [the mobilisation of power and the pursuit of tactics on behalf of particular interest groups] and embody different commitments and different strategies...To analyse how the hegemonic form of masculinity can be displaced by other forms...requires a standpoint [which is] a commitment to human equality.

Women have been asking for a long time 'what can be done to change men?' The answer lies in an analysis that goes beyond the focus on individual change and instead examines the way that structural issues such as class, 'race', sexuality, culture, language, place, as well as gender, influence the collective and individual nature of experience within any locality. For practitioners, in same gender single-sex work, the contradictions and intersections of gender relations may offer possibilities for reconfiguration and transformation of oppressive practice since, whilst there are many sites of power, there are also many sites of resistance (see Meekosha, 1993). This does not mean ignoring the prevalence and variety of exploitative, abusive, and coercive actions from men but rather, as Segal (1993, p 638) argues 'trying to situate them within the discursive conditions and frameworks that either foster or discourage such behaviour'.

The purpose of exploring the practice ideologies examined in this article is to stimulate discussion and debate and through such debates to subject single-sex work to a rigorous challenge. Practitioners can then be helped to problematise their own practice in ways which require the questioning of taken for granted values, strategies and goals within a context that emphasises the relationship between knowledge, power and action. This will involve the deployment of theoretical frameworks that focus on how oppressive practices can be changed through an examination of the ways in which the politics of social class interact with those of gender. It is a political understanding of the mutually interlocking nature of gender, sexuality and class as forms of structural oppression, rather than an individualist analysis, that is necessary if practitioners are to be able to contribute to the building of a more egalitarian and democratic world through their work with working class men and boys.

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UNEMPLOYMENT, YOUTH AND THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

RICHARD K. BROWN

A comparison of the inter-war period with the last two decades shows many similarities in both the pattern of unemployment in Britain and political responses to it. One major difference, however, is that in the more recent period young people have typically been much more likely than average to be unemployed whereas this was not the case before the Second World War. In contrast to governments' unwillingness, or inability, to take major initiatives to tackle the problem of adult unemployment, youth unemployment has been seen as a cause for concern. A series of policy initiatives since the mid-1970s has come to focus on three areas: skills training, the moulding of attitudes and assistance with finding jobs. This paper explores the context of and the reasons for this concern with youth unemployment, and goes on to argue that the policies adopted are inadequate. In particular they cannot create the supports for the institutions of employment which are derived from the experience of working in 'real' jobs.

Unemployment: then and now

In many respects accounts of inter-war unemployment have a familiar, mostly depressing, ring. It was concentrated in the traditional, export-oriented heavy industries in which Britain had dominated world markets in the 19th century: coal mining, cotton and other textiles, shipbuilding and heavy engineering, iron and steel (Glynn, 1991, p.74). Largely as a result of this industrial concentration the incidence of unemployment was very much greater in the 'old' industrial areas, again a familiar list: 'South Wales, central Scotland, the north-east, parts of Lancashire, parts of Northern Ireland and Cumberland' (Hobsbawm, 1969, p.208). Alongside the persistent problems of the older industries there was considerable economic growth: the rapid development of consumer goods industries oriented to the home market and using mass production methods to produce motor vehicles, electrical goods and processed food (see Glucksmann, 1990); and the expansion of service industries, especially retail distribution, finance and insurance, and entertainment, notably the cinema (Hobsbawm, 1969, pp.218-223). Many of these new industries and services employed large numbers of women, and women's participation in paid work in the formal economy consequently grew significantly, absolutely and relative to male employment (Glucksmann, 1990, esp. pp.40-57).

The explanations of unemployment are also familiar. Then, as now, the radical restructuring of the economy gave rise to structural unemployment as traditional industries declined, or became more productive and reduced their labour forces, and the new ones recruited workers with different attributes (women and young people rather than men), with different skills (assembly line and white collar workers rather than skilled tradesmen or unskilled labourers) and/or in different parts of the country (London, the south-east and Midlands rather than the north and west, Scotland and Wales). Then as now, the problems of frictional and structural unemployment were made more acute by cyclical unemployment, particularly in the inter-war period by the depressions of the early

1920s and 1929 to 1933, and in our own time the recessions of the early 1980s and the early 1990s. Then as now, it can be argued more controversially, the situation was exacerbated by the policies of government, both the pursuit of policies which emphasised monetary and fiscal priorities rather than those of industry and trade, let alone employment, and the failure to engage in or assist counter-cyclical investment (see Glynn, 1991, pp.78-80). Then as now, high levels of unemployment seemed to be permanent: unemployment was increasing again in 1938 and early 1939 and it only dropped below a million in May 1940 when war production was really established; since 1981 the number of those officially recorded as unemployed has only fallen below two million for two and a half years between early 1989 and the summer of 1991.

Age and Unemployment

There is a major difference between these two periods which, so far as I am aware, has not attracted much attention. It concerns the relationship between age and unemployment. The figures for registered unemployment between the Wars show that men were more likely to be unemployed than women, and that although older men did not have a greater risk than younger men of losing their job, their chances of remaining unemployed were materially greater; older men were disproportionately represented among the long-term unemployed (Beveridge, 1937, pp.11-17). This accords with more recent experience. However, the rates of unemployment, and even more so long-term unemployment, for young males aged under 25 were very much less than those for all older age groups. There is less information regarding women's unemployment but except for girls under sixteen, and women over 55, the pattern appears to be similar.

Writing at the time G.D.H. and Margaret Cole described the 'ages of the unemployed' in 1936 as follows:

*Unemployment was relatively low among boys under 18, but high among girls under 16. Among men, it was most severe in the age-group between 55 and 65, and **least** [my emphasis] in the group between 18 and 24. Among women, the recorded figures show no corresponding increase in the older age-groups; but this is principally because women tend to drop off the register at an earlier age than men. (Cole, 1937, p.223)*

They went on to comment that the fall in unemployment since 1935 had 'benefited the younger much more than the elderly sections of the unemployed'; and that 'The fall was greatest among the younger age-groups. Among those between 18 and 20 unemployment fell by one-third during the year [May 1935 to May 1936], and among those between 21 and 24 by over 23 per cent.' (Cole, 1937, pp.223 & 228) One recent survey of inter-war unemployment, using National Insurance Scheme (NIS) figures, has suggested that 'Youth unemployment between 1920 and 1939 averaged only 5 per cent against an overall average of 14 per cent (NIS)' (Glynn, 1991, p.28).

In contrast to this pattern the age distribution of the unemployed since the 1970s has had two peaks; at one end of the age scale those over 50 are disproportionately

likely to be unemployed, and especially long-term unemployed; but at the other end so are those between 16 and 24. (The recent figures for unemployment among 16 and 17 year olds must be treated with caution as they have been affected by the ending of the right to claim benefit.) Thus in the years 1981 to 1986, when recorded unemployment was over 10 per cent, the unemployment rate for those aged 18 and 19 was more than 20 per cent and for those aged 20 to 24 between 16 and 18 per cent. The rates were consistently higher for men than for women; in the worst years of the early eighties (1982-4) more than one in four young men aged 18 or 19 was recorded as unemployed. The unemployment rate for 18 and 19 year olds reached 20 per cent again in 1993 and 1994, when the rate for all ages was around 10 per cent. In July 1996 some 18.1 per cent of 16 to 19 years olds, and 12.8 per cent of those aged 20 to 24 were recorded as unemployed, when the rate for all ages was 8.3 per cent: this amounted to a total of 658,000 people aged 24 or under, of whom more than a fifth had been unemployed for more than a year (figures from *Employment Gazette*, various years, and *Labour Market Trends*, September 1996).

The causes of higher than average levels of youth unemployment are several and various. In his excellent review of the changing youth labour market Roberts (1995, pp. 9-10; see also Ch. 2) suggests that there are two apparently competing but not incompatible sets of explanations. The first emphasises that young people, entering the labour market for the first time or without a secure place in it, are particularly vulnerable to general trends in employment and unemployment. They are affected more than others by slowdowns in recruitment, cutbacks in training and competition from more experienced adults displaced from other jobs. As one early study reported 'changes in youth unemployment are strongly associated with changes in the general level of unemployment, but are generally more rapid' (Wells, 1983, pp.1 & 48).

However, 'youth employment failed to recover during the economic boom in the mid-to-late 1980s' (Roberts, 1995, p.9) and the second set of explanations provides a better account of why this should be so. These point to the importance of economic and occupational restructuring: the decline of manufacturing and the (related) increases in white collar employment, in service sector employment, in the number and proportion of part-time jobs and in the labour market participation rates of women. There has been a dramatic decline in apprenticeships (most of which were in manufacturing) and the disappearance of some of the jobs formerly taken by young workers, office juniors and some less skilled manual jobs, for example. Young workers, especially females, are in competition with married women returning to employment, and/or find that formerly full-time jobs are now part-time. In addition there is some evidence that, at least in the past, higher relative wage rates for workers under the age of 18 have reduced their chances of obtaining jobs (Wells, 1983). The net effects of these changes, however, are 'different for different groups of young people defined by various combinations of gender, qualifications, and place of residence' (Roberts, 1995, p.54).

Responses to Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment must be seen as a partial exception to the generalisation that unemployment has been made, or allowed, to disappear as a political issue.

Governments of both political complexions have clearly been concerned about youth unemployment.

Part of this concern may have arisen from the fear that youth unemployment represents a threat to social order. It seems plausible, to put it no more strongly, that continuing high rates of youth unemployment, and the deprivation and alienation which can result from it, are contributory factors behind the disturbances in urban areas during the 1980s and early 1990s and the rising levels of crime, much of it committed by young males. But it is inherently difficult to demonstrate such a connection conclusively and for the most part the possibility of a connection has been denied or minimised by politicians. What has been overtly a cause for concern has been the fear that young men and women who fail to gain experience of employment at an early stage in their lives will never acquire the appropriate attitudes and values to become good employees in later life.

A researcher for the Department of Employment, writing in 1980 and referring to speeches in the House of Commons in 1977, put the point very clearly:

The depth of concern expressed over the unemployment of young people as a particular group reflects the disproportionate effect of the recession on young people and the long-term damage to work attitudes that might ensue.... The effects of unemployment have been thought to bear particularly severely on young people who have had little or no work experience and one fear that exists is that if young people are exposed to spells of unemployment (especially prolonged spells), this may influence work and social attitudes throughout the rest of their working life. It has been recognized that this is not a problem limited to the United Kingdom but that the same feature of high levels of youth unemployment has characterized the present recession in other countries in the European Community. (Makeham, 1980, p.1)

Significantly in the Employment White Paper of 1985 the Youth Training Scheme was described as having three consequences:

*The Scheme helps young people to acquire the practical skills they need for finding jobs, **to form attitudes that will make them useful and employable** (my emphasis), and to demonstrate their capabilities to employers. (Department of Employment, 1985, p.15)*

These three elements, skills training, the moulding of attitudes, and assistance in finding jobs, have been characteristic of much government intervention in the youth labour market before and since that date.

Thus there has been a continuing stream of initiatives and schemes designed to provide school leavers and other young people with at least a modicum of experience of employment, or something like employment; with the qualifications and experience which should help them to find a 'proper job'; and with assistance in the search for employment. These schemes have included the Young Workers Scheme, the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP), the Youth Training Scheme (YTS), Youth Training and

Youth Credits, specifically for 16 and 17 year olds; and for older young people the adult programmes: the Job Creation Programme, the Community Programme, the Job Training Scheme, Employment Training, Enterprise Allowance, Training for Work, Restart and Job Clubs - to name only some from the plethora of schemes and initials. It is significant and important that over time the emphasis has shifted from job creation to training and assistance with finding paid work.

Is this fear of the effects of unemployment on young people's attitudes and values justified? What is the evidence regarding the social and psychological consequences of unemployment? Are the measures which have been adopted an adequate response?

The Effects of Unemployment

When unemployment, and especially long-term unemployment, once again became a problem towards the end of the 1970s some social scientists and other commentators looked back to the inter-war studies of the unemployed for insights and generalisations. At least partly as a result of this interest the argument developed that the longer-term unemployed were likely to go through a series of stages in their reactions to unemployment: shock, optimism, pessimism and fatalism. It was also argued that the effects of unemployment should be seen as not merely taking away an individual's main or only source of income, but also depriving him or her of other psychological benefits which it would be difficult to gain in any other way: the structuring of time, social relations outside the immediate family, participation in a collective purpose and activity, status and identity, and the requirement to be regularly active (see Jahoda, 1982, esp. p.59).

These broad generalisations were challenged by those, like Ashton (1986), who suggested that the experience of unemployment and its impact would be different for different categories of employee or potential employee depending on their orientation towards and previous experience, if any, of paid work. Thus, with regard to school and college leavers, he argued that those expecting to enter the upper or middle levels of the occupational structure would find unemployment threatening to their identity in ways which would not be the case for those seeking to enter semi- or un-skilled work, though for all of them being unable to find a job makes the transition to adult status more problematic (Ashton, 1986, pp.130-2).

Employment is particularly significant for young people because it is an important, perhaps the most important, element in the transition from being a school child to full adult status. This generalisation applies most strongly to those whose expectations are that they will be employed in work with some skill, status and prospects; and the significance of employment, and perhaps also a place on a training scheme, has been increased since the ending of Income Support for 16 and 17 years olds removed the other main source of an independent income. By and large a satisfactory adult status cannot be built on unemployment, and not having a job or having irregular and insecure employment lengthens the period of transition.

Not surprisingly therefore the overwhelming message from a variety of studies is that young people between the ages of 16 and 25 and no longer in full-time education

are and remain strongly committed to gaining employment, to having a job.¹ There is some evidence that for some the search for work, the efforts to find a job, decline with the experience of long-term unemployment, but there is also evidence that the importance attached to getting a job increases as people get older. Many young people dislike looking for work, because of their experience of failure, disappointment and aggravation, but they also dislike being unemployed and remain positively committed to finding paid work. To be without paid work is not only to have a reduced or no independent income, but also to risk being bored, having no structure to the day, and being socially isolated. The experience of unemployment can lead to a lowering of expectations, and studies suggest that most of those seeking work are fairly flexible and 'realistic' in terms of their expectations and what they will accept. However, government schemes and training have typically been viewed much less favourably.

The overall picture of young people's reactions to unemployment is one of pragmatic acceptance, in the sense that protests were seen as likely to be ineffective. Only a minority have been likely to advocate a collective response, and the level of interest and involvement in politics is typically low; faith in politicians is lower still. Some studies report feelings of bitterness and anger, but these have not led to any commitment to collective action. Rather the trend is towards a calculative individualism.

Thus in terms of the anxieties quoted earlier there is little evidence of a decline in the 'work ethic', in the sense of a commitment to having paid work and giving priority to obtaining employment. Nor is there much sign that the continuing high levels of unemployment and sub-employment for young people will lead to a co-ordinated political response, let alone any revolutionary threat to the social order. On the other hand there is a case for arguing that the problems of crime and public disorder are exacerbated by unemployment, and that is reason for concern.

In the light of these generalisations about the effects of unemployment on young people serious doubts must be cast on the appropriateness of the series of measures introduced by governments since the 1970s to deal with the problem. What young people appear to want above all is a job. They are strongly committed to employment. A place on a training scheme is a second best unless a job is a more or less guaranteed outcome of successful completion of such training. And assistance with finding jobs is irrelevant if there are no (or no suitable) jobs for them to find.

I would wish to argue, however, that there are yet further aspects of the process of transition from full-time education to employment and of the socialisation into the status and role of 'worker' which also need to be taken into account. To make this point it is necessary to say something about the employment relationship itself.

The Employment Relationship

The exchange of pay for work is not like other purchases and sales in the markets for goods and services. What the employer obtains through a contract of employment is the employee's capacity to work. The exchange of a wage or salary for work cannot take place instantaneously, like buying a newspaper or even a car or a house where there is a moment when the exchange takes place and the buyer gains possession. It

has to be realised over time and involves an on-going relationship between employees and employers, or their agents: managers and supervisors. In entering this relationship it is typically impossible for the employer to specify in precise detail, or for the employee to know, all the work that is to be done. The broad outlines may be, but are not always, embodied in job descriptions and so on; but how hard an employee is expected to work, what responsibilities they will be expected to take, even what skills they will be expected to exercise, are worked out in the course of employment rather than clearly and fully specified at the start.

Thus the employment relationship involves negotiations continuing over time. Managers and supervisors have to clarify in practice what levels of effort, skill and discretion are expected of the employee in return for their wage or salary, and any other rewards; employees have to try to establish what they think reasonable in terms of how hard they work, what skills they may need to acquire and use, and how much responsibility they will take in return for the rewards they are being offered. Most of the time, of course, employers and employees accomplish these activities very successfully, and without thinking of them in these terms; and for the most part employment relations are orderly and productive. This is so despite the fact that the parties have differing interests in the outcome of these ongoing negotiations, and within the employment relationship itself: wages and salaries are a cost to the employer but income for the employee; the employees' contributions of physical and mental effort equally represent a cost to them, but are essential for the production of goods and provision of services which the employer needs.

In his book *Efficiency and Effort*, published 35 years ago, Baldamus took these conflicting interests as inherent in the employment relationship and turned the normal question about industrial relations on its head; rather than regarding industrial conflict as needing explanation he restated the problem:

If conflict is basic and unavoidable, how do we account for the apparent stability of employer-employee relations when there are no strikes, no grievances, no dissatisfactions? In other words, it is now the ordinary pursuit of work, the daily run of routine activities, that has to be explained. (Baldamus, 1961, p.8)

In reviewing accounts of the day-to-day relations of workers with their supervisors and managers Baldamus pointed to the ways in which much of the time workers accepted the requirements of their jobs, in particular levels of effort, as right and required; in other words there was a moral or normative element in the relationship. The corresponding point that protests against terms and conditions of employment often have a moral element, rather than just being expressions of self interest, has also been made by other commentators. This led Baldamus to suggest that part of the stability of the employment relationship derives from the internalisation during childhood of obligations to work, and obligations to accept the deprivations which work involves. Such 'work obligations', he suggested, are an instance of 'social supports' for the institution of employment, and help produce a measure of stability in the social interactions around the employment contract.

However, Baldamus also argued that though they are an essential element the 'work obligations' are too diffuse to explain fully the stability of most employment relations. This depends on there also being two other elements: what he termed 'institutional controls' at the place of work - shared understandings within a particular workplace, which are acquired in the course of employment itself, as to what is reasonable in terms of levels of effort and so on; and the formal controls over work which are exercised by supervisors or embodied in the production system. He summarised this argument as follows:

The interplay of these forces may readily be illustrated by the situation that faces a young person on his first entry into industrial employment. He brings with him a set of general role-expectations of what is right and wrong for him as a wage-earner. If he comes from a working class family he will probably define work as a necessary evil and may search for an opportunity where it is relatively 'easy' to obtain a fair amount of money. This expectation acts as a social support to the institution of employment. Then he will soon have to learn the established rules of restricting output or the acceptable standards of effort, and in due course he thus incorporates into his habitual pattern of behaviour a specific set of institutional controls. In addition, his activities are minutely prescribed by the system of regulative controls that govern his particular job, the methods of production, the type of supervision, and the mode of wage payment. The corresponding situation that faces the employer or the managerial executive in the early stages of his career is formally the same, though, of course, the content of the three factors is different. (Baldamus, 1961, pp.84-5)²

Thus stable employment relations depend on the internalisation of work obligations during primary socialisation at home and in school, including assumptions about the quality as well as the quantity of work; and on further processes of socialisation in the workplace itself during which these rather diffuse expectations are made more precise and relevant to that particular context.³

Baldamus' main concern was with the effort bargain, the exchange of pay for unskilled work in situations where employees had little responsibility and little or no apparent skill. More recently others have argued, rightly in my view (Brown, 1988), that there are discretionary elements in all jobs (not everything can be prescribed, nor controlled), and that even the least skilled jobs in formal terms are likely to involve 'tacit skills': the abilities to function effectively in routine situations, to have an awareness of unfamiliar situations, and to co-ordinate one's work with that of others (see Manwaring & Wood, 1985). Thus the socialisation in the workplace itself, on which stable employment relations depend, includes the acquisition of shared and acceptable expectations regarding the exercise of skills and the taking of decisions as well as levels of effort.

The purpose of this brief account of a complicated set of arguments is to provide a basis for two further points. The first concerns the notion of work obligations.

People work in part, possibly in large part, because they have to. The employment relationship involves considerable pragmatic and coercive elements. Stable employment relations, however, depend to some considerable extent on moral obligations on the part of those employed, and shared normative understandings between the parties to the employment contract. We have already seen that the commitment to finding a job and doing paid work appears to have remained strong, perhaps surprisingly so, amongst young people experiencing unemployment. There must be a question as to whether we can rely on this continuing to be the case if the current pattern and levels of unemployment look set to continue indefinitely. One must also ask whether the sorts of commitment to finding employment, which studies have revealed among the young unemployed, are sufficient to provide the type of social supports for the institution of employment which Baldamus suggested are necessary for stable employment relations.

My second point concerns the implications of current patterns of training. Baldamus suggested that stable employment relations also depend on the processes of socialisation into work which take place in the workplace itself and provide what he termed 'institutional controls'. As I have noted, the government seems to have almost entirely abandoned efforts at job creation in response to unemployment and concentrated on schemes of training. What must be questioned is whether this training, which may be the only experience of paid work or its equivalent which many young people have in the years immediately after they leave full-time education, provides adequate socialisation into work; whether it provides adequate opportunities to acquire the shared expectations and understandings which underpin stable employment relations.

The classic example of such a process, which was highly successful in this respect whatever its deficiencies as a means of transferring skills, was of course the traditional seven, five or four year apprenticeship; and that has virtually disappeared. (Some white collar occupations had or still have similar provision: articulated clerks in law and accountancy; houseman posts and nurse training in hospitals.) In place of apprenticeships there is much more off-the-job training, and a tendency to train people in specific competencies, rather than enabling them to gain experience of a particular occupational role within the appropriate work situation. The technical skills may be acquired more quickly and thoroughly but what about the abilities to deploy them on the job, alongside other people who may be variously helpful or hostile, in a variety of circumstances, and so on? Fragmented training in specific skills will not cover the acquisition of tacit skills, the internalisation of standards of quality and quantity in relation to real tasks, the appreciation of when, where and how to take responsibility and exercise discretion.

Though he approached this issue from a somewhat different angle, Ian Roberts has illustrated the sort of problem I have in mind very well from his work on skill in the construction and engineering industries:

Voices on both sides of industry are cautious of the possibility that competencies up to 'skilled status' can be taught without the trainee having shop

floor experience. The clearest expression of the problems involved in this type of approach was suggested by a plasterer who when speaking of the deficiency of YT trained labour lamented not only their lack of rounded skills but more especially the fact that a high proportion of them lasted only a 'couple of weeks' on site. He explained that not only was it the case that they were ill equipped to practise their trade on the real terrain of the building site, but also that for many of these young lads they did not know how to respond to the practical jokes and 'wind ups' perpetrated on them on site. [Our attention needs to be directed to] precisely these aspects of socialisation into skilled identities, both the ability to know and cope with what a job in its entirety actually demands and being able to deal with the culture of the shop floor... (Roberts, I.P., 1997)

Concluding comments

Unemployment no longer appears to be at the top of anyone's agenda. We seem to be content to live in a society where a large, though actually unknown, number of people who want paid work have difficulty in finding it; a substantial minority of them are without work for long periods. The one area of unemployment which has aroused most concern in the past, and still does, is unemployment among young people. There is fear of crime and disorder, and of a loss of any sense of obligation to work among those who will be the adult labour force of the future. Disorder has so far been limited and containable; attempts to deal with crime have concentrated on punishment not prevention; and the research evidence suggests that young people's commitment to paid employment remains surprisingly strong. Thus, although most people, including politicians, probably genuinely would like to reduce levels of unemployment they apparently feel that there are insufficiently strong reasons for them to abandon other objectives in order to do so.

I have tried to point to further possible consequences of youth unemployment, where the evidence is less certain and the implications long-term. Do the reported levels of commitment to finding and holding a job really equate to the sort of work obligations needed to underpin stable employment relations? Are current patterns of training provision, the government's main response to youth unemployment, providing the socialisation into employment and early experience of the world of work necessary to create an effective and stable work force?

A cynic might argue in response to such questions that young people's typical experiences of unemployment and sub-employment do provide an adequate preparation for the flexible and insecure jobs which are all that the labour market is likely to provide in the late 1990s and beyond. I do not accept that we have to have such insecurity of employment in so many jobs - though to argue that case would require another paper (Brown, 1997); and one could question too how far our current employment relations are dependent on commitments to and expectations about employment which were established in an earlier period and are not being reinforced and reproduced. 'Time will tell', but by then it may be too late.

Richard K. Brown, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Durham.

Notes

This paper is a considerably revised version of an earlier one which was presented to the conference, organised by the Centre for European Studies, University of Durham, on 'Education and Training for the Future Labour Markets of Europe' and held in Durham at the College of St. Hild & St. Bede, on 21-24 September 1995.

- 1 This part of the discussion draws on the following sources: Allatt & Yeandle, 1986; Ashton & Maguire, 1986; Banks & Ullah, 1986a & b; Coffield, Borrill & Marshall, 1986; Coles, 1986; Furlong, 1988; Hendry, 1987; Hutson & Jenkins, 1987; Lee et al., 1987; McRae, 1987; Rees, Williamson & Istance, (no date); Roberts, K., 1995; Roberts, Dench & Richardson, 1986; Wallace, 1987; White, 1987.
- 2 A more vivid personal account of part of this process is provided by Lupton, who started working life as an apprentice in marine engineering, and ended it as Director of Manchester Business School. He described his experiences as follows:

It was the custom of the workshop in which I served my apprenticeship for the workers to cease work some 15 minutes before the official finishing time. During the second day in the shop I was given a job by the foreman which completely absorbed my interest. I became oblivious to my surroundings and to the passage of time. I was disturbed by the sound of the 'buzzer' which announced the official finishing time, and when I looked up I found myself surrounded by a group of men who had obviously been watching me for some time. They were all ready to go home. Nothing was said but their looks made it clear that I would soon become unpopular if I persisted in observing official times. ...In time I learned other lessons about the customs and usages of the shop. To work too quickly was to be labelled a 'teararse' and to be at least partly shut out from the friendly give and take of the shop... ..it was also regarded as a breach of workshop custom to be too much of a 'scrounger'. The man who persistently dodged work and whose output fell below what was generally considered 'decent' became an object of ridicule. Equally...the man who produced shoddy work lost status in the shop... So workshop custom was reinforced by the value placed on a high standard of workmanship, a value held by management and workmen alike, and by apprentices even before they entered the shop. (Lupton, 1963, p.2)

- 3 The processes whereby such social supports for the institution of employment are formed are likely to be more complex than Baldamus allowed. In an intriguing study Willis (1977), for example, shows how the rejection at school of the dominant values of hard work and acceptance of authority by a group of 'lads' can nevertheless lead to a situation where they become relatively committed to employment in unskilled manual jobs.

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COMMONALITY OR DIFFERENCE:

Whither anti-racism(s) in youth work practice?

SONIA THOMPSON AND JULIET BETTS

Abstract

This article contends that youth work needs to move away from simple notions of 'race'¹ because they constrain not only the ways in which racism can be perceived but also the manner in which it can be resisted. It argues for a more complex understanding of 'race' and racisms, one which acknowledges the lived experiences of young people from a range of different backgrounds and puts forward a model which is based not only on skin colour but on a range of ethnic indicators. It further contends that workers should recognise the ways in which oppressed peoples have and continue to contest those stigmatisations. The work draws upon historical and contemporary material to consider some ways in which four specific groups—two white and two Black—have been racialised by White Anglo Saxon Protestants, teasing out some of the similarities and differences of experiences between these groups. Finally, it offers a tentative framework of understanding which can be used to develop a more holistic approach to Asian, African, Jewish and Irish identities, not just as victims but also as potential oppressors and as fighters of racial oppression.

Introduction

The oppression of women knows no ethnic nor racial boundaries, true but that does not mean that it is identical within those differences...To deal with one without even alluding to the other is to distort our commonality as well as our difference. (Lorde, 1984, p. 70)

Lorde's insight and eloquence concerning the profound 'commonality and difference' of sexism in all its manifestations comes from her deep knowledge and experience not only of sexism, but also of racism and homophobia. Her words capture a perspective which is not necessarily new, but is still controversial. From our experience of working in the field of anti-oppressive practice in both youth and community work and social work, it is a perspective that opens up ways of improving practice. This is because it is rooted not only in more sophisticated theoretical analyses, but also in more informed and sensitive responses to service users' daily experiences.

Racist incidents [attacks] have a long and undistinguished history in Britain... Although much of this evidence appears to suggest that such incidents are directed at young people of South Asian and African-Caribbean origin, there has been growing evidence of an escalation of attacks on Jewish pupils and students, partly related to an upsurge in anti-Semitism across Europe...Pupils of Irish background living on mainland Britain have also been the object of attacks, which reach their peak during and after IRA bombing campaigns. (Gabriel, 1988, pp.84-5)

Thus the point is made that ethnicity as well as colour is an important aspect of racial stigmatisation. Many of the problems we discuss in this article concern those people

whose social position in their own countries is in relation to them as vanquished adversaries, and/or subject peoples, and in their adopted countries as poor immigrants and/or refugees. All of this supports the premise that concrete experiences of racism cannot be explained by macro-theories of 'race' alone. Indeed a great deal of confusion has been caused by the simplistic notion of racism being prejudice plus power, primarily because power itself is so very complex. Such ideas fail to do justice to the complexities of late twentieth century post-industrial Britain.

This theory to practice debate is long overdue in youth and community work. It needs to be explored in relation to all forms of oppressions and their profound inter-relationships. By choosing to begin the process with a focus on 'race' and racism we do not seek to prioritise this or any other form of oppression.

Following Lorde, we wish to argue that racially stigmatised groups share many experiences of oppression in common, but by rooting this argument in the lived experiences of racially stigmatised groups we contend that there is more than one form of racism.

Many youth workers are able to understand the damaging effects which racism can inflict upon the potential of young people and recognise the importance of youth work in the struggle against this and other forms of social inequality. However few are able to conceptualise and contextualise the complexities which are part of young people's everyday lives. The problem is that 'race' has been theorised in such a way that the link with practice seems vague at best or prescriptive at its worst. There has been a tendency to ignore the lived experiences of young people many of whom are of mixed-descent (eg one parent African the other Irish), or other young people who may have recently been subjected to violent anti-Semitism or anti-Islamic behaviour. There is a need for a more dynamic and grounded approach which would be helpful for workers charged as they are with the responsibility for redressing all forms of inequality (The Report of the Second Ministerial Conference 1991). It is no longer reasonable for youth workers to argue the monolithic line on 'race' and racism. Young people have seen through that facade. They make sense of the world from their lived experiences as Irish, Cypriot or Pakistani young people in Britain.

Putting forward any theoretical position on racism(s) is fraught with difficulty. The debates between immigrant/host (Patterson, 1963) Marxist (Castles and Kosack, 1973; Solomos, 1986) Weberian (Rex, 1986) and other perspectives (Banton, 1977; Barzun 1938; Baxter 1972; Benedict 1942; CCCS, 1982: Gilroy, 1982; Miles, 1989, 1993; Sivanandan, 1982) have been long, convoluted and bitter (Rex and Mason, 1986). However, despite the many differences of view about the origins, history and current workings of racism, most social scientists agree that 'race' and racism are socially constructed phenomena. (Op. cit.)

Notable for their absence from many of these sources have been the perspectives of writers from racially oppressed groups. To take one example, the emergence of Black writers on 'race' and racism in Britain is a relatively recent phenomenon (cf some authors in CCCS, 1982; Gilroy, 1992; Kapo, 1981; Sivanandan, 1982). Even more

recent is the emergence of books by, and about, Black women in both Britain and the US (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe, 1985; Carby, 1982; Davis, 1982; Essed, 1991; Collins, 1981; hooks, 1982, Parmar, 1982). Although the perspectives of such writers are varied, there are some common threads which can be identified. The writers insist on a social constructionist approach to 'race' and racism, emphasising the powerful role of social definitions in *ascribing* people to relatively fixed racial groups within unequal social structures. The basis of such definitions frequently lies in beliefs about group physical differences ('races') which are then assigned moral values. The resulting racist ideologies then serve to justify unequal social treatment and, at times, for members of racially stigmatised groups, violence and death. In whatever context racism appears, it therefore serves as an ideological justification for structural inequality, whether that justification be pseudo-biological, cultural, economic, religious, historical or sociological. In addition to these ideological and structural features of racism, Black writers stress the insights that their own experiences of racism bring. Essed's (1991) work based on the life stories of Black women is one powerful example that demonstrates the need for theories of racism to be grounded in the lived experience. It follows from this argument that 'race' and racism are not fixed entities but are subject to changing economic political and social circumstances. By taking a social constructionist stance we argue that there are clearly no boundaries between one 'racial' group and another (Kuper, 1981) and that racism (the acting upon that ideology) is not strictly delineated on colour lines.

This means that there is no pressure to argue that only Black people experience racism or that racism exists in one form alone. Rather the starting point is the experience of stigmatised minority groups within society. This initial stage can be used as one of the steps towards developing a rich tapestry of what is the reality of racism in Britain today. Thus as Gabriel (1994, p.21) argues,

Variations [of racism]...have to take account of political and economic contexts as well as the various 'assemblies' of stereotypes depending on the group in question...Jews, Aborigines, Africans, Chinese,...Middle-Eastern Arabs and Muslims.

And because of the historical and social construction of Black skin alongside its visibility it is far easier and more acceptable to target Black rather than white minorities for overt racism. However, this does not preclude other 'selected' stigmatised groups from also being targets of racism. Those which spring to mind are Orthodox Jews and white minorities who may be easily distinguished by dress, culture or neighbourhood. Balibar (1991) writes about the popular image of the 'true' nationals as opposed to 'false' nationals. Under the latter heading he includes 'the Jews, "wogs", immigrants, "Pakis", natives, Blacks' (p.60). The important issue here concerns the degree to which a particular group is considered different, the extent to which that difference is believed to be undesirable, the power of the dominant group to impose their definitions and the possibility of challenges to that power by racially stigmatised groups. Thus we postulate that there are several qualitatively different forms of racism, and that it is a dynamic force which is constantly undergoing change in a diverse society. Furthermore, it is our

thinking that one group which experiences a particular form of racism can also use racism against members of another racialised group. For example Black non-Jews can be anti-Semitic, white Jews can be anti-Irish and white Irish people can be racist against Black people (Kuper, 1981). How the oppressor group benefits from this racism will vary by the nature of the racist engagement and the position of the socio-economic group to which each player belongs. For instance, those local authorities wishing to establish sites for travellers may have had this process thwarted by members from the non-travelling community including Irish people, Jewish people and Black people. However this must be considered within the context of the power which White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs), hold locally and globally. As a group, WASPs have been able to dominate the creation and maintenance of many ideologies which uphold their position as a privileged and superior ethnic group. Other ideologies attempting to compete have tended to be demonised as part of this battle for power (see Madood, 1988 on Islamophobia). It therefore follows that the most powerful ethnic groups are generally the net beneficiaries of all in-fighting between the various racialised groups for restricted resources.

Taken in total the benefits from this more complex approach to 'race' and racism are numerous. Firstly, it is a more realistic framework which allows people to position themselves somewhere within it and therefore offers greater opportunities for social agency. Secondly, it means that non-Black racialised groups can argue for resources based on their own needs as opposed to comparing their position with Black people and hence putting those restricted resources in peril. It allows groups to decide if, where and when to build alliances between themselves and other racialised groups. In addition, it provides workers with a structure for considering the Irish, Jewish and other experiences as well as the Black experience in order that those young people might be able to understand their own experiences and make responses to racism. Finally, we feel that there is much to be gained by increasing terminology in the area of 'race' and racism so that we can speak about anti-Semitism, anti-Irish racism, anti-African-racism and anti-Asian racism. A more specialised language reflects the highly specialised and ethnicised nature of racism.

In summary it can be stated that, despite the increasing recognition that 'race' and racism are important social phenomena, few theoretical works have addressed issues which would make their principles helpful to the ordinary worker. Some of the major questions which need resolution revolve around the similarities and differences between racism against white people (eg Jewish and Irish people), and racism against Black people, (eg Africans and Asians). To speak of a collective racism helps to point out shared histories of colonialism and occupation in Ireland, India and Africa but collapses together differences centred on religion, culture and skin colour. The nature of these commonalities and differences will be explored by an examination of anti-Irish racism, anti-Semitism and anti-Black racism.

Anti-Irish Racism

In recent years, with the development of Irish studies as a much overdue academic subject area, a debate has arisen about whether the hostility and discrimination

which undoubtedly exists against Irish people, particularly Irish Catholics can be termed racism. Implicitly or explicitly, in such discussions, an analogy is being made with racism against Black people. We wish to assert that anti-Irish racism certainly exists within our definition, but that it is not the *same* as anti-Black racism or anti-Semitism: there are important historical and qualitative differences.

The basis of the common experience of racism lies in a history of the colonial oppression of Ireland and her peoples by Britain, which still involves similar experiences of being negatively stereotyped, denigrated, and discriminated against. (Gilley, 1978; Waters, 1995; O'Brien 1989). Prior to the enslavement of Africans and the use of Indian indentured labour, Irish people were used as indentured labour in some colonies such as the Caribbean. Colonially induced loss of land, famine, poverty and death at home resulted in massive migrations overseas. Irish people have faced extensive and at times very overt discrimination in employment, housing and access to services in Britain, and often still do (see for example Owen, 1995; Swift and Gilley, 1989). The colonial relationship between Britain and Ireland is complicated by the fact of a strong Protestant group in the north of Ireland committed to remaining part of its coloniser, Britain. Despite these ties of 'loyalty', and the ethnic discrimination of Irish Protestants against Irish Catholics, there must be occasions in the British context where people of Irish Protestant origin are discriminated against by the English.

There are however, significant differences between the Black experience, the Jewish experience and the Irish experience which need to be highlighted. Irish people have not experienced the systematic mass enslavement and resultant terror and death endured by many millions of Africans through the slave trade, slavery and subsequent economic and forced social dislocation. Nor have they experienced generations of exile, pogroms and ultimately the calculated scientific project of extermination experienced by the Jews. In stating these differences, we do not seek to measure or evaluate the relative pain of each experience, but to emphasise that there are important qualitative differences in the history of each human experience that must be acknowledged and honoured.

Additionally, the symbolic significance of skin colour makes a difference. In situations of migration to a new country where assimilation or integration policies operate, an Irish person has a choice which is not available to the Black person. S/he can choose to hide their Irish identity and 'pass' in order to 'integrate'/'assimilate'. Thus in Britain, there are many people with 'concealed' Irish identities. As long as economic and political circumstances do not change, (as many Jews in Europe found out under Nazism when genealogies were used to force people into a state-defined Jewish identity) Irish people can remain hidden and appear to be a member of the dominant white elite, with all its privileges. This is an option which Black people do not have.

There are of course also disadvantages to being able to 'pass' or conceal a 'racial'/ethnic identity. There may be a personal price in terms of a less historically rooted sense of identity. There are also costs in terms of the relatively lower profile given to anti-Irish racism in Britain, and the difficulties that this creates for attempts to gain public and

other resources for Irish people. Indeed, some aspects of the contemporary debates which have arisen between Black people and Irish people may have some of their roots in competition for such resources, and the resentments of Irish people about the apparent targeting of resources to Black community groups.

Many gaps in our knowledge and understanding of Irish history both at home and abroad exist (another result of racism and discrimination), but some initial ideas can be drawn from the U.S experience and the British experience at home and overseas.

In the United States, people of Irish (particularly Irish Catholic) origin have undoubtedly experienced racism and discrimination. If the dominant cultural and racial norm is White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP), then Irish people deviate in at least one significant respect, religion. However, as this very crude comparison shows, they do not differ as extensively as for example Black people of African origin. Irish people who are white can benefit from their skin colour. There are very strong Irish communities in the U.S. whose influence can be seen currently in the pressure on the U.S. presidency in relation to peace in Ireland. In addition, admittedly only recently, the U.S. has had one President of Irish Catholic origin, J.F. Kennedy.

Historically, during colonisation we can see both the racism against Irish people at work, and also the way that whiteness can be used to bring benefits to Irish people. In this context the history of Barbados is an interesting case in point. Prior to the extensive exploitation of African slaves in Barbados, Irish people were brought into the country largely as indentured labourers (labour tied for seven years). They were discriminated against as both poor and Irish by the predominantly English white elite. In the face of the economic and social changes which resulted from the development of large scale plantations with African slave labour, the Irish origin white labourers (who also made a living through selling vegetables in the market) were pushed to the periphery of the island, geographically and economically (Greenfield, 1966). There they became subsistence peasants and have remained a largely endogamous poor and isolated group known as 'redlegs'.

On the other hand, some individuals from the 'redleg' community, because of their whiteness and their links with the prosperous and relatively large indigenous white elite in Barbados have managed to become upwardly mobile for example by becoming an estate manager and then buying a small, and then larger estates (Greenfield, 1966). Historically, it was possible that, over a few generations, such a family could, through economic betterment and other activities even become recognised by the British crown for services to the Colony (as it was then) (Greenfield, 1966). This would have been impossible for a person of African descent.

In the British context, anti-Irish racism has a long history and is still prevalent today. Foot (1965) documents some of the extreme forms of anti-Irish hostility and violence which took place in the late 19th/early 20th century. Stereotypes are deeply embedded into British culture including the prevalence of 'Irish jokes' and the telling phrase 'that's very Irish'. Recently, in a suburb of Nottingham, the words 'Irish f*** off' were painted onto the gate and fences of a local house. It is not perhaps coincidental that the owners of the house have subsequently put it up for sale.

The political struggles in Ireland throughout this century and before have resulted in a waxing and waning of anti-Irish racism in Britain over the centuries. As previously argued, the people facing the main brunt of anti-Irish racism are Catholic. The recent war in Ireland centring on extreme ethnic conflict has resulted in the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) 1974. This piece of legislation has been criticised by many civil liberties groups because of the draconian powers it gives to the British government to screen people travelling between Britain and Ireland, and to detain people without charge etc. In practice it has been used primarily against IRA 'terrorists' rather than Protestant or other kinds of alleged 'terrorists', a distinction which pervades public and media images of the two 'sides' in the war. The criminal justice system has responded harshly and in a number of significant instances (the Birmingham six and the Guildford four) unjustly towards alleged IRA 'terrorists'. The significance of this piece of legislation and the issue of 'terrorism' can also be judged from the fact that counsellors can only be prosecuted for refusing to answer police questions about terrorism, but not any other form of criminal or illegal activity (BAC Code of Ethics, Sept. 1992, p. 22).

It is important, however to note that the PTA (1974) was the first piece of legislation that made the checking of people travelling between Ireland and Britain possible. Irish people have never been and are still not subject to immigration control. This is a very significant difference between the historical and contemporary experience of Jewish people and Black people in this country. It was largely in response to a wave of anti-Semitism at the end of the 19th century that the Aliens Act 1905 was introduced. Before and during the Second 'World War', this highly restrictive piece of legislation enabled the British government to limit the number of Jewish refugees fleeing from Nazism and the impending holocaust on the continent (Cesarini, 1990).

The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act was introduced specifically to control Black immigration to Britain in response to vocal expressions of anti-Black racism. There have been many subsequent pieces of immigration control legislation passed in Britain. All of this legislation impacts disproportionately on Black people's lives in very destructive ways: in marriage opportunities; in visiting and receiving visitors from abroad; in seeking to be reunited with family members; in seeking to stay united with family members.(Cohen, 1981; WING, 1985).

Irish people in Britain have the opportunity to use their whiteness to protect themselves (and also to benefit themselves if they so choose). Thus whilst Lennon et al. point out that anti-Irish sentiments have been on the increase since the 1970s, they also point out that Irish people (women in this study) have felt pressure 'to "keep a low profile" and to be "low key" about [their] nationality and identity' (Lennon, McAdam and O'Brien, 1988, p.10) Whilst in no way disregarding the pain of these difficult choices and the pressures experienced, our point is that for visibly Black people such a strategy would not be possible.

Practice implications

There are a number of important implications for youth work arising from this discussion. For young people of Irish origin, it is important to retrieve their history both in

Ireland and overseas. Such knowledge can bring a stronger sense of group and personal identity which will enable Irish people to become visible. This is an essential stage in the fight for resources, whether it occurs alone or in allegiance with other groups. Young people of Irish origin need to acknowledge their whiteness and the benefits that it can bring. They also need to acknowledge and act against their anti-Semitism and their anti-Black racism to become more sensitive to the identities of mixed heritage Irish people.

The implications for young people of non-Irish backgrounds are the need to understand, acknowledge and act against anti-Irish racism. In order to do this, they need to have some knowledge of Irish history and the nature of anti-Irish racism. This will enable them to challenge it along with other forms of racism they encounter and to make alliances with Irish people where appropriate.

Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism has been called 'the oldest hatred' and has been perpetrated against Jewish people throughout the world for more than 2,000 years. Whilst forms of anti-Semitism existed before that advent of Christianity, they 'did not hold much fateful consequences for Jews as that which later crystallised within Christianity' (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971, p. 95). Whilst the growth and increasing power of Christianity are not the only precursors of increasingly systematic forms of anti-Semitism, the relationship has had, and continues to have great significance.

The term anti-Semitism was coined in Germany in 1897 by Wilhelm Marr. It derives from the Greek language and Marr used it to highlight the campaigns against Jews that were current in Europe at that time. It was soon applied to the many campaigns against Jews throughout history (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971). Whilst the existence of the term 'anti-Semitism' serves to highlight the particular experiences of racism faced by Jewish people, it is however no guarantee that anti-Semitism will be challenged.

There are a number of key aspects of the Jewish experience, which is essentially a global experience that needs to be explored and understood. There are the long-standing experiences of the diaspora (dispersion) and the galut (forced exile), culminating in the ultimate horror of the holocaust in the mid twentieth century. Many different pressures over the ages have resulted in a shared experience of dispersal and exile; natural and other disasters, military defeats, economic pressures, pogroms, persecutions and expulsions (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971). In spite of all these threats and traumas, and in the face of the Nazi genocidal 'Final Solution', Jewish people have not only survived but have retained a strong and diverse heritage.

As a result of this history, Jewish people have lived all over the world and created many different kinds of Jewish culture each with a common Jewish core. Within local and national Jewish communities there are also differences eg. between Orthodox and Liberal Jews. In recent times, the development of Zionism as a response to the dangers of persecution, homelessness and ultimately the threat of extinction, has offered a further source of difference within Jewish communities (Cesarini, 1990)

Although many Jewish people can be defined as white in terms of current global classifications, there are nonetheless some Black individuals who have converted e.g. Sammy Davis Junior, but also at least one Black Jewish community in Africa. It is not insignificant in terms of our argument that the request from these Jews to migrate to Israel caused some hostility there. There is also the well documented and ongoing conflict between some American-Jews and some African-Americans in the U.S which illustrates the reality of Jewish and Black racism as well as Black anti-Semitism.

No doubt throughout Jewish history, depending on circumstances, it was possible for Jews who so chose to assimilate into the wider society. In societies where a white racial identity is important, Jews defined as white clearly had (and have) a better chance for this path than Black people. Despite the presence of anti-Semitism in some situations, Jews have also been able to benefit from their whiteness; for example, Britain has had one Jewish Prime Minister (Disraeli) and in recent years, several cabinet ministers have been Jewish. Historically, it is likely that some Jewish people were members of the colonial elite during Britain's days of empire. Jewish people, through economic migration, have established business communities in colonial settings eg Jamaica. Such paths are still not open to most Black people.

Nonetheless, the Jewish experience demonstrates without question that any of the processes of accommodation between Jews and non- Jews (acculturation, integration, assimilation) ultimately offer no protection whilst anti-Semitism/racism still exists. Thus, one author describes the 'model Jew' in Germany in the early 1930s as 'native i.e. German born, metropolitan, a business man (sic) or professional, centrist in his (sic) politics, with a more passionate attachment to Germany than to Jewishness' (Dawidowicz, 1977, p. 217). Whilst German Jewish people recognised and challenged anti-Semitism before the rise of Nazism, the overwhelming majority still identified strongly with Germany. Many, for example fought proudly for Germany in the First World War. None of this protected German Jewry, of whom 90% were slaughtered during the holocaust (Dawidowicz, 1977).

Like all groups defined as 'racially inferior', Jews have been and continue to be placed in 'Catch 22' positions. Thus, they are blamed for being poor and persecuted; they are blamed for being rich and persecuted. More recently, a new 'no win' situation has emerged. Thus Jewish people have been stereotyped as 'passive victims of Hitler's Final Solution'. Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Israeli Jews have been stereotyped as aggressive colonisers (Cohen, 1984).

If we explore the second stereotype it becomes apparent that it is based on an implicit assumption that the nation state of Israel can be expected to behave differently from other nation states because it was set up by the victims of oppression. However nation states have their own characteristics and dynamics of which territory and boundaries, sovereignty, security, expansion, aggression, nationalism and racism are but a few. The state of Israel, whilst established for the victims of oppression, lives with the contradiction that nation states frequently act in racially oppressive ways. Israel is

no exception. Israel and many (but not all) of its Jewish inhabitants have acted in racist ways against people of Palestinian and Arab origin both within and outside of its borders. The history of Israel therefore demonstrates the poignant truth that, in certain circumstances, the oppressed can become the oppressor.

Turning to the British experience, we find that there is a long history of anti-Semitism emanating from these shores. As part of the Crusades, English Crusaders took part in the massacre of Jewish communities throughout Europe. In York in 1190, a mob attacked Jewish residents who took refuge in Clifford Tower. From there they committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of their hostile Christian neighbours. Edward I expelled all Jews from his territories in 1290, and they did not return until after the 16th century (Parkes, 1964).

More recently, Jewish refugees fleeing Russian persecution in the late 19th century were greeted with a flurry of hostility in Britain. Anti-Semitism fuelled the passing of the first legislation designed to systematically control immigration - the Aliens Act 1905 (Foot, 1965; Cook and Clarke, 1990). During and between the two World Wars, anti-Semitism also flourished. Britain's record on anti-Semitism is exemplified by their response to Jews fleeing Nazi extermination, policies were designed to restrict access to both Britain and Palestine for all but a relatively small number (Niewyk, 1980).

Despite this history of anti-Semitism in Britain, knowledge of the full horror of the Holocaust and the regular violence against Jewish people, their graves and monuments, there is still relatively little public awareness about British anti-Semitism. Even in sectors of the education system that emphasise anti-oppressive practice eg. social work and youth and community work, there is virtually no teaching on anti-Semitism². As with racism against Irish people, there is a sense in which to raise other forms of racism within these contexts is seen to undermine efforts to combat anti-Black racism. We wish to emphasise the need to teach students about the experiences which impact upon the lives of all those with whom they work as the initial stage towards developing a praxis compatible with the needs of every service user.

Practice Implications

Youth workers need to begin the task of bringing together key aspects of the complex history of the Jewish diaspora, in order to educate both Jewish and non-Jewish young people about the ability of the Jewish people to fight and survive racism as well as an understanding of their history outside of racism. The framework used should be geared towards clarifying similarities and differences between anti-Semitism and other forms of racial oppression.

For Jewish young people, it is vital that they know about their past and that they have the opportunity to have their experiences validated by themselves and by non-Jewish people. From this, they need to have the chance to develop their own sense of identity and their strategies for opposing anti-Semitism. Such strategies may include the making of alliances with other racially oppressed groups. As part of this process white Jewish young people need to acknowledge their whiteness and the impact this has on their position in society relative to Black young people.

Non-Jewish young people need a similar knowledge and understanding of Jewish history in order to be able to locate Jewish people within a global history and to challenge anti-Semitism (their own and others) and to offer support to Jewish companions. As with all forms of racism, leaving anti-Semitism unchallenged allows it to continue and grow.

Anti-African racism and anti-Asian racism

We argue that history is an important source of evidence for uncovering today's social relations, and thus we cannot avoid the conclusion that historical material consistently reflects a socially stratified society where skin colour is one of the major 'racial' divisions and identifier of stigmatisation (Kapo, 1981; Sivanandan, 1982). This is what unites the experiences of Black people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, however we also acknowledge the different ways in which that racism expresses itself. In this section some of the similarities and differences between anti-Asian racism and anti-African racism is discussed.

One of the residues of European empire building and globalisation is that white skin still signifies dominance the world over. Black skin has come to be recognised as belonging to subject peoples. White skin on the other hand has international currency, allowing its owners to migrate from one part of the world to another and to cash in the benefits that it affords them. It is likely that white migrants may be moving to a country previously owned by Blacks but now run by whites eg. North America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand. Within this global social order they can step automatically over the lower 'races' and benefit from the greater opportunities that their skin offers them. Similar benefits exist when they migrate to ex-colonies where the previous essentially European administrative hierarchy remains. Finally, they may decide to make their economic livelihood within fortress Europe. The reality is that Third World has come to be equated with both the place and the people. It refers to inferior conditions in the south and the north of the world, and whilst migration may well offer opportunity it is not of course equal to that offered to white migrants. Unfortunately Black migration also results in the need to spend inordinate amounts of time and energy on an individual, local, national and international level contesting the inferior social and economic positions to which people have been allocated.

The global perspective..helps explain the reasons why the struggle against such forces is an uphill one. The power of multi-national companies to shift capital and labour around the globe, the abilities of western governments to intervene overtly and covertly and the power of states to reaffirm cultural superiority through education and the media help to explain the one sidedness of these battles. (Hall, 1991 p. 154)

Thus the particular social relations between Black people and white is over shadowed by the way in which racist ideologies infect the sub-conscious and the manner in which various Black groups contest them. In order to understand these relations one must understand some of the history which shapes it (Fryer, 1984).

Whenever Black people and white people of low ethnic status have come into contact with one another, low-status whites have found themselves socially elevated. Examples

of this abound in the Caribbean where Africans as slaves, and Indians as indentured labour took the social positions formerly held by Irish people, or even had new categories specifically created to separate them (Greenfield, 1966). In more recent time, notably the mid-twentieth century, Indians like other Black people were brought over to the west to do jobs considered beneath the white population (Duffield, 1988).

In India, Indians found it notoriously difficult to own their own land and gain access to their own resources including admission to the Indian civil service. Europeans were consistently placed in positions of standing and given responsibility over Indians and the result of various official and unofficial barriers in the late 19th century led to 'virtually only boys educated in England' (Spear, 1965, p. 173) being able to gain places within the service.

The evidence seems to point out that Black people have consistently been consigned to the bottom rung of society in social relations between different ethnic groups (Duffield, 1988; Locke, 1995). This however should not be surprising given the role which 'race' has had to play in privileging the WASP globally and dividing racialised groups along various patterns of stigmatisation. There is an array of evidence that Black people have been graded as less human than either Jewish or Irish people³. For example, in the Caribbean, both were entitled to keep slaves and hire workers, though the type of worker they were allowed to keep was based on the notion of a racial hierarchy within the white community itself. 'Jewish households were not allowed, under law, either to indenture or hire white workers' (Beckles, 1989 p.57). So whilst Jews were considered as less worthy than non-Jews their white skin ensured that they alongside white Irish people were by law legally superior to Africans who by virtue of their skin were designated slaves.

The owning of white skin was therefore an important delineation between all whites and the enslaved. Given that we argue that 'race' and racism exists on several levels and it is helpful to claim that the legacy of a colour-coded stratification society remains with us today. Over time it has however become more complex as social relations continue to be contested. A situation which arises whenever such stigmatised groups come together on a geographical basis. It should be noted however, that these historical details do not detract from the long history of the mass slaughter and persecution of Irish people and Jewish people around the world, but it does highlight some of the social relations between these groups because of a common history of oppression by WASPs.

The existence of this racial hierarchy in the hearts and minds of Europe has divided the Black community from the white one and signifies one important dimension of racial stigmatisation.

The effect of these collective ideas is to suggest that British people have been brought up to believe that there was/is something infinitely and innately superior about a people who could come to rule over so much of the world. They have also been taught through a range of literature, folk lore and images that those they ruled over must be inferior (Fryer, 1984). The particular form of inferiority that each racialised group is said to share varies ethnically ie racism is ethnicised.

As well as a shared experience of racism as discussed above, the peoples of Asia and Africa in Britain have different experiences of racism based on different histories, cultures, economic situations and religions. And precisely because our argument is controversial, there is relatively little documented evidence about these differences in experience. However, in relatively recent times, Lord Scarman (1984) made some interesting comments which seem to us to encapsulate some of the deep seated manifestations of anti-Asian and anti-African racism.

They [Asian people] have their own cultures as old if not older, than ours. They have religions which are as old and, in spiritual and moral terms, as high quality as ours. So the Asian people are not anything like as interested in merging into British society as the Caribbean. This is their problem. The Caribbean people have no culture and no acquaintance with civilised life other than through their links with the Western world. They therefore depend very much more on us than do the Asian peoples. (1984, p. 153-163)

As can be seen, Scarman's assessment of Asian people is based on notions of domination. They are considered unchangeable in their (undesirable) characteristics and therefore incapable of assimilation (Parmar, 1982, 1984) This means that the Asian way of life is seen as too separate, and consequently Asians remain a potential threat and a danger to the stability of the 'British' way of life.

On the other hand he adapts this system to argue that African Caribbean people are both too close, and too dependent upon the white 'man'. They are seen as the archetypal 'white man's burden'. They are a threat to 'civilised' life precisely because they have 'no culture'. This fits in with stereotypes about a proneness to violence, lawlessness and waywardness.

Despite the differences in the nature of the racist sentiments within these two statements, it is obvious that they share a Eurocentric value-base relating to images of empire, notions of 'authentic' civilisations, the capability to be assimilated and the ability to resist the process of assimilation.

Practice Implications

The experiences of the African and Asian continentals and diaspora can be discussed in homogenous and heterogenous Black ethnic groups as well as in white-only groups. Young people deserve to gain an understanding of their history as a Black community in Britain, on their continent of origin and as a diaspora. In this way both Black groups can explore similarities and differences in pre-European history, discuss the ways in which this history has been shaped since the arrivals of the Europeans and consider the ways in which they have both opposed their racialisation and developed their own ethnicities. This outline would form part of a validation process allowing young people to also explore the histories of other oppressed and dispersed people. Again opportunities will always exist to contemplate how various forms of racism may be combatted, (including anti-Semitism and anti-Irish racism) but with an emphasis on avoiding the notion of Black people as victims.

Conclusion

If youth workers wish to challenge racism and support young people who are experiencing racism, they need firstly to understand 'race' and racism as social constructs. By listening carefully to members of stigmatised groups, they will become aware of the 'commonality and difference' (Lorde, 1984) in racist experiences. They need also to develop the tools to discern the ways in which groups attempt to contest their stigmatisation. Members of racialised groups are not passive victims, and the role that they play in contesting racism creates new ideas about social relations and identity. Only then will youth workers be able to acknowledge that young people experiencing different forms of racism have a role to play in fighting it at whatever level it occurs. This article aims to contribute to that struggle.

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Notes

- 1 We use the form 'race' to highlight the fact that we define 'race' in social not biological terms - see extensive discussion in the text below.
- 2 Recently there has been an initiative from the Central Council for the Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) to promote teaching on anti-Semitism on social work training courses (See CCETSW (and) Workshop on the Teaching of Anti-Semitism, Newcastle upon Tyne, University of Northumbria)
- 3 'The framers of the [American] Constitution were careful to avoid using terms designating sex or color. The words 'slave', 'slavery' and 'female' are not to be found in the original document. What one does find are phrases such as 'persons held to service or labor' (Article IV, section 2) or 'three fifths of all other persons' (Article I, section 2). Those persons held to service or labor and designated as three fifths were African-Americans, females and males' (Locke, 1995 pp.225 - 6)

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TEENAGERS IN BRITAIN

Empowered or embattled?

MOIRA BORLAND AND MALCOLM HILL

Introduction

This paper is concerned with the impact of current policy on teenagers with a particular focus on social services provision for vulnerable young people, aged 13-17. It is based in part on research carried out in England and Scotland in which consumer feedback played a central part, including the views of young people themselves (Triseliotis, Borland, Hill and Lambert, 1995). We will consider both the impact of general policies which shape the social environment of all young people and the operation of specific policies for teenagers who are in receipt of social work services.

In discussing the situation of this age group, we are conscious that for many purposes they are included in the global category of 'children', but in other contexts they are given a special label of their own ('youth' or 'adolescence'), whilst at the upper limits they may be regarded and regard themselves as adults. This ambiguous status means that they are due the same rights to protection and provision as younger children, but their particular needs can be overlooked in protective and supportive services. It also means that they do not have the same rights of self-determination as adults, yet they may have the wish and power to act in ways that significant adults disapprove of. Against a background of scarce resources and targeting, this makes service delivery for this age group and their families problematic.

Young people, the family and the state

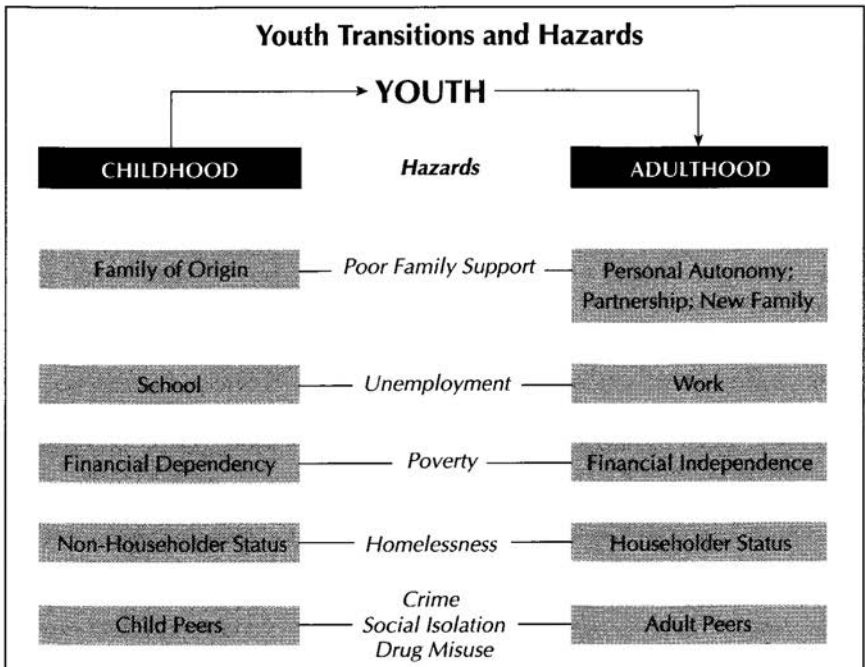
For *children* in Britain the 1990s are a time of contradiction and polarisation. Attention to their rights and well-being has been enhanced through changes in legislation and supported by ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Yet high unemployment and changes in the benefits system have resulted in an increasing proportion of children and young people living in poverty, with uncertain prospects for their future (Coleman and Warren-Adamson, 1992; Kumar, 1993). While child care policy has reaffirmed family care as the best option for children, abuse within the family continues to arouse public concern and provision is dominated by investigatory child protection systems (Gibbons, 1995). With the rise in divorce, many children face major upheavals in their family lives over which they have little choice or control.

Teenagers are children who are in the process of becoming adults. Many of the ambiguities which characterise social constructions of both childhood and adulthood are highlighted in relation to young people. The UN Convention defines anyone under the age of 18 as a child, with special claims on the state as regards rights to protection, provision and participation (Asquith and Hill, 1991). Recent child care legislation in England & Wales and in Scotland has strengthened the responsibilities of local authorities towards young people up to the age of 18 or even beyond in some circumstances. This tendency of national and international measures to lump young people together with younger children has arguably resulted in neglect of the special features of this age group.

The teen years can be seen as shaped by the interplay between general structural features and specific biographical experiences, which involve transitions, opportunities and hazards. Recent analyses have used the concepts of 'transitions' or 'career' to describe the changing dynamics of youth at population levels (Banks et al., 1992; Jones and Wallace, 1992; Coles, 1995). This has proved a useful analytic tool, although there are dangers of treating young people purely as if they are en route to adulthood without valuing their current interests, status and concerns. Typically, youth is seen as the life stage when, in modern British society, there are four kinds of goal to achieve, each with its associated transition:

GOAL	TRANSITION
Personal independence	Family of origin to adult (sexual) partnership(s)
Occupation/career	School to work
Financial autonomy	Parental income to own income
Householder status	Family home to own household

A significant further dimension concerns altered social network relationships, especially with peers



The crucial elements in these transitions are those of independence and separation from the family of origin, which embody culturally bound values. Although it is recognised that the nature of transitions is influenced by such factors as social class and gender (Coles, 1995), there are dangers in assuming that everyone's life path is broadly the same, disregarding for instance differences related to sexual orientation or disability (Griffin, 1991). An important aspect of this life stage is the increased involvement in illegal activities, especially by males. Although crime takes up a very small proportion of the lives of all but a few adolescents, so prominent is this age group in official and self-report statistics that it has become almost conventional to see anti-social behaviour as a normal 'phase' out of which most youngsters are destined to grow. Views remain very divided about which policies are most desirable or most effective in dealing with teenage law-breaking. In the 1990s, both non-custodial and punitive measures have been supported in a contradictory rather than cohesive fashion (McLaughlin and Muncie, 1993; Williamson, 1993).

In the eyes of government and probably the majority of citizens, the transitions to adulthood are also expected to involve a shift in status from that of recipient of financial input by the state through its investment in education and Child Benefit to a position of contributor to public funds by means of taxation and National Insurance.

It is widely acknowledged that in the last 20 years, negotiation of these transitions has become both more hazardous and more differentiated. The chief cause has been the growth in youth unemployment, but other factors have included changes in the labour and housing markets, benefit restrictions and demographic changes. For instance, Social Security reforms removed entitlements to Income Support for non-employed 16-17 year olds and introduced low rates up to the age of 25, with the assumption and intention that they should rely on their families for support or attend low-paid training programmes (Roll, 1990). Suitable accommodation for young people is scarce and homelessness has grown (Killeen, 1992; Bannister et al., 1993). The combination of high youth unemployment and restricted benefit entitlements has meant that increased numbers of young people are suffering from poverty, low status, uncertainty and pessimism at the same time as some of their peers have gained from expanded opportunities in higher education and from extended periods of 'freedom' as a result of deferred child-bearing. Consequently, transitions have become more diverse, fragmented and hazardous.

Within this context of polarised opportunities, the support of families becomes particularly important, either to enhance educational and job prospects or to help sustain those out of work or on training schemes. The most vulnerable young people are therefore those whose experience combines structural disadvantage and family problems, since each of these circumstances reinforces the other. Status insecurity and the lack of prospects in education, employment and earning can lead to tensions at home and the seeking of alternative sources of life satisfaction, which may include illegal activities or substance misuse (Chisholm and Hurrelmann, 1995). The increased financial dependency of young people can also exacerbate family stress, especially if parents too are struggling with unemployment and poverty.

There is also evidence that parenting styles influence young people's well-being independently of household structure and socio-economic circumstances. Analysis of data on over 4000 Scottish secondary school children aged 13-16 found that one in six reported problems with their parents, whom they perceived as disapproving, conflictual and unsupporting (Shucksmith, Hendry & Glendenning, 1995). High proportions of this group were also disaffected with school and showed signs of psychological distress. Local authority Social Services and Social Work Departments are charged by government to provide services which prevent or alleviate the difficulties that arise for such young people. Our study was intended to evaluate how well that mission was translated into local policy and practice.

The study

The research was funded by the Department of Health over a three year period and was carried out by the authors and two colleagues from the University of Edinburgh. It covered five local authorities - two in Scotland and three in England. A total of 116 young people aged 13-17 took part in the study. Two interviews were held with the young person, the parent(s) (or main carer) and the social worker, the first shortly after a specific social work service had begun and the second approximately a year later. Although our focus was on teenagers and families in contact with social work services, many of their difficulties reflected common sources of tension and exposed issues in relation to more universal services, notably education and social security. It was not a primary aim of the study to examine differences between Scotland and England but inevitably some aspects of service provision reflected the different child care and juvenile justice systems in the two countries.

None of the agencies in the study had a comprehensive policy for work with young people. They were submerged within general policies for children aged 0-18 and any specific documents about them were confined to single issues, like offending or leaving care. Thus there was little recognition that the transitions older teenagers face require specific attention. Several agencies had policies and inter-agency agreements which emphasised measures to keep young people at home. These included both gate-keeping mechanisms and positive services, like group work and community initiatives (see also Kendrick, 1995). One consequence of this was that less attention seemed to have been given to strategies for meeting the needs of supporting young people admitted to foster and residential care, especially if there was no speedy return home. In the main, services for teenagers were aimed at young male offenders, whilst support services such as family centres were largely directed at families with younger children. Resources were stretched, so there was little scope for preventive work.

In this paper there is scope to report on only a few aspects of the study findings. To highlight the transitional status of older teenagers, we shall focus on young people whose main difficulties centred on family relationship problems (rather than offending or school based difficulties). Their needs and service responses will be considered in the light of three key themes embodied in recent central and local government policies, namely that:

- the preferred option is for young people to remain in the family home
- parental responsibility is continuing and social workers should work in partnership with parents
- young people's views should be obtained and taken into account in decisions which affect them

In practice it was often difficult to implement and reconcile these objectives which required treating young people as individuals in their own right, yet recognising their parents' continuing significance in their lives. The effective operationalisation of such aims also requires a range of resources which were seldom available. To convey how these tensions and limitations impacted on the young people who took part in the study, we will outline their family circumstances and problems, describe the services provided and consider some consequences of the social work intervention.

Teenagers and their Families

For the majority of families we met, the difficulties experienced by the young people added to and exacerbated a range of problems including poverty, mental illness, divorce and family violence. At the start of the study only a fifth of the young people were living with both natural parents, over a quarter were with one parent and a new partner and 42% were cared for by a single parent.

Family difficulties were identified as the main reason for social workers being involved with over half the young people and tensions at home had been a contributing factor in four out of five admissions to care. The nature and intensity of the problems varied widely. Some families had a long history of problems while others had only experienced difficulties since the young person reached adolescence. In most cases it was the young person who was identified by their parents or carers as the problem, but increased confidence and articulacy had also enabled some teenagers to challenge long standing unfair treatment or abuse in the family. While a degree of tension is to be expected during the teenage years, all of these families were experiencing intense difficulties. Power battles between parents and teenagers were typically fierce, sometimes resulting in physical fights or young people leaving home, either of their own accord or because a parent insisted. In some cases young people found it difficult to accept the authority of a new step parent and, if their resistance was too strong, they could find themselves excluded from the reconstituted family. When young people stole from family members or vandalised the family home, parents reached breaking point.

Despite the high level of family tensions, many young people considered that their parents, particularly mothers, remained an important source of help and two thirds of the whole sample considered that their relationship with at least one parent was reasonably good. This reinforced the view that even where family life has been very fraught, parental support may remain important. However the level of family support provided during the study year did not match young people's expectations at the first interview. While over half the young people had anticipated that some

form of practical help or advice would be forthcoming from a family member in the course of the year, only a third did in fact receive help. In some instances this was due to the breakdown of relationships, but most families had few additional emotional or practical resources on which they could draw. Help from family members usually came from parents. Though a few young people relied on relatives to put them up or lend them money in a crisis, in general our study did not indicate that the extended family was a potentially significant source of support for teenagers in difficulties. Parents remained the main providers.

In summary, most families who took part in the study were under considerable, often long standing stress and had access to few resources. They looked to social work services to help resolve the difficulties which overwhelmed them. Not surprisingly parents and children who were in conflict with each other often had different perceptions of the problems and what was required to resolve them. The nature of the service provided was thus influenced not only by policy aims but by resource availability and a need to balance the demands and rights of teenagers and their parents.

Supporting and sustaining family relationships

Reflecting national policy, each agency was committed to keeping children and young people within their families if possible and a range of community based support services and gatekeeping procedures were in place to achieve this. In recent years there has been increasing recognition that a period in foster or residential care may in fact contribute to sustaining family relationships by providing temporary relief and an opportunity to resolve tensions and conflicts. Even when children and young people are unlikely to return to live at home, the benefits of maintaining family links are emphasised. Supporting young people in their families is thus a central plank of policy, yet we found that service provision to achieve this was piecemeal and often reactive.

Several parents had found that it was difficult to access support services at an early enough stage. In a number of instances, initial requests for help had been turned down because emergency or statutory work took priority. It had sometimes been suggested that a psychologist or psychiatrist should be consulted, but their services were not always available or acceptable to the families. Social workers only became involved when the young person had broken the law, was thought to be at risk or the situation became so difficult that parents insisted on admission to care. By this time family relationships were often at breaking point. Thus the rationing of services meant that by the time they were brought into play they mainly performed a reparative rather than preventive role and some older teenagers had concluded that leaving home was the only solution.

When social workers did become involved, they worked very hard to keep young people at home but were hampered by the limited extent and range of resources available. Respite foster placements were virtually non-existent for this age group. Although an emergency placement in a children's home could always be found, there were fears that admission to overstretched children's units would exacerbate an already tense situation so that this option was not often thought suitable. In some

agencies young people might have the opportunity to discuss family problems with other teenagers in a group. Befrienders were sometimes recruited to spend time with young people and so give the parents a break. However each type of resource was scarce and it was very unusual for a choice of services to be available, because each agency favoured only one or two methods.

Consequently most social workers had to rely primarily on their own resources and skills, which were tested to the limit as they attempted to meet the demands of both young people and their parents while winning the confidence of both. Usually their approach was to have separate meetings with young people and their parents. They tried to resolve family problems by supporting each individually and acting as a go-between rather than through direct negotiation with both parties. Not surprisingly this was a difficult role to sustain and there were indications that family issues gradually became less prominent in social workers' discussions with young people as time went by.

For some young people, coming to terms with their parents' failure to care for them was a prerequisite to re-establishing a relationship with them. Increasing their understanding of why they were in care was also important for teenagers' sense of identity and self esteem. At the initial interview social workers thought that over half the young people would benefit from increased understanding of the events which led to their present situation, but a year later these issues had been followed up with fewer than one in five. Additional information about their family background had been obtained by a third of the 19 young people who indicated a wish for increased understanding at the first interview but this had not been achieved through social workers' actions.

In summary, though sustaining family relationships was a central policy aim, resources to achieve this were limited and expectations of the young people and parents were rarely systematically clarified and addressed. Attempts to keep young people at home were further complicated by the fact that young people and their parents did not always share the view that keeping the family together was the best option.

Children's rights and working in partnership

Recent years have seen increasing emphasis on participation of both young people and parents in policy and practice terms. The duty to consult with children according to their level of understanding has been incorporated in legislation since 1975 and was given increased emphasis in the Children Act 1989 and the Guidance regulations which followed it. The ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child further reinforced this trend. One of the agencies which took part in our study had published a Children's Family Charter, applicable to both Social Work and Education Departments as well as the Health Board whilst another had established a post of Children's Rights Officer. A third agency preferred not to have a single person responsible for children's rights, but sponsored local groups of young people in care and involved them in the development of revised policies and procedures. As would be expected, teenagers were more able than younger children to make use of these developments.

As noted earlier, reaching adolescence provided the opportunity for some young people to express their long standing dissatisfaction with their family situations. A small but significant group of young people were clear that, despite its drawbacks, being in care was the best option for them. They considered that life at home had been abusive, unacceptably exploitative or unpredictable. Their expressed need was for the support of social work services to provide somewhere to live at present and to support their move to independent living in the future. They anticipated that coping on their own would be difficult but recognised that without social work support it would be impossible. Our findings to some extent confirmed their analysis since young people who left the family without social work support were in the least favourable circumstances a year later.

For some young people, admission to care was therefore a positive choice but, despite the current emphasis on children's rights, there were indications that the emphasis to keep young people within their family prevented care or accommodation from being discussed as a possible alternative. Instead it was presented as a last resort to be avoided at all costs. Teenagers lacked accurate, realistic information about what admission to care would involve and young people's requests to be accommodated or admitted to care were only taken seriously if they provided evidence that they were at risk or had been abused in the family. Otherwise, they were admitted to care only when their parents insisted or because of persistent offending or truancy. When admission to care was agreed to, scarcity of resources meant that less than a quarter were given any choice about the type or location of placement. Given the lack of opportunities to participate positively in these decisions, a few young people claimed that their unruly behaviour had constituted a deliberate attempt to get away from home or into a different placement.

There was a general perception among young people that, because of its emphasis on parental responsibility, the Children Act had reduced their right to ask for services in their own right and gave parents much more control over whether and for how long they would be accommodated. There was also a belief that accommodation would not be provided if any member of the extended family was prepared to offer a home. This sense of powerlessness was in sharp contrast to the experience of a few of their peers not reliant on public provision who made headline news when they were granted an order allowing them to live with another family of their choice. Lack of resources and a reluctance to undermine parental responsibility created a quite different situation for the young people in our study. Despite their evident competence, decisions about admission to care and placement were largely imposed by parents and social workers.

In addition to enhancing children's rights the Children Act required social workers to work in partnership with parents. When young people's and their parents' views were in conflict it was difficult to reconcile both principles and individual social workers differed in terms of the weight they gave to each point of view. Commonly the balance shifted in favour of the young people as the intervention progressed. While, according to social workers, parents had initiated 40% of all admissions to care, their influence on subsequent decisions declined. At the same time young

people became more informed about the care system and more skilled at articulating their views. Some parents resented the attention paid to the teenagers' wishes and, though the majority continued to feel adequately involved, overall satisfaction with the extent of consultation declined during the year. While most social workers agreed that young people's views should take precedence, they differed in the extent to which they would accept these at face value or take time to discuss options in detail so that young people's views could be more considered and informed.

The Scottish Children's Hearing system also encourages the participation of parents and young people, though within a statutory rather than voluntary framework. There were indications that there were some advantages in negotiating within such a setting. When any major change is being contemplated, the Children's Panel requires parents and young people to attend hearings, moderates precipitate actions which may not be in the young person's best interests and can mediate between parents and children. The system makes demands on but is also a potential source of support to young people, parents and social workers. By contrast, in the English authorities there were examples of parents jeopardising plans for their children by prematurely ending social work involvement, removing young people from care or refusing to attend reviews and participate in planning their future. In a few instances parents acknowledged that it was difficult for them to exercise parental responsibility when they had no control over their children and at least one parent had been intimidated by the teenager into agreeing to his return home. The result in all these instances was that the young people were denied an opportunity to resolve problems and at the end of the study some were living with whoever would put them up, often in risky or exploitative situations.

Though parental influence to some extent limited the degree to which young people's wishes were taken into account, lack of resources was a significant factor, too. Social workers identified that resource limitations restricted young people's choice in over a fifth of decisions whilst parents' views took precedence in one in five.

In highlighting the inherent tensions in implementing policy and reconciling competing policy aims, we have concentrated primarily on identifying gaps and deficiencies in the service. However the results of social work intervention were in many respects positive so that a more hopeful picture emerges when the overall consequences are considered.

The impact of intervention: benefits, risk and harm

Using a range of measures (See Hill, Triseliotis, Borland and Lambert, 1996), we sought to assess how successful the services had been in assisting young people to resolve their difficulties and improve their life chances. In addition to the resources already mentioned, services included special schooling, referral to specialist agencies and advocacy with housing and social security offices.

According to young people's own accounts (largely confirmed by social workers and parents), the majority were satisfied or very satisfied with the services and service providers. Most also believed there had been improvements in their own circumstances and prospects over the year, although only sometimes was the intervention given the

main credit for this. Two thirds of the sample reported that their situation was improved at the end of the year and only 12% said it was worse. A slightly higher proportion of parents said there had been positive changes in the young person.

The proportion of the sample with a very high rating of psycho-social disturbance reduced from 63% to 36%. Self-reports on health and self-esteem indicated little change, although in nearly half the cases social workers thought self-esteem had improved. About half said relationships with parents were better at the end of the year. A third of the whole sample thought that the intervention had helped improve family relationships. About 80% of young people said they got on well with their social worker personally (many indicated 'very well'), but only half of both parents and young people thought that the young person had benefited from contact with the social worker.

It is interesting to note that even though most of the sample had significant personal or family problems, their concerns about the future were typical of the anxieties of anyone of their generation from a disadvantaged background, i.e. about difficulties in finding work or accommodation. About half the sample had left school by the time of the second round of interviews, but just three had acquired any qualifications and only a quarter were in paid employment. A minority had made significant educational improvements according to social workers, most often as a result of a stable period in a residential school. Thus, whatever their personal situation, few were managing well the transition towards financial independence and a stable occupational career.

Our study was primarily intended to document the variety of issues, services and processes involved, so the sample was too diverse to reach any definitive conclusions about what factors were responsible for success. Nevertheless it was possible to identify both individual and service characteristics which were associated with good outcomes, although this does not of course imply cause and effect. Not surprisingly, the young people who began the year with lower self-esteem and more psycho-social difficulties were less likely than others to feel positive or satisfied with progress over the year, but even so some young people with major difficulties were helped to stabilise their lives. Most of the small group of individuals whose prospects were poor (according to all participants) were persistent offenders or drug users. Even so, nearly half those with offending problems claimed that they had been helped to reduce or stop criminal activities. A number said they heeded advice and warnings from social workers, because a relationship based on trust and understanding had been established.

We devised a global index to summarise the end of the year outcomes (for further details see Triseliotis, Borland, Hill and Lambert, 1995). The index was based on:

- assessments of psycho-social adjustment, self-esteem, school progress and behavioural change
- young people's and social workers' appraisals of intervention
- young people's satisfactions with the year experienced between interviews
- young people's and social workers' views on the young person's future prospects

The index showed that young people in residential schools had the highest chance of success. This was attributed to the individualised teaching and care alongside stability and good co-operation with home. The group who did poorest were those who had left home, care or accommodation and were trying to establish lives on their own. Less than one quarter of this group were coping adequately. They were seeking to do this at an age (16-17) which is considerably younger than usual and yet these were young people particularly lacking in family support or educational resources. Some had been keen to be independent to get away from where they had been living before, but some had felt 'pushed' by age limits of legislation or residential institutions which forced them to leave before they felt ready. Most of both groups struggled with problems of low income, unemployment, unsatisfactory and changing accommodation, and social isolation (cf. Garnett, 1992). Those with local authority tenancies experienced more stability than others. Some were able to establish eligibility for Income Support on grounds of vulnerability, others were not.

Although the social work interventions proved reasonably satisfactory and somewhat helpful for the majority of our sample, it was clear that most remained vulnerable to making arduous journeys into adulthood on account of poor prospects of gaining sustained well-paid employment and adequate accommodation. They were clearly 'losers' in terms of universal policies concerned with education, employment and social security, which it would be unrealistic and inappropriate to expect selective social services to do more than partially offset. In addition, though, about one in six of our sample had this 'generational' risk compounded by serious interpersonal difficulties which had been little helped or made worse by the intervention. A few were in danger of losing their lives through heavy drug dependency or suicide attempts. Others were at risk of exploitation by partners and peers after they had left home due to conflict and unhappiness. A third group, having resorted to anti-social behaviour with peers, found themselves subject to increasingly controlled forms of substitute care, including secure accommodation, which further exacerbated their problems.

These young people were still children in the sense of being under 18, but the service system often seemed to have given up providing constructive help. The concept of 'significant harm', which has been given so much attention in the Children Act (Hardiker, 1996) has come to act as a threshold for receiving supportive services (Bullock et al., 1995), yet it is largely conceived of in terms of active abuse of younger children. We believe that similar concern should be expressed for youngsters in their mid-teens and priority given to them. They are also very vulnerable though in different and less prominent ways.

Social workers could only help young people remain safe if they were able to engage with them and to help them develop support systems and coping strategies. Some social workers achieved this in the most difficult and unpromising situations, sometimes by working productively alongside residential or group workers. However there were also examples of young people's views being ignored or their options restricted due to lack of resources, parental wishes and/or too narrow an emphasis on keeping them out of care. At the end of the year as many 17 year olds

who had remained at home were living independently as those who had been in care so that keeping out of care had not guaranteed continuing family support. Indeed it had afforded reduced access to housing and other resources. Social work involvement had not resulted in these young people being more equipped to protect themselves against the risks and hazards which lay ahead.

Conclusions

The study reported here was concerned with older children who face the common youth transition hazards of their generation combined with particular family or social difficulties. It is now generally recognised that the conventional markers of adulthood such as steady employment, independent housing and a committed sexual partnership have generally become more difficult for young people to achieve and are often delayed (Morrow and Richards, 1996). Government rhetoric and policy have shifted responsibilities back onto families (Coles, 1995), so that those whose family relationships are weak are at a particular disadvantage in their efforts to attain stability and autonomy. Success in education and family support have become vital resources for negotiating the more hazardous transitions to adulthood, so that those teenagers who are disadvantaged in these respects have bleak prospects, which cutbacks in entitlements to finance and housing have exacerbated. The study showed that in these circumstances social services intervention is often experienced as helpful and beneficial, but may make little impact on the longer-term risk factors. Measures which effectively combined social work and education seemed to be most effective in enhancing life chances, because they improved young peoples' resources for coping in both the private and public spheres of life. Contrary to the common rhetoric amongst professionals of empowerment and rights, young people were often marginal in key decisions affecting their lives (cf. Williamson, 1996).

Despite the present government's pre-occupation with 'troublesome teenagers', few central or local policies address positively and comprehensively the needs of such adolescents and their parents. Our study revealed good examples of helpful programmes and effective practice. Some young people were assisted in reconciling with their families and modifying law-breaking or addictive behaviour. However a co-ordinated policy is required with a range of supportive and respite resources which is more specifically targeted at this age group. Attention is rightly being given to enable young people to participate more effectively in decision-making. It is equally important to meet their needs for protection from risk and significant harm, in a manner which respects their developing autonomy

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CITIZENSHIP, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

ANDREW WEST

Explorations of citizenship and young people largely remain dominated by a paradigm that connects 'citizen' with 'adult' (see especially Jones 1995 and 1996). As France has recently explained in this journal, the features of this paradigm owe much to Marshall (1950), whose 'three areas in which individuals could fulfil their duties' (France, 1996, p. 29) include two - paid work and paying tax and social insurance - which are legally mostly limited to adults. Of the third, civic responsibility, France notes that 'what Marshall meant is not entirely clear' (*ibid*). Thus, questions concerning the citizenship of youth are inevitable, since a number of essentially contested concepts and terms are involved: 'citizenship' itself, 'youth', 'civic responsibility', even 'adult'. The resulting effect on young people is apparent, as France has shown: 'One impact of the [recent] re-structuring of citizenship for the young is the growth and development of new forms of social controls which limit young people's choices and restrict their opportunities to become autonomous adults' (1996, p. 40). Such controls are particularly evident in the changes in entitlement to welfare benefits since the mid-1980s and an increased dependence on the family for both 'disadvantaged and advantaged youth'.

The link between youth, citizenship, changing (in)dependence, and on to adulthood, connects in particular with the social constructions of youth and the transition to adult status, all well-described and explained by France. Here I want to follow on and ask questions concerning children and their citizenship, not necessarily to find immediate answers, but to suggest that an examination of the broader constituency of children, in offering additional issues and problems, might re-frame the picture of youth citizenship.

The Transition of Youth

'Youth' is a bridge between the two states of child and adult. These states are age-related, but the division is constructed to have significant meanings of innocence and dependence (childhood), and independence (adulthood). The representations involved in this construction disguise the reality of the power relationship between the two states, and negate ideas of continual development and change throughout a life course (see Hockey and James, 1993, and Cohen, 1987) and the notion of lifelong learning.

The adult/child divide implies a point of transition: the precise age of this transition is a problem which has become entrenched with the biological/age division confounded with ideas of social maturity. Thus, resolution in this area will always be contested. The bridging period of 'youth' has, therefore, taken on the significance of a third state, but retaining a sense of liminality and change through ill-defined status and identity (see van Genep, 1909 and Turner, 1969 for discussions of social status and transitions).

The problems of youth's ill-defined status are shown in the combination of elements of childhood and adulthood, in the acquisition of opportunities (for example, to work) and responsibilities (in law, etc.). Such rights and responsibilities have become

bound up in the citizenship debate, particularly in the re-structuring of dependence and independence, as France demonstrates.

A key aspect of the problem for youth is what defines citizenship: is it to be age (that is so many years old), or is it certain rights or responsibilities? What other elements are possible? The moment of change is open to debate. For example, selection of the right to vote suggests 18 years, but citizenship is suggested to be more than voting. Other elements often embraced in citizenship include responsibility for various actions, as defined in law, and also attributed to 18 years. But other aspects, especially the right to welfare and the standard of welfare for young people, have changed much in recent years, which can be seen as an erosion of their rights and a reduction in or lessening of their citizenship status. These changes include the lower level of income support for the under-25s, the withdrawal of benefit for 16-17 year olds, the increase in youth homelessness and unemployment, and changes to the labour and education 'markets'. Bessant (1995, p. 29) sees these changes in the context of citizenship, as providing 'delayed adulthood' and suggests 'we should be considering how to provide experience that presents opportunities of full citizenship to young people in the context of a diminishing labour market' (ibid). T.H. Marshall saw the right to welfare as the key and completing contribution of the twentieth century toward citizenship (building on the civic and legal rights developed in the previous 200 years in Europe).

Some writers are explicit that the transition to adulthood is the 'transition to citizenship' (Jones, 1995, p. 2). 'Youth is also the period during which young people make the transition to citizenship' (Jones, 1996, p. 26). The contemporary focus on citizenship and youth is thus very much defined in adult terms and the notion of 'full citizenship'. A look in the other direction, towards children, affirms those terms, since the focus there has largely been on teaching children about citizenship. This preparation for the future has taken the form of education around voting, legislature, courts, council, rights, responsibilities, moral dilemmas (see for example White, no date). Educating children to be citizens is not new: for example, in the 1970s, employment, income tax, family, marriage, housing, health and leisure were seen as elements (Curry, 1972), and in the 1980s, citizenship was placed in an economic context with discussion of family and local authority expenditure (Ryba, 1985).

Children ...

So where does this leave children? If children are not citizens, what are they - citizens in waiting, emergent citizens, second-class citizens? Jones is again explicit, 'adults are "citizens"', 'children are only "citizens by proxy"' (1995, p. 2, citing Jones and Wallace, 1992). The reasoning for this is that only adults are in a 'direct relationship with the state, as contributors to its budget as well as beneficiaries' (1996, p. 2). Jones goes on to point out the extension of dependency for young people - through the extension of education and training - so that 'citizenship has been withheld - in terms of the responsibilities in the package, perhaps, as well as the rights' (Jones 1995, p. 5).

The implication of dependence means children (and young people) are somehow subsumed within the family in terms of their relationship to the state or to any

other collective grouping (such as the 'community'). On this basis the years 16-17 would be seen as the traditional transitory rite of passage, where the key, culturally significant elements of social life come into play, when age limits about sex, marriage (and so biological reproduction), joining the armed forces (and so death and killing) are fully or partially removed, and then capped by the right to vote at 18 years. Recent years have seen changes increasing dependence, potentially until 25 years or more. These latter changes are largely economic, and reflect the privileging of and preoccupation with that sector as a key determinant of social success. However, problems with this framework can be illustrated with one example, the issue of children in and from care: their family constructions are different, mediated in some way by the state. Thousands of children leave care each year, mostly at 16 years, facing a range of serious problems connected with survival due to lack of income, inadequate housing, lack of employment opportunities and so on (see West, 1995). In asking about the circumstances of these children and young people, the question of citizenship becomes broadened: what is the relationship between children and the state or community? what of children's rights?

... and Citizenship

The defining point of citizenship concerns the relationship between the individual and the state: as France notes, citizenship dominates many debates on the 'relationship between the individual and society' (1996, p. 28). A 'legal definition of citizenship' is offered by Willshaw as being 'the link between an individual and a particular state or political community under which the individual receives certain rights, privileges and protections in return for allegiances and duties' (Willshaw 1992, p. 31, drawing on K. Marshall of the Scottish Child Law Centre). This definition sets out the structure of the relationship, and implies all inhabitants, including children, as Willshaw goes on to discuss.

Defining the nature of the rights, privileges, and duties of citizenship in adult terms, as Marshall (1950) did and others have continued to do (Jones 1995, 1996), excludes children and places emphasis on youth and the transition to adulthood as the site of a substantial status change. This transition is experienced as a sequence of changes in different rights and opportunities, which are subject in practice to political whim and change (as France, 1996 demonstrates): it is this subjection to change which exposes the power within the relationship. The question of children's citizenship then assumes two aspects: first, what rights and duties do children have as individuals within the state; and second, how may those rights be enforced?

The key remains the nature of the relationship between the individual and the state. Barbalet offers a useful definition: 'citizenship can readily be described as participation in or membership of a community' (1988, p. 2). Membership is an important area, and has implications in terms of passport, rights to enter countries, the status of refugees and so on. Participation is the other key area, and might be linked to what Marshall saw as civic responsibility. Barbalet points to problems of social inequality, which in effect limit modern citizenship. The assumption of equality before the law is insufficient: 'the provision of citizenship across the lines

dividing unequal classes is likely to mean that the practical ability to exercise the rights or legal capacities which constitute the status of citizen will not be available to all who possess them. In other words, those disadvantaged by the class system are unable to participate practically in the community of citizenship in which they have legal membership' (1988, p. 2). The words 'class system' might be replaced by other groupings: the lack of such practical participation is the experience of children and minorities lacking power or facing discrimination. (Unless these groupings are assumed not to be full members of the community. This question becomes tautologous - to be a full member is to participate, not to participate indicates lack of membership - yet it provides illustration that criteria other than participation are used, derived from power held by sections of the community or state.)

The question of participation should focus on how children can participate. Here the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratified by the UK government in 1991, offers a lead. Article 12 specifies the right of the child to express an opinion and have that opinion taken into account in all matters affecting the child - potentially a large remit. The CRC actually offers a set of rights which could be seen as forming the basis of the relationship between children under 18 years and the state - in effect laying out the nature of citizenship for children. The problem in activating that relationship is one of power and the enforcement of those rights even in states where the CRC is ratified. The CRC is accepted by the UK government in name: there have been strong criticisms of the government's performance in implementing the Convention, by the UN Committee in 1995, which led to a xenophobic media response.

Because of their powerlessness, children require particular provision that will enable them to participate. This is the responsibility of the state or community, to provide and to ensure that formats and methods exist to enable children's participation and take account of their views in decision making at all levels. Potential areas of participation and decision-making are outlined by Willshaw (1996, p. 31) (among others), and include education, planning, traffic. The CRC effectively recognises the special qualities of childhood and the early biological development that may initially prevent suffrage and the exercise of any right to vote, but not prevent the right to participate commensurate with age and ability. Given the increasing lack of adult participation, the development of participation practice for children might offer practical benefits, for example, that their engagement with state and social milieu might continue after attaining adulthood.

Citizenship should not be seen as a generous gift from adults to be withheld, restructured or altered at will for children and young people, but rather as a set of rights which, because of the powerless position of children, require enforcement by adults. The location of power might be related to the origin of those rights. Turner's 1990 discussion is here interesting. He indicates a division whereby rights can come from above or from below: from above would mean those in power (such as the king, or here adults) handing out what are essentially a few privileges. From below would mean the gaining of rights as an outcome of a radical struggle

by the powerless. This might also be expressed as active and passive: the active being the struggle from below to seize rights, the passive being the acceptance of what is given from above. Here, as always, the case of children and young people offers a perspective apparently crossing these categories. The CRC came from above (from adults), but rather than being a selection of privileges, is the recognition of a set of rights - including rights to survival and non-discrimination - which correlate with elements of citizenship.

The problem is that these rights are not generally respected in law, in institutional, family or individual practice. For example, violence against children is still permitted, through a culture that approves of 'smacking' and parental or adult rights: beatings with implements are referred to in the context of the 'smacking debate': children's rights have generally not been upheld and are little discussed except sarcastically. This further weakens the situation of young people.

Conclusion

The development of children's rights has been compared to the struggle for women's rights: similarly the gendering of citizenship has been questioned (Walby 1994). The role and status of children in the past was open to question, whether seen as adult possessions or independent beings, and such varied representations continue - as where children are thought to be born evil, or require to be shut away through curfew. Their rights are tokenistically nodded towards, and ignored where possible. The right of children's participation, and influence over decision-making might alter some of these outcomes. As a minority, children are in similar circumstances to other groups with minimal participation, such as disabled people, in having their needs passed by. Children are not a homogenous entity and other social groups and identities cross-cut them as a whole, which points to the need to ensure the participation of all children in terms of citizenship.

An examination of citizenship with regard to children seems to offer another frame for the question of citizenship and youth. The key element for both youth and children can be seen as participation, and engagement with decision-making: without such involvement, children and young people are excluded. Exhortations for them to act responsibly should be seen in light of the failure of the state or community to fulfil its responsibilities to enable the participation of children and young people. The current location of power is evident, and is central to the reality of citizenship. Changes are taking place, with more local authorities interested in developing the participation of children and young people, especially their contribution to decision-making. These changes create a tension in the lives of children and young people in regard to citizenship: in one direction the encouragement of government and local authority to participate dragging down the age of involvement, whilst other policies raise the age of dependency. The re-structuring of citizenship for young people, a discrimination on grounds of age, is more easily possible because the rights of those even younger are ignored, and children's citizenship status is not considered nor debated. As France (1996, p. 41) suggests, 'it is important that

both the meaning and the impact of citizenship for the young is investigated in more depth': such investigations must also specifically include children, and be conducted in the context of children's rights.

Andrew West is Research and Development Officer with Save the Children in England. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not represent the position of Save the Children.

Note

1 This is intended as a working paper to develop debate. Contested terms such as 'community' (or even 'state') and 'participation' cannot be explored here presently.

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WORKING SPACE

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

Children and Young People as Carers

SYLVIA HEAL

Introduction

Carers National Association (CNA) is the leading organisation representing the needs and view of the nations 6.8 million carers. It aims to provide recognition, support and advice to all carers and to lobby government at a national and local level on their behalf. The Association first began to initiate work on young carers in the late 1980s when together with other professionals, research was carried out in Tameside, Greater Manchester, and Sandwell in the West Midlands. In 1990 CNA received funding from the Department of Health for a two year project to gather research, influence policy, raise awareness among professionals of the issues and to encourage and support local development work. This is now part of the ongoing work of CNA for which I have responsibility nationally.

Who are young carers?

You just can't picture a child picking an adult up, getting them on a stair lift, taking them up and bathing them. You can't picture it. And if you can't picture it, it doesn't happen. (Young Carer, Sefton).

When that comment was made during a Channel 4 News item in May 1993 most people could not believe that children undertook such responsibilities. The reality is that many children and young people do provide care for their parents, siblings or grandparents who have an illness, a physical or mental disability, or are affected by substance use. They may be the sole or primary carer or act as a secondary carer when giving assistance to an able adult in the house. Hence the term 'young carer' has been used to describe the children and young people who undertake this responsibility.

There is no typical young carer. They may be living in a lone parent household caring for their mother with Multiple Sclerosis, living in a two parent family but still providing support, helping to care for a parent with mental health problems, living in a family where both parents are disabled, or contributing to the care of a brother or sister with a disability. Young carers can come from any social background and may live anywhere in the country. Children from black and minority ethnic communities may encounter extra pressures. They may be asked to interpret for the person they look after. Service provision may not meet differing cultural needs.

There are no official statistics to indicate the scale of the issue. Carers National Association continues to urge the Department of Health to obtain this information through the General Household survey.

The Health Services Management Unit at Manchester University evaluated the first three Young Carer Projects in March 1995 and estimated the figure between 15,000 and 40,000 young carers nationally. Other estimates put the figure much higher at 212,000 (Parker 1992). It is difficult to obtain accurate figures because of the hidden nature of caring. Young carers and their parents are often silent about the extent of caring through fear of separation, guilt, pride and a desire to 'keep it in the family'. In lone parent families this fear can be increased.

I was so afraid that someone would find out what they were doing it reached the stage where I didn't dare ask for help in case they took them away so we just carried on. (Care receiver, Mother).

The children are often embarrassed about their parents illness, (particularly when there is a mental health or drug or alcohol related problem) and some of the caring tasks they undertake. Most young people are keen to be like their peers and will go to great lengths to conceal anything which makes them 'different'.

I don't want people at school to know what he's like. (Young carer aged 14).

Identification of young carers from black and minority ethnic communities can be even more difficult due to differing racial, cultural and religious needs. A survey of black and ethnic minority children in secondary schools in Hammersmith and Fulham in March 1996 revealed 19% were carers. Significantly no boys completed the questionnaire. According to the researcher Mandana Hendessi this identifies the urgent need for education projects to destigmatise caring.

What Tasks do Young Carers Perform?

The tasks and caring responsibilities young people undertake are wide ranging including practical and emotional support. They will vary according to the illness or disability of the care recipient. Research by Dearden and Becker (Young Carers The Facts 1995) showed that:

- 60% of the care recipients had a problem with their physical health,
- 29% of the care recipients had mental health problems.

Practical tasks are likely to include shopping, cooking and cleaning, budgeting and caring for younger siblings. Some young carers provide personal and intimate care such as toileting, washing and dressing their relative. This can cause embarrassment for both the parent and the child. Some children ensure parents take medication or administer injections. Young carers feel a deep sense of responsibility for the person they care for. They have often been described as 'permanently worried children'.

I get frightened when I hear a bump in the night. It might be Mum falling over. (Young carer).

Some young carers may also be coping with the emotional stress of knowing they are about to lose a parent with a terminal illness.

What are the Effects of Caring?

It is widely recognised that childhood is an important stage in a person's development. For many children growing up can be done in 'fits and starts'. At one time they can be

very responsible and mature and at another being more irresponsible and childish. The impact of caring on children will of course vary depending on the level and extent of their caring responsibilities and family circumstances.

I didn't used to talk about it. I didn't want anyone knowing our business. I still don't, but I've grown up a lot, I've had to. You've got to. (Young Carer Loughborough).

Physical and mental health problems can be caused by the need to lift their parent, push a wheelchair, they may have disturbed sleep patterns and worry about their relatives illness. At times they are likely to experience resentment and anger at the person they are caring for and then guilt for these feelings. The opportunity to participate in after school activities, obtain a Saturday job, or meet friends socially may be restricted. For some young carers, school has been described as a 'nice place to be' and despite their commitments they work hard and gain good results. For others, tiredness, lateness, poor concentration or absenteeism means limited education and employment opportunities.

Parents who rely on their children for care and support are concerned about the impact caring has on them, but may see no alternative because they fear the reaction of professionals. Many of the enquiries we receive at Carers National Association are for parents who are anxious to know if there is any support for young carers in their area.

What do Young Carers Need?

Young carers should be able to make informed choices about their situation with support and alternatives. Because they love their relative, many will want to continue to offer care and support but may prefer not to undertake some of the more personal and intimate tasks and would appreciate the opportunity sometimes to have time to themselves.

The young people say they would like:

- Someone to talk to who will listen and believe them
- Recognition of their role as a carer
- Information about their relatives illness or disability, about practical assistance and support and how to access them
- The opportunity to meet other young people who are caring.

How can Current Legislation Help?

There is no legislation that refers specifically to young carers however there is legislation which can be used to access services and support for young people who are carers. The Children Act places specific responsibilities upon Social Services Departments in respect of 'children in need'. Section 17(10) of The Children Act 1989 states that a child shall be taken to be 'in need' if:

he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority.

Given this definition, in many cases children and young people who have the responsibility of caring for someone can be considered as 'children in need'. The reality is that for many Social Service Departments, their child protection responsibilities consumes most of their budget and little money is left for general welfare and preventative work. The NHS & Community Care Act placed the emphasis on the provision of 'seamless care in the community'. The Act relates primarily to adult services but if it can be proved that services provided would benefit the person being cared for, then young carers can access services through this Act. Examples may be where home care, meals on wheels or respite care are beneficial to the cared for, but also relieve the young carer of their caring responsibilities.

There has tended to be a lack of clarity between Social Services providers regarding provision for young carers. This has largely been because adults and childrens services each claimed that young carers were the others responsibility. Consequently children who were caring 'slipped through the net'. Carers National Association were instrumental in arranging a meeting which resulted in the letter from the Chief Inspector of Social Work, Sir Herbert Laming which was sent to all Directors of Social Work in England (April 1995). The letter reminded local authorities of the relevant legislation which could be used to provide support and services to young carers and their families.

*The Children Act (1989) and the NHS & Community Care Act (1989) together provide the necessary powers and duties of local authorities to meet the needs of young carers. Where the disabled person is a parent, it is essential that the community care assessment focuses on the family and considers how to support the parent and recognise the needs of any young carers. **Services for the family can be provided under children's or adult legislation.***

This was an important point because for the first time in any policy document young carers needs were being recognised. It was also significant because it emphasised the need for joint and collaborative working between adult and childrens services. The letter also referred to the importance of involving health and education services. Clearly it is important that there is a reference to children who care in both Childrens Services Plans and Community Care Plans if they and their families are to receive support from Social Services departments. Recognition of them and provision of services must be built into future plans.

The Carers (Recognition & Services) Act was implemented in April 1996. Under this Act a carer, upon request, is entitled to an assessment when a local authority is carrying out an assessment of the person being cared for under the NHS & Community Care Act or the Children Act. During the process of the Bill young carers visited the House of Commons to meet Malcolm Wicks MP, who promoted the Bill, and the then Minister of Community Care, John Bowis MP. The impact of meeting these young people, some of whom were undertaking considerable caring responsibilities, appeared to have a profound impact, particularly on the minister, who suddenly announced at committee stage that the Bill would include carers under the age of 18. The Carers Act has helped ensure that carers of all ages are high on the agenda of local authority Social Service departments as they prepare assessment policies.

There is also scope for recognising the rights of young carers through international agreements. In December 1991 the British Government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention provides a set of minimum standards relating to children which refer to the right to develop through play, education and health care.

For many young carers many of these rights will be denied through the constraints on their time imposed by the performance of caring tasks. We must remember that children who care are children first and as adults we have a responsibility to ensure that all children have the opportunity to develop fully.

Children are our future - if we don't care for them how can they feel positive about themselves in their adult lives? Children need to have a childhood and not take adult responsibilities before their time.... (Assistant Director of Social Services. About Young Carers, Published by CNA)

Aldridge and Becker (Children Who Care, 1993) developed this notion of rights and produced a list of rights specifically for young carers. The list includes:

- the right to self determination and choice
- the right to be heard, listened to and believed
- the right to education
- the right to practical help and support, including respite care
- the right to stop caring

These rights, and the support that should follow, should be seen as complementary to the rights that parents who are disabled campaign for. The development of policy and legislation are crucial ingredients in the provision of services and support to families where children are carers. However it is also important that Social Services promote a more friendly and positive image if parents with disabilities are to feel confident about approaching them.

Conclusion

When the young carer from Merseyside made the remark quoted at the beginning of the article, there was little awareness of the issue and young carers were a group who had been overlooked. Campaigning, lobbying, research, publications and the development of local projects have helped ensure that many more professionals are now aware of young carers existence and needs. Information is available to help people identify where these young people are and what help they and their families need. Awareness raising in schools, articles in teenage magazines, programmes on childrens television and the work of local projects have enabled young people and their families to recognise themselves as carers. Many young carers and former young carers have made significant contributions at conferences, in the literature and on radio or television to our understanding of the issues.

In 1992 the first three young carer projects were established, funded by the then Mersey Regional Health Authority. The growth of local support has been phenomenal.

There are now over 80 places where there is either a project or a designated worker who provide recognition, advocacy and support for young people who care.

It is clear that Social Services have a responsibility to children who care and their families which will involve staff in adult and children's services. But it is also clear that professionals in health and education need an awareness of the issues. Reference to young carers should be a part of their training to enable them to develop appropriate skills and knowledge.

There is a need to ensure that our mainstream services can accommodate the needs of young carers and their families and to offer specialist help when that is necessary. (Denise Platt Association of Metropolitan Authorities).

This is an issue for many agencies in the statutory and voluntary sector. Cooperation and collaboration between agencies is essential if young carers are not to continue falling 'through the net'. We need to examine whether there are existing structures in place that can facilitate interagency working. For too long we have ignored the contribution and views of children in our society. In the past we have failed many young people who cared. We must continue to find ways of recognising young carers, and with their help, develop sensitive and appropriate services to support them

Sylvia Heal, National Young Carers Officer, Carers National Association.

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Youth Cultures : A Cross-Cultural Perspective
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MIKE WAITE

Youth Cultures is shaped by the determination of its editors that the discipline of anthropology should increasingly contribute to the study of youth culture. This means that useful questions with which to read this book are : what can *anthropology* offer which is distinctive? And what limitations does anthropology show up in familiar analyses of youth culture?

The book does not address these questions satisfactorily, and this reviewer was frustrated by a sometimes crude counter-position of anthropology to other disciplines, particularly to sociology. This problem is underlined by a one-dimensional characterisation of work by the so-called 'Birmingham School' of writers which formed around the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in the seventies.

Claims for the benefits of anthropological studies made by the editors and key contributors include the fact that they have value because they are ethnographically based. Amit-Talai and Wulff also point out that the book's contributors have a consistent theoretical concern to show how young people are active agents in the construction of the meanings and symbolic forms which make up their cultures. Wulff's introductory chapter asserts that the distinguishing mark of anthropologists is that they 'deal with living people in the midst of the flux of the complexities of life'.

Although anthropology can obviously generate useful, interesting and original work - examples of which are included in this book - it seems excessive to back up this fact by implying that it is the *only* discipline which can use ethnography, stress agency on the part of young people, and connect with people in their real lives. Such anthropological arrogance is carried further by weak and caricatured polemic against studies based in sociology. It is suggested that the CCCS school focuses only on 'exotic' moments of resistance and deviance, rather than on more 'ordinary' youth. The school is also criticised for being long on theoretical analysis, whilst having produced only short and 'insufficient' empirical studies. Such points mistakenly lump together the actually quite varied work of CCCS scholars, and can only be asserted on the basis of a *partial* reading of the early work in the tradition. A broader criticism is that Wulff's introduction sometimes conflates sociological approaches in general with a particular - and wrong - perspective on *socialisation*, through which young people tend to be viewed as 'incomplete adults ... who know less than adults, as opposed to knowing something else that has to do with their particular situation'.

REVIEWS

Looking in the text for reasons behind the editors' arguments, this reviewer came across a couple of indications that their counter-position of anthropology to other disciplines has to do with debates which have been taking place within anthropology. Those anthropologists who want to focus attention on questions of culture are seeking to win allies amongst their colleagues by asserting the particular contribution they believe the discipline can make.

There is also a debate going on about the location and meaning of 'culture'. Virginia Caputo's chapter on 'anthropology's silent "others"' illustrates this, and most of those readers of this journal prepared to tolerate her prose style will sympathise with her argument that 'the social spaces of difference are important because these sites are constituted by the presence and activity of people whose voices continue to be silenced ... culture, portrayed in terms of a unified system of meaning, privileges the voice of the powerful ... cultural meanings that may be held by the groups that oppose dominant interpretations continue to be excluded in order to uphold this representation of culture'.

Such values lie behind the choice of subject matter made by most contributors to *Youth Cultures*. An advantage of the late arrival of these anthropologists in the field of youth studies is that they can avoid the focus on white males taken by sociological pioneers. So here we find material on rai music in Algeria, lower class young men of Surinamese origin in Amsterdam, friendships between teenage girls of different racial backgrounds in London, and the handling of various conflicts and confluences between 'tradition' and 'modernity' by young people in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Some of the time, some of these chapters move sufficiently beyond theoretical self-absorption to allow extended discussion of young peoples' lives. Those involved professionally with young people (in non-academic settings) and other readers with an interest in youth cultures may be attracted to this book by these passages. But its overall tone will leave them frustrated. It stands as evidence that the artificial boundaries of 'disciplines' constructed and policed by institutions and grant making bodies sometimes stand in the way of writers and researchers learning, understanding and communicating as well as they might if work across such boundaries was valued more than work within them.

Mike Waite is a community development worker in Lancashire.

Sarah Irwin

Rights of Passage:**Social Change and the Transition from Youth to Adulthood**

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PHIL MIZEN

REVIEWS

The long-standing enthusiasm for conceptualising 'youth as transition' has re-emerged in recent years as an increasingly influential starting point for the analysis of young people's contemporary social lives. Underpinned by the idea of the 'life-course', whereby individual biographies are given historical and social meaning according to age-related institutional arrangements, the most recent version of 'youth as transition' seeks to capture the movement into adulthood as a socially constructed process of adjustment and change. More specifically, through the progressive erosion of the relations of dependency characteristic of childhood, 'youth as transition' has come to depict that phase of the life-course through which young people obtain the economic, cultural and political resources necessary for a certain level of adult independence.

Much of the appeal of this approach stems from its apparent ability to capture the peculiar impact of economic and social restructuring on the lives of the young. It stresses that, as little as 20 years ago, the twin pillars generally regarded as marking the end of adolescence were relatively unproblematic events. Jobs were plentiful and the age of marriage and parenthood was in long-term and steady decline. Yet within the space of little more than 20 years the situation altered radically as jobs for school leavers either disappeared or changed out of all recognition, and benefits were withdrawn or severely restricted. Alongside this, young people displayed less ability to leave home, marriage appeared to become a less attractive way of developing long-term relationships, families became less nuclear and parenting took place both later and with fewer children. Not only did the experience of these new youthful transitions seem a long way from those of earlier generations, but they appeared both longer and more problematic to complete.

This lengthening of youthful transitions and the consequent deferral of adult independence provides the focus of Sarah Irwin's book, although she retains a degree of critical distance from a literature which is often too readily endorsed. More specifically, Irwin begins by placing centre-stage the little acknowledged reductionist implications of the 'youth as transition' approach. Simply put, the successful completion of youthful transition is seen to depend upon the availability of waged labour. With the onset of unemployment and economic retrenchment, employment opportunities for young adults have disappeared with the consequence that marriage and independent families are no longer affordable. In contrast, Irwin's own thesis suggests that emphasis on production needs to be re-integrated with an appreciation of the importance of reproduction, via the family, in

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structuring youthful transitions. For Irwin, the family provides both a resource and a set of obligations essential to understanding youth. For youthful dependence to be feasible, the family must be sufficiently resourced to support a non-productive member, yet before a young person can achieve a family of their own they must generate a sufficient level of resource before the cycle of parenting, with its own obligations, can begin again. An appreciation of the changing organisation of family structures and the different modes of contributions and obligation this entails, is therefore essential to any understanding of the changing nature and experience of youth.

To support this claim, Irwin embarks upon a detailed empirical investigation of long-term trends in youthful transitions, particularly through the formation of new families. This includes an interesting review of the changing demography of adolescence and family formation over the past century and an informative analysis of the more recent changes to the structure of young people's pay. Her contention is that during the early 1970s (and before the austerity of the 1980s set in) the reversal of the long-term trend towards earlier marriage and parenthood coincided with significant changes in the gender and age-related structure of earnings. In particular, the earnings of young women relative to young men improved, while the earnings of young men relative to adult men declined. Her claim is that, in the context of the family's increasing ability to support dependents for longer-periods across the 20th century, the deferral of household formation and parenting over the past 25 years has been the result of the increasing importance of young women's wages in providing the standard of living that new families anticipate. This is further elaborated through an investigation of the significance of 'lifestyles' on orientations and occupational choice, although the relevance of the chapter on age-related distributive justice to her argument is far less clear.

Irwin's book should therefore be of interest to a specialist readership, although its wider interest remains less certain. The clarity of argument does suffer at times from an arid presentation and overly-dense prose, however. This is a pity because the demographic and wage data is particularly interesting, despite resting a little incongruously alongside the use of her own interview data to illustrate some of the more general points. A more significant reservation, however, is whether Irwin succeeds in freeing the youth as transition thesis from its economism. Even taking into consideration her emphasis on the family as a structure of resources and obligations, the reader is still left with the feeling that, whether mediated by the family or not, the idea of youth as transition is still basically economic.

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*B.M. Deakin***The Youth Labour Market in Britain, The Role of Intervention**

Cambridge University Press 1996

ISBN 0 521 55328 8 (hbk)

£35.00

pp 223

PATRICK AINLEY**REVIEWS**

The title of this book promises an overview of the essential economic background to youth policy. Moreover, Bob Deakin is a 'Man Whose Name Is Known', as they say in New Guinea. A stalwart of Cambridge University's Department of Applied Economics, he has tended with Bob Rowthorne and others the sacred flame of the old believers in Keynes throughout the dank winter of new monetarist orthodoxy.

These two considerations were enough to overcome my usual reluctance to write a review without remuneration and embark upon this study, whose purpose announces itself as 'to examine and assess the role of intervention by government in the youth labour market in Britain'.

The approach is historical and analytic. After an ominously economic introduction that produces an equation in which dead labour (capital) is balanced with living labour (human capital) to calculate the effects of state interventions in the youth labour market, Deakin recounts the demographics which ultimately determine the supply of youth labour. He draws attention to the often neglected fact that the second baby boom since 1945 peaked in 1983 and projects falling supply into the future thereafter.

Deakin then traces the history of vocational education and training from 1100 to 1973. This is an excellent long chapter, almost worth buying the book for. Unlike even the best histories of education, such as Andy Green's cross-continental comparisons or Brian Simon's masterly trilogy, this is not an account restricted to schooling but uncovers the lost outlines of technical learning outwith institutional provision.

It leads Deakin to the meat of his book when the post-war boom ended and state intervention in the youth market really began - though, like Sheldrake and Vickerstaff's history of industrial training, he audits also the exceptional measures undertaken in two world wars. Many a forgotten work experience/preparation/subsidy scheme is then reviewed en route to what Deakin's next chapter describes as 'The development of the modern system of youth training'.

System? This gives one pause. What system?! System is surely too strong a word for the shambles Sir Ron Dearing has tried to cobble together in his latest review! Yet Deakin perceives a 'policy learning process' in the confused switching from what Dan Finn in 1987 called 'Training Without Jobs' to today's 'Education Without Jobs' as answers to the crisis of permanent youth unemployment.

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Yet this is surely too generous a description of the Departmental struggles and in-fighting by factions of the Tory Party that have resulted - after thirty years of intervention in education and training - in a learning policy that takes us back to the square one of tripartism. Albeit that the divisions between A-levels, GNVQs and NVQs confirmed by Dearing, represent a tertiary rather than a secondary tripartism.

Deakin does not remark, for instance, on the peculiarity of the oxymoronic modern apprenticeships, resuscitated after twenty years' attack upon the 'inflexibilities' and 'time-serving' of traditional industrial training. Similarly, there is no consideration of the effects of ending benefits for 16-18 year olds, still less the 1985 national school students' strike against compulsory YTS.

Nor does the devolution of training to structurally redundant TECs and LECs strike Deakin as symptomatic of the switch from two decades imitating the German dual system to a sudden embrace of North American norms of mass further and higher continuing education. Let alone the latest moves from welfare to workfare in the shift from a Corporate to a Contracting State.

But then, Deakin operates in a strange time-warped world of human capital theory. This gave him that early-warning light of an equation to measure the effect of government intervention and dismiss the critics of manpower policy, such as myself and Mark Corney in our history of the Manpower Services Commission.

We are lucky to be so summarily dismissed; Brendan Evans' successor account of 'The Politics of the Training Market' is passed over in silence. Extraordinarily, so too is Ashton, Maguire and Spilsbury's pioneering investigation of the implications for youth of 'Restructuring the Labour Market'. Critics like Hodgkinson, Finn, Benn and Fairley are also ignored, but so too is Gilbert Jessup's evangelistic advocacy of the competency approach derived from the MSC's Occupational Training Families. Ken Robert's summary estimation that 'Beneath the mirage of wider opportunities, descent into unemployment was the main career trajectory created by trends in the 1980's' is not considered.

Such omissions are disturbing indications of failure to communicate between on the one hand, those like Deakin to whom human capital theory still makes sense and, on the other, those who talk in terms of cultural capital. The function of the latter, wrote Bourdieu, is 'to help sustain economic power by enabling it to present itself as something politically neutral'. Deakin's acceptance of human capital as politically neutral vitiates his whole assessment of the role of intervention in the youth labour market in Britain.

Patrick Ainley is author of 'Degrees of Difference, higher education in the 1990s' (Lawrence and Wishart 1994), 'Class and Skill' (Cassell 1993) and co-author with Mark Corney of 'The Rise and Fall of the MSC' (Cassell 1990)

Robert L. Hampton, Pamela Jenkins and Thomas P. Gullotta (eds.)

Issues in Children's and Families' Lives : Preventing Violence In America

Sage Publications, Inc. 1996

ISBN 7619 0041 1

£18.95 (pbk)

£36.95 (hbk)

pp 328

Joseph A. Durlak

School-Based Prevention Programs for Children and Adolescents

Sage Publications, Inc. 1996

ISBN 8039 5632 0

£13.95 (pbk)

£29.50 (hbk)

pp 128

KAREN HAGAN

The two books provide a frightening picture of the level of violence in America, especially worrying when the impact is so clearly seen in the young. There is a warning to the U.K. in the figures of increasing social unrest and an indication of ways to avoid catastrophe - if it has not already happened. The focus of the books is positive, around prevention and cure at early stages (probably one reason why they look so much at the youth element). They both manage to hit home the seriousness and immediacy of the problem without scaremongering and quickly use the facts to move into examining programmes of habilitation or prevention.

Preventing Violence in America starts off with a gentle review of how past literature gives some insight into the range of violence that exists and its historical development. Towards the latter stages of the book it returns to literature and media to update the reader and round off this discussion. There is a social-historical account of the context of violence through causes - dependence, alcohol abuse and lack of morality through to newer ideas of environmental stress, lack of education and mental instability. It comments on societies coping strategies of 'blaming the victim' and setting the perpetrator aside from the rest of society as 'the other'.

The editors provide a useful base section on the theoretical perspectives, from the biological medical model to sociological perspectives. I would have liked more of this in detail and some further application (though there are some relevant illustrations), especially of systems theory. Better explanation of Straus and Gelles 1990 study would outline the controversial methodology and how they reached their conclusions.

Throughout, a vast array of appropriate and related research is cited - making this a very useful book for cross referencing! Case studies lighten and

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illustrate how domestic and community violence overlap - an area for which there is little research. What may have been interesting to add to this discussion would have been the actual views of the perpetrators and victims. I was also aware at times that there was a basic debate over the term victim - in many instances people now prefer to be known as survivors. However this is really quite an academic collation of information and the lack of such familiarity with the ground level considerations of the subject is fairly common. Further areas to add could include an analysis of the different types of violent crime and an exploration of the criminal justice system as exercised in the courts. Perhaps this is more appropriate for another piece of work and it is more to the credit of the creators that they left me with a renewed interest in the issues and questions to follow on with.

Chapter 4 - Violence in communities of colour- perhaps had the least relation to the U.K., though this could be just evidence of my own naiveté. It appears that the social make-up, systems and structures in these regards have significant differences. This was an interesting account but I felt it was so vast it could have constituted another book in its own right. The balance of cultural differences and socio-economics was recognised as a problem, as were the effects of confounding variables, but they were not, and could not, be examined in the proper depth they deserved. The main point of use was that culturally sensitive prevention and intervention is the way forward.

Martin Bloom's section on resilience was a welcome look at the 'exception that proves the rule'. Werner's 'Protective Factors' e.g. positive family context was a way into current thinking into primary prevention, protection and promotion. Biological and social influences are integrated with cognitive processing to build up a picture of strengths for resilience. The next chapter adds to resilience by citing Carver's work on religion as supportive/motivating and guiding/controlling. This is more of a philosophical discussion but it gives scant attention to the possible negative impacts of religion.

The overview of media impact, however, is much more balanced. The interactive model (Anderson and Meyer 1988) provides depth and again relates to earlier chapters on predisposing factors. Drug abuse is covered with a degree of thoughtfulness, the writer displaying the complicated inter-relatedness of problems. Unfortunately, the public health model for education and training in violence prevention, while it is an inventive adaptation from the medical model, risks oversimplification of the inter-connections and puts too much power in the professionals. The ecological model for intervention concentrates on the individual through to the family and community/societal level with education and social development approaches. This has definite support but the final, important point, is that basic cultural and ideological changes are needed.

Durlak's book follows on with many of the basic ideas presented in *Preventing Violence in America*, though less complex, it more clearly defines basic concepts and focuses more specifically on the young in schools. It takes a mental health approach with maladaptation and its suggestions are on prevention of emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Again it reviews the background literature (though not in the same depth) and highlights the problem. It works, comprehensively through all levels of prevention; primary - looks at person centred approaches etc. - secondary and tertiary. I would have preferred to see these linked more closely with theoretical bases e.g. sociological and psychological models of maladjustment and therapy, and I found some of the approaches a little old fashioned i.e. deviance is negative and maladjusted. I was a little surprised to find health education and learning disabilities treated as maladaptation but accept the challenge since apparently 'the best single prediction of academic performance ... is the families socio-economic level'.

This book also advocates the use of a multi-level approach, including parental co-operation as well as school and community based programmes.

Karen Hagan, *Social Worker and Open University Tutor.*

Lorraine Green

Policing Places with Drug Problems

Sage Publications (1996)

SUZANNA KNIGHT

Green's book primarily evaluates a place-oriented drug control strategy adopted by the Oakland Police Department, California, namely the Specialised Multi-Agency Response Team (SMART) programme. The SMART programme aims to reduce drug nuisance problems associated with specific areas such as businesses, homes and rented property. Its primary tactic is to compel non offending people, such as landlords and property owners to improve the fabric of areas with drug nuisance problems, by enforcing civil laws, and thereby reduce or eradicate the nuisance. The so-called SMART sites are selected by a designated police officer after an area has experienced emergency calls, a number of narcotic arrests, or a request from a community group. Green evaluates the impact of SMART intervention at the 321 sites selected during 1991 using these three criteria.

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The SMART approach, with its emphasis on targeting hotspots and blocking criminal opportunity, is presented as a complimentary addition to traditional strategies of drug control centred around undercover operations and arresting perpetrators. Whilst evaluation is the primary impetus of the book, Green attempts to provide a theoretical underpinning to the SMART programme to promote crime prevention as a method for solving crime.

It is at this point flaws in Green's analysis emerge. In presenting a case for the benefits crime prevention has for reducing crime, two sets of themes are converged. First, although reducing drug *nuisance* problems is the main aim of the Oakland SMART programme, Green converges drug nuisance problems with drug problems generally. As a result, instead of perceiving drug nuisance activity as one aspect of the drug problem, it is presented as the whole problem. Thus, the results of the evaluation of the SMART programme are assumed to support the idea that place based interventions can help to solve narcotic crime problems generally. In evaluating the impact of SMART intervention, however, no account is taken of other aspects of drug abuse, much of which is less visible to the non-drug taking population, such as the crime committed by addicts to fund their habits, the human cost of addiction and violence used by dealers to protect their markets. Without a discussion of the dynamics of drug abuse and its many permutations, we are unable to test the inference that SMART intervention does indeed move beyond improving the physical appearance of the designated sites and reducing nuisance calls and helps alleviate drug problems generally. All we are able to deduce from the results is that SMART intervention is ultimately successful as far as the Oakland Police Department is concerned, if the number of personnel hours spent at a particular area is reduced or eliminated. Important though this may be, it tells us little about whether actual drug abuse is diminishing. Moreover, it offers no insight into the *causes* of drug abuse and places a well-worn emphasis on working class drug crime, thereby ignoring significant middle class drug abuse.

Second, in attempting to provide the SMART approach with a theoretical underpinning, Green converges work from a number of theorists to argue that 'situations and circumstances cause crime opportunities' (p 17). She further refers to '*situations* causing specific crime problems' (p 16), and '*conditions* that cause places to experience high levels of crime activity'. (p 21) Green draws from research into how risks and benefits are weighed by burglars, shoplifters, muggers and bank and commercial robbers and by a sleight of hand suggests this indicates that the environment *causes* crime. This notion is then subsumed as the theoretical basis of the SMART programme. Further evidence is supplied by Cohen and Felson's routine activities theory, which Green suggests, demonstrates that increases in residential burglary in the United States between 1960 and 1970 were the result of the increasing proportion of empty homes in the day (due to more single-person households and greater female participation in the labour market). It is a theoretical leap to suggest these two variables,

the availability of empty homes and increases in burglary, have a causal link. It is equally valid to suggest that both may have been reflective of wider economic changes at that time. To reduce complex socio-economic and psychological motives of people who decide to commit burglary solely to the availability of an empty house seems at best simplistic. Opportunity may be a factor in deciding which house to burgle, but not necessarily the decision to commit burglary itself.

Wilson and Kelling's 'broken windows' thesis is used as further evidence to support the idea that environment has a causal effect on crime. On the basis of their thesis, that vandals can occur when an environment signals an absence of concern, Green proposes that criminal behaviour is not a product of a fixed predisposition but located at the point where individual perceptions and crime opportunities intersect (p18).

However, the dynamics of vandalism, burglary and drug abuse are very different, arguably making the motivational dispositions of individual perpetrators incommensurate and therefore incomparable. To converge theoretical positions in an effort to evidence an argument in this way is to risk inaccuracies. For example, it may be possible to argue that vandalism is a product of momentary convergence of opportunity and perception, but it is harder to assert that the behaviour of drug addicts is not part of a fixed disposition.

In conclusion, she presents convincing evidence that environmental changes can have an impact on certain types of crime. However, the question of what is actually being achieved by the implementation of such a programme needs further analysis. To achieve this, a more rigorous delineation of the crime problem and which aspects of it are most susceptible to environmental management may be required.

Suzanna Knight, *Serving Police Officer with Northumbria Police.*

Richard J. Altenbaugh; David E. Engel & Don T. Martin
Caring for Kids: A Critical Study of Urban School Leavers
The Falmer Press
ISBN 0 7507 0193 5
pp 215

GWENDA RHIAN JONES

This book deals with a growing and deep-seated problem concerning young people, that of early school leaving in the United States. By focusing upon students' perceptions of schooling, the author seeks to gain an understanding of the school leaving process. It is maintained that the problem transcends social class, gender, race and ethnicity, and recent school reforms, it is suggested, may even 'exacerbate' rather than 'ameliorate' the problem.

Structured into three parts, the first section of the book provides a contextual framework and an introduction to the history of the school leaving process and a historical, economic and social overview of the Pittsburgh school system. The second concentrates on student perceptions of schooling in Pittsburgh, why they leave and further return, their views on school personnel, vice principals and teachers. The final section concludes by analysing the research findings and offers some policy recommendations.

Definitions, causes and solutions to the problem of school leaving, according to the author, have at times confused the issue. Different states vary in their definition of a 'dropout' and their recording procedures. In addition, too many have neglected the other side of the issue, i.e. the number of students returning to education, which according to the author represented an oversight. Causes and solutions differ as well, which range from blaming student background and others solely on the school structure. The author follows Wehlage (1989) in his use of the term 'school leaver', which effectively avoids the negative implications associated with 'dropout'. Drawing upon a relatively small sample, of a hundred 'dropbacks', predominately urban minority students, between 1986 and 1994, the author explores school leaving and resumption experiences, from 'their own frames of references' (p15).

Emphasis in chapter two is placed on the conflict of authority over children's welfare, between compulsory education and the rights of the family; followed by an examination of the context of the research approach in chapter three. Students' consistently described non-traditional family structures, 76% of them lived with one parent. These students according to the author were from highly distressed economic backgrounds and families, which were unable to help their children. However, the author notes that this did not 'in itself cause students to leave school... it also may not totally mitigate that experience' (p58). Moreover, schools rarely addressed students' educational and social needs.

Limited and predictable is the author's chapters on the schooling factors and school knowledge. The emphasis on students' views about the impersonal approach, the estrangement and unfriendliness of large schools is somewhat predictable of student alienation. The violence, drug abuse, fighting, the formal curriculum as dreary and uncreative etc. is not measured. Consequently, the research appears too general and fleeting. This could have easily been avoided by simply working out how many of those interviewed said what they did. This would add weight and credence to the students' responses. The reasons for leaving school early (chapter seven and eight) do not suggest anything new in terms of research findings, other than those returning to education are included in the analysis.

Public schools therefore, according to the author, appear inflexible and static in the light of school reforms, whilst students' needs and society demands have changed. A 'caring' approach is advocated in chapter nine to deal with early school leavers and a 'profound reformation' (p184) of public schools is called upon to 'create and sustain true learning communities' (p167).

Policy recommendations, inevitably, emphasise child care facilities, volunteer mentor programmes, flexibility and better access to counsellors.

The value of the book is in supplementing available statistical and other literature on the subject matter.

Gwenda Rhian Jones *University of Wales, Bangor.*

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Richard M. Lerner

America's Youth In Crisis: Challenges and Options for Programs and Policies

Sage Publications 1996

ISBN: 0 8039 7069 2

£15.95

pp 147

Leif Roderick Rosenberger

America's Drug War Debacle

Avebury 1996

ISBN: 1 85972 120 6

Wayne S. Wooden

Renegade Kids, Suburban Outlaws

Wadsworth 1995

ISBN: 0 534 24012 7

£16.50

pp 248

TONY JEFFS

These are a fairly depressing collection of texts. You will encounter little in the way of optimism or hope within any of them. Overall the consistent message is that America has acquired a 'youth crisis' of major proportions or as one writer puts it 'a generational timebomb'. *Rosenberger* is convinced America is losing the battle to stem a rising tide of drug and narcotic abuse amongst young people. An economist currently teaching in the U.S. Army War College, he has no faith whatsoever in the capacity of the government to manage the problem via supply reduction programmes. In particular he calls upon the government to abandon a 'war analogy' which merely serves to delude politicians and electorate alike that it is a 'winnable' contest. Initiatives which seek to staunch the inflow of foreign supplies, he argues, ultimately simply serve to stimulate home production of both traditional drugs and new 'smart' chemical alternatives. Therefore the billions of dollars recent administrations lavished on measures to catch the traffickers and dealers have proved largely ineffective. Likewise attempts to curtail production in other countries via diplomacy, aid and investment in policing operations have, he argues, achieved little discernable impact on availability at street level or usage. Not surprisingly given his employer *Rosenberger* wastes few words on decriminalisation as a feasible policy option choosing instead to highlight as a partial solution, programmes which promote 'stronger community based institutions to tackle drug problems' (p 59). Basically what he calls for is investment in medical treatment for hardcore users who wish to 'break the habit' and community education programmes organised at a neighbourhood level. In the end the book reads like a manifesto for traditional youth and community work approaches augmented by an enhanced community role for schools. Reducing demand *Rosenberger* maintains is the policy with a future and this means putting money into educational and commu-

nity programmes which, he argues, have worked but have been starved of secure funding because of the obsession with attacking the supply side. A brief but perhaps important book.

Lerner is even more alarmist than Rosenberger promising his readers that if they do not act now America 'is lost'. Lost because it is losing 'much of its next generation'. The urgent need, he argues, is to control the dangerous discretionary time of young people; to reduce their involvement in the risk-taking activities which it seems more and more young people are indulging in - drinking, smoking, drug-taking and skipping school; and invest in community programmes designed to educate and divert. The statistics of risk and criminal behaviour he cites are disturbing yet, I suspect, anyone who has encountered past examples of the 'popular' literature on youth will be a mite cynical. This sort of panic peddling is definitely not new and invariably fuels the sort of repressive policies you sense Lerner would not opt for. Aside from the journalistic scare-mongering of the opening and closing sections this is however a rather sensible book. First because it makes a powerful case for youth work which is well resourced, longterm and encourages the active participation of the young people. Second because it envisages a crucial role for what Lerner calls the full service school but which is known here as the community school. It recognises the need for school reform to be at the heart of any feasible youth policy. Not needless to say yet more tinkering with the curriculum inserting moral education here and team games there but reforms designed to extend both accountability and access. Reforms which encourage welfare agencies to collaborate and communities to have a genuine voice in shaping education policy. Finally because he re-asserts the need for universities to make a full contribution to community development and renewal. To create programmes of what he terms 'outreach scholarship' designed to generate, transmit, apply and preserve knowledge for the direct benefit of the community. For British readers unfamiliar with the historic role of Land-grant universities and the historic links between scholarship and community development which they were established to foster, this chapter is well worth a read. The policy options and solutions discussed are close to those of Rosenberger. Both convey an encouraging belief in the capacity of workers and community agencies to make a difference which is at odds with the pessimism which the casual reader might perceive as the central message.

Anyone familiar with the opening scene of *Heathers* in which one Heather tours the canteen with a questionnaire encountering in turn each of the school's cultural sub-groups will quickly grasp what *Wooden* is offering. This is a study of the white middle class teenagers living in suburban Los Angeles. You get to meet the 'Jocks and Cheerleaders', 'Surfers', 'Preppies', 'Metal Heads', 'Brains', 'Nerds' and lots more who he encountered in the schools and on the streets. In the main they seem to be a pretty interesting bunch. The text is dotted with loads of disturbing news stories about racism, skinheads, mall-rats, satanists and the like who seem less likeable. You know the author is very worried about what is happening to young people

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in America and what he believes to be a rising tide of delinquency but I did not find the case to be well argued. Nevertheless this is an enjoyable book in which Wooden, like a latter-day Mayhew, introduces us to characters we might never otherwise encounter. C.E.M. Joad once remarked that he could never grasp why books on education were so dull when the activity of teaching was so exciting. I have a similar feeling about the literature on youth culture. It is largely so po-faced and leaden yet the experiences it purports to describe are such fun. This book therefore is something of a rarity - a joy to read. Unfortunately though I am unsure that the author will be pleased to learn this reviewer put it down with a smile rather than a furrowed brow.

Tony Jeffs, University of Durham

Clive Wilkinson

The Drop Out Society. Young People on the Margin.

Youth Work Press 1995

ISBN: 0 86155 160 5

£12.50 (pbk)

pp 107

SARAH HACKETT

In the light of various initiatives to redirect young people's energies away from what the Secretary of State for education called anti-community activity and the intractable problems of truancy, training deficits and youth unemployment, 'The Drop Out Society' looks at the poor take up rates by young people of education, training and employment.

The title of this book should give some indication of both its intentions, its message and its contents. From the start, the book makes explicit connections between youth drop out rates and social instability. This is a familiar theme of the political right responding to what is believed to be a rapidly growing youth underclass.

Interestingly, Wilkinson's research was part funded by Newcastle Employment Service and approved by the then Employment Secretary, Gillian Shephard. Thus, the general emphasis of this book is the production of solutions for the reinstatement of young people into jobs and training.

The fact that this research was carried out in the North East is indicative of the perception of the area as particularly hard hit. We must not fall into the trap of labelling the North East as worse than elsewhere. It is more probable that differences within regions are greater than the differences among

regions. It is, therefore, more useful to see the North East as a microcosm of the country.

The purpose of the report was to explore and understand the lives of young people in three areas of Wearside. These areas were targeted because they shared the same inner urban conditions of multiple deprivation. Furthermore, observations from the Community Resources and Education Development team cited that large numbers of young people with whom it was working were aimlessly drifting without any significant attachment to mainstream society. Wilkinson's book then is in danger of becoming yet another study that concentrates on youth problems and young people who are perceived as having no

...connection with the world outside of the sphere in which they live out their lives, who feel that many of the things that society as a whole takes for granted...are irrelevant to the realities that drive and control them. (p 4)

Wilkinson is keen to highlight the lifestyles of those young people identifying key indicators associated with youth drop out. 250 young people were questioned in this detailed quantitative work, a smaller sample of which were developed into case studies. Wilkinson does not spend time letting us know how he and his fellow researchers came to know the young people of their study and at no point does he take time to define 'young people', 'dropping out' or 'mainstream society'. It is perhaps one of few efforts that have attempted to quantify the extent of the youth drop out, but to what use this is for is unsure.

One of his main methodological flaws, as Wilkinson acknowledges himself, is the chi-square method of probability. This is used to illustrate strong statistical associations between, for example, offenders characteristics and dropping out. Like proponents of the underclass theory, he sees the most powerful indicator of dropping out being criminal activity. This relationship between truanting and offending is now a tired, predictable and discredited connection. It is not possible or desirable to assume any causal links may be at work here. Statistical research prevents much being uncovered and tends to greatly reduce contextual complexities at work.

In choosing his sample, Wilkinson deliberately picked out young people who displayed the most graphic indicators of dropping out. There is great danger in targeting young people in this way and how is it possible to identify whether a young person is going to be more or less involved in truanting? You cannot answer these questions without stigmatising young people.

His use of 'relevant extracts' from transcriptions makes each discussion very selective and evasive. He does however, make good use of extensive quotes from young people who interestingly never speak about their experiences in terms of dropping out. In many cases they explained clearly and rationally the reasons behind their behaviour, and what factors would make a difference to the problems surrounding employment, training and education.

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Wilkinson combines both structure and agency in his explanation of youth drop out, relating this to the way in which structural barriers create negative and hostile attitudes. Underlying Wilkinson's ideas is the notion of the traditional family as the most important stabilising factor in a child's life. Reminiscent of the culture of poverty and deprivation, Wilkinson has virtually written off the lives of many young people, and their parents, on low income estates.

He claims that young people will develop mind sets that foster a structureless rejection of society itself and display early signs of trauma. This is not research that will reinforce the idea of the normality and usual conformity of most young people.

Wilkinson also talks of society's collective responsibility to provide safe structures to enable young people to nurture a sense of optimism. This is something that has to be done by the public as a whole. Yet part of the problem in the implementation of collective responsibility is the stigmatising of areas and young people. By doing this you fail to educate all about social responsibility and policy becomes designed in terms of excluding young people.

The idea that young people reject social structures does not reflect as Wilkinson believes, a rejection of society itself. Rather it represents the feeling that many of the TECs and training institutions do not fulfil the needs and requirements of young people, an issue that came out strongly in the interviews. It illustrates how the most important agencies that work with young people are effectively reduced due to restricted funds and therefore their capacity to make change is limited.

In his recommendations, Wilkinson moves some way to bridge the gap between individuals who may drop out and the development of structures in society that will prevent them from doing so. What he does not acknowledge is that there are many ways for young people to make a valuable life for themselves. It just depends on how much society at a given time is going to invest in them.

The overall message of the book was confusing. As was the layout. Wilkinson has a very rigid notion of what the transition from the world of youth to adult looks like. Wilkinson talks about what are for him clear cut cycles of behaviour that inevitably lead to alienation and dropping out. It is this aspect of his book I hold most reservations with. His contribution helps along notions of an underclass theory of poverty viewing the behaviour of the poor as a 'self reinforcing nexus' (p 28) of residential and emotional insecurity and impoverishment, parental unemployment, the rejection of home, school, training and work, and, ultimately dropping out from society as a whole.

The stories told by the young people in his study do not involve pathological tendencies, recklessness or deficiencies. There may be for some people involved methods of damage limitation or strategies for survival, but they do not constitute actions that are far removed from the rest of society. There is

no homogeneous way to grow up in society, nor are there homogeneous unemployed or poor young people. It is a piece of work that can be added to the growing negative discourse around youth.

Sarah Hackett, *Social Welfare Research Unit, University of Northumbria at Newcastle.*

John Briere, Lucy Berliner, Josephine A Bulkley, Carole Jenny, Theresa Reid
The APSAC Handbook on Child Maltreatment

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pp 449

Malcolm Hill & Jane Aldgate (eds)

Child Welfare Services: Developments in Law, Policy, Practice and Research

Jessica Kingsley Publishers

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pp 269

CLAUDIA BERNARD

Due to the constantly changing nature of child and family welfare practice, up-to-date research is continually necessary. Research can be crucial to developing a strong knowledge base, and can also offer theoretical models built from and grounded in practice. Based on recent research projects, both texts reviewed here provide some important contributions to current debates about child and family welfare.

The APSAC Handbook on Child Maltreatment is a new publication by the American Professional Society of the Abuse of Children. This interesting volume is very comprehensive and based on the most up-to-date empirical research available. The handbook is organised into six sections and addresses many important questions. Section One provides an overview of different categories of abuse: sexual, physical neglect, emotional maltreatment, and ritualistic abuse. The rest of the sections are concerned with topics such as, psychosocial treatment, medical and legal aspects, preventing and reporting abuse, and the organisation and delivery of services.

REVIEWS

Overall, particular attention is given to current issues and concerns, and the need to develop effective interventions and practices is well identified.

The Handbook's strengths lie in its ability to engage the reader. It is written in a clear and accessible style and the contributors make some interesting observations. Most notably, they provide some useful chapters on children's testimony, and provide excellent summaries of the research to help child witnesses in the legal system. Though the chapters on legal aspects are geared to the North American legal system, there is relevance well beyond the US situation. We in Europe can draw much from the ideas expressed here, not least because they explore the empirical and theoretical underpinnings. They also describe useful techniques that have been developed to improve the quality of children's testimonies.

In spite of the many positive features of the *APSAC Handbook*, the book has some limitations. One is that there is a glaring absence of perspectives exploring the influence of race, gender, and class. Thankfully, an exception can be found in Abney's chapter 'Cultural Competency in the Field of Child Maltreatment'. Here Abney looks at a range of cultural factors that impact on the response to abuse and families' help-seeking strategies. However the remaining 23 chapters either just touch on these issues in a superficial way, or ignore them altogether. I found this omission troubling because factors of race, gender, and class continue to influence the experience, disclosure, and reporting of child maltreatment, as well as modes of state intervention. Nonetheless, this is still a useful text overall for its focus on the development of theory and effective interventions.

Child Welfare Services is concerned with the recent changes in law, policy and practice relating to the provision of services to children and families by local authorities and health boards. The central focus of this text is its examination of the child care legislation in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Thus, the book examines The Children Act 1989 (England and Wales) (1995), The children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, The Children (Scotland) Act 1995, and The Child Care Act 1991, (The Republic of Ireland).

The book consists of an introduction and 18 chapters organised under subsections. Among the topics discussed are child protection, the continuum of out of home care, and the historical background of developments in law, policy, and related research. Outcomes in child care are also carefully examined. There are excellent chapters giving overviews of the key features of the legislation in each jurisdiction. Similarities and differences are explored as well as the specific factors that influence the development and implementation of legislation in the different jurisdiction in the UK. One common theme running through all the chapters giving an overview of the legislative frameworks, is that there is a danger that services are being developed around a narrow focus on child protection with less emphasis on family support services.

I particularly found Kelly & Pinkerton's chapter on the Children Order illuminating, not only for the way it emphasised the broader context in

which child welfare services are being developed in Northern Ireland, but also for its analysis of the 'parity principle' that dominates social policy in Northern Ireland. They argue that legislation cannot be understood in isolation from the society in which they are part.

Overall, the contributors explore their different topics in an interesting way, and many of the chapters are informed by original research. Freeman et al's chapter *Consulting Service Users: The Views of Young People*, Ward's Chapter on *Assessing Outcomes of Looking After Children Away From Home*, and Hill et al's chapter *Outcomes of Social Work Intervention with Young People* are good examples. Here the authors provide the readers with detailed accounts and critical appraisal of practice and on organisational responses, as well as theoretical analyses on their subjects.

I have few criticisms for *Child Welfare Services* as on the whole it is a well-written and informative text that provides an overview of the key issues in child care legislation today. However, a concluding chapter drawing together the key strands raised in individual chapters would perhaps have added further strength. Overall, researchers, academics, and practitioners will find much in the book to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the different legislative frameworks in operation in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Both the texts discussed above will be essential reading for practitioners, policy-makers, and academics in the field of child and family welfare. *The APSAC Handbook on Child Maltreatment* provides a succinct overview of all types of child abuse, making it an important contribution to interdisciplinary debates on Child abuse. *Child Welfare Services*, on the other hand presents a clear, up-to-date account of the child care legislative framework of the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Claudia Bernard, *Department of Applied Human Sciences, Goldsmiths College, University of London.*

REVIEWS

Kay Kinder, John Harland, Anne Wilkin and Alison Wakefield

Three to Remember: Strategies for Disaffected Pupils

NFER

ISBN: 0 7005 1409 0

£3.50

pp 40

Kay Kinder, Alison Wakefield and Anne Wilkin

Talking Back: Pupil Views and Disaffection

NFER

ISBN: 0 7005 1420 1

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pp 38

TED HARVEY

The NFER is probably best known in the educational world for its work on assessment, many secondary schools use its tests as a way of measuring the profile of their new intake of eleven year olds. These two booklets represent a move into the rather more obviously controversial and 'messy' area of pupil disaffection. Based on the NFER project 'School Attendance, Truancy and Exclusions' these two reports are discussion papers aimed to be of use to school, LEA and EWS staff who are planning initiatives to deal with this widespread and, it seems, growing problem.

The first of these reports 'three to remember' is focused on the view points of senior managers, heads of year and form tutors in some 30 schools and special units in 14 LEAs, together with some input from other LEA and EWS staff. Here the brief but very thorough analysis covers perspectives on the causes of disaffection and strategies and initiatives to counter it. The writers identify three relevant areas - individual, family and community, and school as being the main sources of factors which produce disaffection, and three groups of responses - maintaining and monitoring attendance, support for emotional and behavioural needs, and offering alternative curriculum experiences. Each of these categories is illustrated with quotes from the survey or examples of practice gleaned in the same way.

'Talking Back' is also divided into three sections - pupil perspectives, the experience of disaffection, and talking back on solutions. As might be expected this is something of a livelier read as it includes substantial quotes from pupils who recount their experiences and feelings with a refreshing directness. Similar areas are identified, the effects of friends and peers, relationships with teachers, the content and delivery of the curriculum, family factors and others are briefly discussed and exemplified.

These two publications are interesting for a number of reasons. In their own right they are impressive in terms both of the rigor of the research and the clarity and coverage of the reports. They could indeed fulfil the stated aim of being useful as discussion papers, I am sure that the findings

are representative and that the issues raised are relevant to a large extent for most schools. Any working group looking into these problems could find the material here a good collection of evidence from which to begin. Eminently practical and empirical in scope and style these two booklets have a great deal to recommend them.

However, while they are sound and solid pieces of work in many respects, I do find them fundamentally frustrating in a few closely related areas. Firstly, the recommendations for action are lacking in power and conviction, clearly there is value in this because each school or LEA is being encouraged to work out its own solutions, nevertheless the prosaic and tentative suggestions put forward here seem to somehow leave me with a feeling that either we have to accept a rather pessimistic and piecemeal approach or launch into uncharted waters which the authors only obliquely hint at.

This leads on to the fascinating issues of placing the particular style of these reports into a wider theoretical, political and cultural context. I can not help but wonder if the notably empiricist quality of the reports is the product of a post-modern reluctance to use grand theories or concepts, a desire to remain 'grounded' in the reality of pupils and professionals, or an unwillingness (conscious or not) to say anything too controversial in the current political climate. (In fairness it should be said that reference is made to the possible negative effects of the national curriculum and the dangers of adopting a 'bolt-on' approach but these avenues lay unexplored).

I am not arguing for a return to the marxist analysis of Bowles and Gintis, or even for Ivan Illich's theories of deschooling to be resurrected, but surely a more in-depth analysis is called for than the one offered here? After reading these booklets I found myself yearning for an insightful and incisive comment or generalisation which would enable professionals to see their work in a new light and offer a conceptual framework for change. Carl Rogers' work on the 'necessary and sufficient' conditions of respect, genuineness and empathy spring to mind.

It may be unfair to be critical of these documents which are highly commendable in many respects and clearly limited in their ambition, my worry is that the bigger and more critical issues are unexplored and that after reading these we remain where we started.

Ted Harvey is Assistant Warden at a Village College in Cambridgeshire.

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For an article:

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And for a report:

The Thompson Report (1982) Experience and Participation, cmd 8686, London, HMSO.

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