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YOUNG PEOPLE'S UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNICATION:

Implications for educational initiatives

ROZ BRODY AND LIZA CATAN

Background

From Brando's Wild One to Harry Enfield's cultural icon 'Kevin', adolescents have been portrayed as poor communicators, restricting their vocabulary to monosyllabic grunts punctuated by emotional outbursts. A recent national survey of attitudes to communication reported that the majority of adults thought that communication between parents and children has worsened, due to children's greater involvement in video and computer games and parents' long working hours (SCPR 1997). Another survey of employers' views on recent school leavers concluded that young people generally are lacking in a variety of skills relating to employability, including communicative abilities (MORI 1995).

The belief that adolescent communication is in need of improvement is not new. In the Newbolt report of 1921, Messrs Vickers Ltd. reported' great difficulty in obtaining junior clerks who can speak and write English clearly and correctly, especially those aged from 15 to 16 years' (Dearing 1996, p 47). Since these early concerns, numerous educational initiatives emphasising the need for young people to be taught communication skills have been proposed. Several of these initiatives emerged in the 1970s as part of the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) and then later became the core skills of the BTEC courses, before their recent incarnation in the Dearing report, and also as part of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) courses (Dearing 1966, NCVQ 1996). These courses for communication are largely influenced by the needs of employers and the emphasis tends to focus predominantly on the use of English such as ' use of correct spelling, punctuation and grammar and the ability to 'summarise information' and 'take part in discussions' (NCVQ 1996). Even when mention is made of personal and interpersonal skills, it is often interpreted as giving oral presentations and tackling projects through group work to develop experience of team working. (Dearing 1996 p 56)

Alongside this development are other educational initiatives, which have placed the emphasis on social skills training and the mastering of specific skills, such as saying No, active listening and managing anger. However, these initiatives have often divorced communication from both social and personal relationships and have given little emphasis to the importance of context. Very few of these initiatives explore young people's own understanding of what leads to effective and ineffective communication and very little research has been undertaken into this topic. (Catan, Dennison & Coleman 1996).

Academic research into adolescent communication has concentrated mainly on communication in the context of interpersonal relationships in the family. Despite its narrow focus, this research has provided useful insights into the variation of adolescents' communication according to the context, content and participants involved. Noller and Bagi (1985) found that both male and female teenagers communicated more with mothers than with fathers, and that this was linked to different parental styles of communication. Mothers were perceived by young people as being more open, understanding, accepting and willing to listen, while fathers were seen as more judgemental and less involved in discussions of feelings. Whilst these differences echo classic stereotypical images of male and female communicators, 'men are more focused on information and women are more sensitive' (Tannen 1996 p 27), the perceived differences may be used effectively to explore the consequences of using different communication styles as well as challenging some of the stereotypes.

Research on young people's communication with friends (Collins and Repinski, 1994) suggests that shared goals and value systems facilitate much of their discussions, and that friends were people who could be trusted with private worries and concerns (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984). Intimacy, loyalty, confidentiality and steadfastness were thought to be of central importance to peer friendships (Kon and Losenov, 1978), and Youniss and Smoller (1985) suggested that females were more likely than males to have a close friendship that involved symmetrical understanding and intimacy.

These studies clearly show that communication involves far more than the appropriate use of English and social skills. Communication is not just about transmitting information effectively, but plays a key role in establishing and maintaining relationships. (Duck 1994, Garfinkel 1967). In addition, through our conversation we construct both ourselves and our world view: we maintain, modify and reconstruct subjective reality (Berger & Luckman 1966). Yet current educational concerns about communication seem to omit both the relationship and constructivist nature of communication, in favour of a purely skills based model.

In order to explore ways of enhancing educational initiatives designed to improve communication, we chose to look at young people's own understanding of effective communication. Most interventions are based on adult perceptions about what needs to be improved, but we wanted to use young people's perceptions to inform our interventions so that they would be based on what young people identified as problematic. We wanted to develop dramatic scenes which the young people felt typified ineffective communication, and video these scenes so that they could form the basis of discussion with groups of young people. Our aim in developing this video was to stimulate both discussion and analysis about why the communication

difficulties occurred and to explore a range of strategies that could be used to avoid or repair the breakdown.

Aim of the study

The aim of this study was twofold. Firstly we wanted to get an' inside view' of young people's talk about communication. What do young people consider contributes to effective communication and what do they consider results in communication breakdown?

How do young people articulate the strategies they use to avoid or repair communication breakdown? Secondly we wanted to use young people's understanding of communication to inform educational initiatives that were designed to improve communication between young people and others.

Methodology

In order to gain insight into young peoples' understanding of communication a series of focus groups were set up. This methodology was chosen because it was felt that focus groups generate open, informal and free ranging responses and would enable young people to express their ideas in their own words, whilst at the same time allowing the researcher to explore the expressed ideas in greater detail and depth. Given the aim of the study it was felt that focus groups would be more naturalistic than questionnaires, and would allow the everyday contradictions that emerge in conversation to be recorded.

Seven focus groups were used. The participants' ages ranged from 14-20, and the groups were selected to represent a range of social and educational backgrounds. Whilst the younger participants were drawn from schools, youth clubs and hostels for the homeless, the older participants were from two universities. It was felt that this cross section would include a variety of experiences of communication and would enable a broad range of communication strategies to be discussed.

The breakdown of the groups was as follows:

- *four male students aged 17-19, at a sixth form college*
- *three male and four female students aged 14-16, at secondary school*
- *six male and three female students, aged 18-20, taking predominantly social science courses at a university*
- *four male and four female students aged 18-20, taking a graphic design course at a university*
- *two homeless males aged 16, living in a local authority hostel*

- *four homeless females aged 16, living in a local authority hostel*
- *four males aged 15-16 attending a local youth club in an area of social disadvantage.*

The group discussions centred around the following questions:

- *What did they think makes for good communication?*
- *Who is a good communicator and why?*
- *What did they think causes difficulty with communication?*
- *What did they understand by 'communication breakdown'?*
- *How did they restart communication when it had broken down?*
- *How did the task, context and relationship influence their communication strategies?*

When discussing these questions, they were asked to use specific examples which included:

- *Negotiating with parents over 'rules'.*
- *Difficulties in asking people out, ending relationships.*
- *Being in unfamiliar environments, like visiting the doctor, or going to see a counsellor.*
- *Dealing with insults to both oneself and one's family.*
- *Interactions with the police and other figures of authority such as teachers, doctors.*

The focus group discussions were taped and transcribed. Three researchers extracted themes from the transcripts. They worked 'iteratively,' comparing first efforts, checking them against the transcripts and revising the analysis. This process was repeated several times until a coherent set of themes was agreed.

The frequently occurring themes of honesty, trust, openness, respect, and equality which emerged, were subsumed under two main discourses which young people tended to use when talking about communication. These are discussed below, together with the implications this research has for educational initiatives.

Young people's understanding of communication

Two distinct discourses about communication were identified. The first revolved around relationships, familiarity and intimacy. It was labelled the 'affective/intuitive'

approach to communication, and generated communication based on the values of openness, honesty and shared meanings and experiences. The second discourse, often adopted when honesty and openness needed to be modified, was a more strategic and analytical discourse about communication, where good communication depended on negotiation and an analytical understanding of other points of view.

These discourses have certain implications when looking at interventions designed to improve communication in young people.

Affective/Intuitive Discourse

Young people's talk about communication revealed the strongly held belief that good communication was essentially intuitive, and based on shared understanding and meaning.

> *With my mum I don't have to speak to her to know that she understands... and that she knows what I am feeling without words. Words don't mean much. (Female 18)*

They felt that good communication resulted from being 'on the same wavelength', 'soulmates', 'knowing where the other person is coming from', thus emphasising the importance of long established relationships and familiarity in encouraging the reciprocal grasp of moods and feelings.

Communication breakdown was seen to occur when the underlying friendship and common experience were disrupted, e.g. through moving away or having new, unshared experiences:

> *I nearly completely split up with a friend of mine because of girlfriends... he went out with this girl and she had such a hold over him... she'd click her fingers and he scarpered off to follow her... then she dumped him and he was all right again, but he's back with her and it's worse... he's just lost the plot. He's like changed. (Male 20)*

Changes in belief systems similarly resulted in communication breakdown.

> *As soon as I became a Christian the communication stopped because Ibelieved in something totally different... they respected me, but they couldn't understand...and it's just totally broken. (Female]8)*

In addition to shared understanding and experiences, the themes of honesty and openness were emphasised as the basis of good communication in the affective/intuitive mode. These values ran through teenagers' talk about communication at all ages and stages. Asked what advice they would give on the best way of resolving difficulties, two university students said:

To be honest. Just say how you're feeling to the other person. (Female 19)

Sit down and talk about it. And face it straight away. (Male 19)

Secondary school students agreed:

I'd just speak to them...tell them how I feel (Male 16)

Yeah it's the best way if you can (Female 15)

The need for honesty and openness was also linked to another central theme - trust: young people feel safe enough to be honest and open only when there is trust between partners:

My best mate, me and him talk about a lot of things. . he trusts me 'cos that means he can talk to me and I can talk to him. (Male 16)

Trust is central too to teenagers' views on what makes for effective communication with adults and it is as important to feel trusted by the adult, as it is to trust them. Teenagers want to be treated as equal partners in the communicative relationship. When trust and respect are not forthcoming, communication difficulties arise. This was particularly noticeable when they talked about communication with authority figures outside the home and in particular, communication with the police. A common complaint in the focus group was that the police made assumptions on account of young people's colour, youth, housing, or activities like skateboarding and then picked on them (young men) or ignored their calls for help (young women):

They think every black person is a trouble maker. (Male 17)

I've been hassled by the police five times when I was skateboarding because of the image you portray (Male 17)

They think.. because we live in a hostel we're just trouble makers anyway (Female 15)

Another concern was that they were excluded from matters that actually affected them.

I'm nearly eighteen... and the police wouldn't come to speak to me. They'd speak to my guardians or whatever. But I can easily sit down and think, and they could tell me things. (Female)

They felt that this lack of respect destroyed the basis of good communication, and was particularly evident when they were stopped arbitrarily by the police:

When you get pulled over by the old bill for no reason at all, and they ask to search you, then that's a breakdown in communication 'cos you just start having a real go at him and everything. (Male 17)

It was evident that young people were aware that adults have power over them. A power imbalance was often cited directly as a reason for communication difficulty whenever young people felt they were not being treated as equal partners:

> *Basically, we're powerless when it comes to teachers 'cos some thing happens between a teacher and a student... the teacher will just get off for free. (Male 15)*

Both politeness and disclosure of personal information by adults and authority figures were seen as indicators of trust and respect and were seen as beneficial in communicating with young people.

What is particularly important to extract from the affective/intuitive understanding of communication is young people's sense that intuitively based communication is irreparable. Intuitive communication is something you *just know:* the main strategy is to *follow your heart.*, Consequently, it is felt that nothing can be done about communication failure.

> *If you lose it, you lose it, and that's that.(Male 16)*

> *I can't talk to some people, full stop. I can't even talk to counsellors. It's just one of those things. (Male 16)*

From this perspective, planning what to say and how to say it makes 'everything far too complicated'; communication isn't seen as something which can be learned, or improved if one makes an effort:

> *Maybe I will change, maybe I won't. Maybe I'll get better, maybe I'll get worse. Can't tell, really. (Male 16)*

Contradictions in affective/intuitive communicative discourse

Despite the emphasis given to the notion of openness and honesty, there were frequent apparent contradictions to these principles when young people felt that action based on them was likely to fail. Thus while they were aware of the contradictions involved, young people cited the following strategies to deal with conflicts which necessitated their being economical with the truth or when they needed to protect their egos. These measures included, in their own words:

- *Tell them what they want to hear*
- *Act sincere*
- *Act polite*
- *Lie, twist it a little bit*
- *Use one person to get round another*

- *Conceal your feelings.- Don't let them see you're upset*
- *Agree with them initially but bring it up another time*
- *Drop hints, don't come straight out with it*
- *Pretend you understand.*
- *Grovel, barter*

These seeming contradictions in teenagers' talk about communication indicate that they are beginning to employ strategies to enhance the efficacy of communication to achieve practical ends, at the same time recognising that 'good,' in the sense of ideal, communication may be a different issue.

Indeed as Elkind (1984) points out, one of the difficulties faced by young people as their social world broadens is the realisation that openness and honesty are often dispensed with, in favour of more strategic modes of communication designed to obtain, conceal or convey information for personal advantage over others.

Strategic/Analytic Communicative Discourse

The tensions between the central concepts of honesty and openness, and the awareness of the limits of their usefulness, open up the way to the second type of discourse about communication, which involves reflecting on and analysing situations, planning strategies and consciously employing communication skills. When confronted with a potentially difficult communication, such as meeting a father they haven't seen for some time, or making business calls, or calling an unknown official to get information, many teenagers were able to detach communication from its immediate basis in a relationship and take a more planned, analytical and even strategic approach. In their own words they employed the following strategies:

- *Wait for a good moment ... bring it up another time.*
- *Observe the other carefully to see if they're in a good mood*
- *Plan and rehearse what you're going to say, you've got your worst case scenario and your best case scenario.*
- *Marshall your points to make a good argument*
- *Think about how to present it. Get to the good news first sort of thing*
- *Make clear you are being considerate of their feelings and point of view. Agree with them and then put your point of view across.*

These strategies indicate that young people are clearly aware of the need to employ cognitive skills within certain contexts and relationships.

Together with this more analytical approach to communication went a recognition of the need for negotiation and consideration of other points of view as a way of handling conflict. Instead of adopting a confrontational, winning/losing mode, which dominated some of the younger participants' view of communication:

> *If you are really good at communication, you can always win. If you can talk a lot and you are really good at it too, you can always win. (Male 16)*

The older participants rejected this mode as immature.

> *When I was younger I used to argue with all the people in authority, teachers and everything. I used to be 'I'm always right. I'm always correct. You don't know anything' and that was it (Female 18)*

With maturity they felt that they were more willing to admit they were wrong, more willing to take advice or criticism constructively and more willing to concede defeat. As a result, they believed they were more able to take others' feelings and points of view into consideration, less likely to prejudge, more able to agree to differ and had a greater awareness of potential flash points. In this discourse, good communication depends on the ability to be strategic and negotiate, rather than to win by force:

> *You get more tolerant as you get older Different things, different people, different views, different walks of life. I think you learn to accept things... it's an evolution of your character. (Male 18)*

Policy/Practice Implications

What do these discourses about communication suggest for educational initiatives? First, the prevailing image of young people as inarticulate 'Kevins' needs to be challenged. Our research suggests that young people have both an understanding of the nature of communication and an awareness of a range of strategies which can be employed within different contexts. This basic knowledge and understanding can be built on by educationalists to raise awareness about what constitutes effective and ineffective communication in different contexts and why.

Second, it seems important to broaden courses on communication skills to include not only the improvement of English and Social Skills, but to also include interpersonal understanding as a means of encouraging effective communication. Whilst this is hardly a new idea, Dearing's exclusive emphasis on literacy and oral skills makes it necessary to resuscitate this broader view of communication.

Third the distinction young people make between the affective/intuitive and the analytic/strategic discourse may be used to explore some of the difficulties that young people experience in the transition between the familiar world of school,

friends and family, to the less familiar world of work where strategies based on the affective/intuitive mode may not be appropriate. Eisenberg and Witten (1987) have challenged the view that effective communication is universally aided by openness and self-disclosure, and similarly Coupland, Giles and Wieman (1991) and Cupach and Spitzberg (1994) have suggested that while total honesty is often believed to be a precondition of adult communication, deception and concealment are nevertheless acknowledged as a desirable, and even a skilled achievement in many adult social and interpersonal situations. Although it needs to be stressed that when shared understandings and meanings are absent, hidden agendas, power plays and mis-understandings thrive.

Fourth the importance of both the social and personal context of any communication needs to be explored with young people. Communication does not take place in a vacuum and the young person's social and personal construction of the context need to be considered when looking at different communication strategies. In some contexts, for example even violence may be seen as an extremely effective means of communication:

> *Teaches them a lesson... it's a very effective way of getting the message through...they all know where they stand (Male 16)*

An understanding of this perspective, rather than an outright rejection may allow the educationalist to explore how some of the same ends might be achieved using different strategies.

Fifth, by looking at the power differences that exist between many young people and adults, it might be possible to broaden the young person's strategies. The research suggested that two main strategies were used by young people for dealing with power imbalance between themselves and adults. Either the young person confronted the adult:

> *I gave them mouth. (Male 16)*
>
> *I called them a bunch of wankers. (Male 16)*

or tried to avoid communication

> *Only talk when you've got to. Just try and avoid them. Don't make eye contact with them. (Female 16)*
>
> *My boss when I was a mechanic... I hated him I really did. I couldn't exactly communicate with him when he comes and asks me something... like Chris can you do this for me? 'Yeah'- one word answers. (Male 16)*

An awareness and acceptance of power differences between groups of people, may give an insight into the possible strategies that may be adopted when those

people with power and authority abuse or misuse power, or simply 'get it wrong'. Finally, given young people's ability to articulate the range of strategies they employ in different situations, it would be beneficial to adopt educational initiatives that explored the different consequences of using these strategies, together with broadening the range of strategies available.

In an attempt to bring these recommendations together a prototype video has been developed, using everyday scenarios which the young people identified as being particularly difficult in terms of communication. The video features dramatic scenes, similar in style to excerpts from soap operas and may be used in both group and individual settings. Young people are asked to view the scenario and analyse what led to the communication difficulties as well as discuss how such difficulties could be avoided or repaired (Brody, 1998).

The aim of this initiative is not to suggest that there is only one way to resolve communication difficulties, but rather to argue that in everyday life a range of strategies are possible. By using video, young people can explore the possible outcomes of using different strategies at a safe distance.

Conclusion

Being able to communicate effectively is important in every phase of life, but it is particularly important in adolescence where young people are in the process of transition to adulthood (Coleman and Hendry 1990; Emler 1993) and need to take on an increasing range of social and communicative contacts which gradually extend beyond the childhood world of family and friends (Catan, Dennison and Coleman 1997; Drury, Catan, Dennison and Brody 1998).

The educational initiatives currently being proposed for aiding young people's communication, whilst important, are largely based on a one-sided approach of what employers want and need, and adults' perceptions of the requirements of school and the workplace. By incorporating young people's knowledge and understanding of effective communication into educational programmes it may be possible to produce interventions which are not only applicable to the world of work, but are also beneficial to other relationships.

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Roz Brody *and* ***Liza Catan****, Trust for the Study of Adolescence.*

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THE EMPEROR HAS NO CLOTHES:

Cycles of delusion in community interventions with 'disaffected' young men

HOWARD WILLIAMSON AND ROBIN MIDDLEMISS

Introduction

A number of issues have prompted us to put together this article in order to provoke debate about the realities of youth work and the condition of many young people's lives, rather than continuing to construct targeted (and presumed to be 'effective') youth work on mythical assumptions, irrelevant practice and unachievable targets.

First, there is renewed public policy debate around 'disaffected' youth (Education and Employment Committee 1998), although this is hampered by such a catch all phrase incorporating those who are temporarily sidetracked, the essentially confused and the deeply alienated. It includes most significantly, however, those permanently excluded from school, a phenomenon that has rocketed six-fold since the early 1990s (see Parsons 1995, also Castle and Parsons 1997), 16 and 17 year olds not in education, training or employment ('status zer0' - see Istance et al 1994, Istance and Williamson 1996) and 18-20 year old non-participants in education, training or the labour market (see Aspire Consultants 1996).

Secondly, there are new public policy measures, such as NewStart in England (formerly Relaunch) and the the Youth Access Initiative in Wales, and the New Deal, designed to bring young people away from the margin of the economy and back into mainstream education, training and employment. These derive from the growing *political* recognition of what professionals working in the field have known for a long time: that there are significant numbers of young adults disengaged from 'official' provision who have established alternative 'ways of living' in the informal and illegal economies. This practice-based knowledge was corroborated by academic research, notably the 'status zer0' studies from South Wales which brought the issue to political attention and led to parallel studies elsewhere which arrived at similar conclusions.

Thirdly, there are wider social preoccupations with elusive questions such as 'citizenship' requiring young people to take responsibilities and play a more active part in society (despite their rights being eroded). The current proposals concerning Millennium Volunteers are firmly underpinned by such preoccupations. Although we do not specifically address these issues in the paper, they are alluded to insofar as they point up the entrenched problematic of forging any constructive connections with alienated young men, let alone securing a renewed commitment on their part to altruistic community participation.

Fourth, the lobby for youth work is demanding an end to 'mediocrity' and the securing of a statutory base for youth work to engage in planned programmes of intervention around critical policy issues such as health, crime and training (see United Kingdom Youth Work Alliance 1996, National Youth Agency 1997). The government is clearly not yet persuaded of the value of youth work in terms of the contribution it may make to the unfolding political agenda for young people, as illustrated in the recent English Green Paper on Lifelong Learning (Department for Education and Employment 1998), although its Welsh equivalent is rather more positive (see Welsh Office 1998).

Last, there are recurrent calls for strengthened agency partnerships (including the youth service in local authorities and the voluntary sector) to work together - especially in relation to excluded young people - to promote responsibility and reintegration on the part of young people. This applies not only to emergent strategies in education and training (such as New Start, the Youth Access Initiative and the New Deal), but also in the policy domains of, for example, health (particularly around drug misuse) and youth justice (following the Crime and Disorder Act).

Our concerns focus primarily on the relationship of a significant cohort of 'disaffected' young men to the conventional values of the labour market, which we believe bears heavily on the efforts to engage their interests on many wider fronts by a range of agencies, including the youth service. We believe that the following observations will resonate strongly with experiences in daily grounded practice - experiences which are all too often denied at the level of strategic management, and which seldom surface because practitioners are too often reluctant to put their heads above the parapet. Indeed, this paper was precipitated by the awareness on the part of one of the authors (Middlemiss) of the vast gulf between the realities of his everyday practice and the illusions projected in the public information management of his project's work. It was his scribbled account of this tension, one which resonated with the other author (Williamson) from numerous similar *verbal* accounts he had received, which led to their collaboration to produce this paper.

The advocacy of the potential of young people and the need to procure effective participation and 'empowerment' has a clear flip side - their abject disillusionment with the proffered opportunities to participate. This is hardly surprising. After twenty years of training schemes and employment initiatives, there is - certainly in the most economically deprived communities towards which such measures are most directed - total cynicism about the relevance of any new initiative. The New Deal may be heralded as qualitatively different, but then the Youth Training Scheme [YTS] was proclaimed as the most advanced set of youth training proposals

ever set before parliament (Norman Tebbit, House of Commons, 1982). Each new variation on this theme is dressed up and paraded before these communities when everyone knows that the emperor has no clothes. Regardless of its actual value to the individual trainee and certainly quite aside from professional claims about self esteem, accreditation and progression, we cannot sidestep the fact that the prevailing attitude is *that any 'work' that does not return a full wage is exploitation.* Operating such programmes is therefore deeply frustrating and 'disaffecting' for those attempting to supervise, train or support young people who respond with indifference or direct hostility. Targets are difficult to meet since young people are not motivated to put in any effort; moreover, attendance is often erratic since there is little or no domestic, social or community encouragement for them to attend. All this reflects a growing subculture of opposition to what are perceived as pointless and ineffective interventions imposed from above. Whatever the structural rationale for participation (that the better the qualifications, the greater the possibilities in the labour market), cultural knowledge conveys a different message: it will get you nowhere. [These countervailing pressures have been confirmed by Furlong and Cartmel (1997).] Moreover, there are better things to do and other ways of getting to where you want to go.

Cultures of work

Having a job is rarely advertised on the local grapevine as a means of achieving personal fulfillment; it is certainly not associated with a process of lifelong learning. For many young people, the only value in having a job is as a means to get the money to afford the lifestyle promoted and believed to be desirable. Although much is made of the fact that most young people say they want a job, this conceals some deeper contradictions. For sure, they want an income or a *wage* but, on closer inquiry, the desire for a job does *not* mean that they are able to see the relevance of applying effort or subscribing to a work ethic that would motivate them to undertake training or knuckle down to the task. For example, Gareth (18), from the middle of the Rhondda Fach, observed, 'It's only an extra ten quid a week. It costs me more in bus fares. There's no point'. Delayed gratification is not negotiable - they want immediate rewards. They do not think beyond the equation that a job means money, with the person who makes the *most money for the least effort* being the most admired.

In general terms, then, there has to be concern that post-16 'opportunities' are not a level playing field: continuing education is literally a 'poor' option, however much it makes sense in the long term. Training programmes usually provide little more than 'component', rather than independent income; the wage available is

not respected. Casual employment in the service and informal economies pays better. The illegal economies offer the richest and most immediate rewards, in the short term at least.

In specific terms such 'options' are thrown into sharpest relief in the most deprived neighbourhoods. Long term unemployment has *demanded* the evolution of an informal economy for those with skills in order to supplement their benefits. Training courses and volunteering are not practical or economic options for this group. Most of the recent school leavers from such communities do not have marketable skills and therefore have to find other forms of activity to supplement their benefits or make some kind of living when benefits are not available. As Thomas (17) asserted, 'The only way I can get by is doing houses [burglaries]. I don't want to. But I've got no choice. I need the money'.

Young people who have no skills (or contacts) to enable them to participate in the informal economy either withdraw, in complete resignation, from any engagement with contemporary youth culture and lifestyle, or join the illegal economy and, in effect, prey on the employed. They become part of a culture which sees 'straight' people with (lowpaid) jobs as fools who are exploited victims of the 'system', or undergoing the penury of employment schemes and training courses for apparently little return. Shane, aged 22, observed, 'There's no way I'd go on a scheme. They treat you like an idiot. I can make more on the side in a day than they get in a week. They *must* be fucking idiots to work all week for that'. Lowering the status of the employed (or those engaged in training) to fools is a necessary technique of neutralisation which softens *their* status as 'unemployed' and provides some moral justification for the further exploitation of the employed by theft and assault.

For young people within this kind of cultural context, getting a job would *disadvantage* them in a variety of ways. For some it is quite likely that they would experience a net reduction in their income; for more they would become the target of their former peers (or their equivalents) materially through the theft of their property while they are at work, physically through assault and harassment, and psychologically through taunt and ridicule.

Are they disaffected?

The term 'disaffected' has become widely used to designate those not motivated to participate in formal education, training and employment. It is more than descriptive: it suggests an *attitude* that repackaging can overcome. It does not suggest a need to explore the cause of the disinterest being presented by many young people in conventional forms of provision. After twenty years of ever more unrealistic targets and promised outcomes there is a massive credibility gap that has become a chasm.

The loose use of the term also proposes that 'disaffected' young people do not fit in. But this begs the question, fit in to what? It is clear that many now do not want to fit in with the expectations of the wider society, but we believe it is important to recognise that it is because many of these young people are the visible (and often well integrated and high status) representatives of a *well established local culture* which has developed over many years, particularly on estates and in communities where unemployment is acute across three generations and even more severe amongst the young.

Social Intervention - temporary palliative care?

The past twenty years has also seen the gradual erosion of the resources available to local authorities to maintain the social and physical infrastructures of housing estates (not just housing, but social services, education, youth services, libraries, play areas and other public amenities), while mass long term unemployment has cemented emotional and material difficulties. The inability of local authorities to meet the 'needs' of these areas has led to increased reliance on voluntary sector intervention. But the ability of voluntary agencies to respond has been under increasing pressure because of the nature of their funding. Voluntary agencies usually have relatively few 'core' staff. Those there are take responsibility for management and administration, securing short term funding for project work and the staff who will undertake it. Beyond the effort to achieve the objectives set out for such projects, agencies have to expend time and energy in recruitment, induction, orientation, staff development and exit strategies. Staff are invariably appointed on short term contracts, without tenure, and often appointed belatedly. The need for continuity of personal finances means they often move on prematurely. Whatever expertise and experience is accumulated is recurrently lost to the agency and the area in which it works: the next project team needs to start from scratch in developing knowledge of the area and its indigenous and professional resources. But short term funding does not allow for the time to consult, network and develop 'partnerships'. This repeated turnover of staff and constant reinvention of 'new' projects selling the same process has left many residents, young people included, on 'target' estates unwilling to commit themselves to new staff and projects, either as service users or volunteers. They experience this process as a series of rejections, with hopes raised and repeatedly dashed. The relevance of many projects is increasingly called into question, with the 'outcomes' tailored by the agencies to meet the criteria of the funder, not the professional practice or the communities they claim to serve. This throws into sharp relief the question of who is the primary 'client': the funding source or the recipients of services. The prioritising of funding compounds the problem in that it reflects and thereby reinforces young people's perspectives that

'money' is the real priority, with people and relationships a poor second (as Margaret Thatcher once proclaimed, 'economics is the religion and money the godhead').

Such pressures are perhaps exacerbated by the faith being attached politically to the efficacy of 'joined up thinking' and its implications for strategic and operational partnerships. There is, indeed, a risk of partnership fatigue as partnerships are required to be forged in response to a succession of policy initiatives around, for example, drugs and alcohol, the New Deal, lifelong learning, and crime and disorder. This, coupled with the *plans* which are integral to partnership approaches, has heightened expectations of what may be achieved with 'disaffected' youth - who are so often a primary target within many recent initiatives. Yet, at the local level, practitioners remain over-stretched and voluntary organisations are trapped in a Catch-22 scenario: either they concede a 'defeatist' position through challenging the rhetoric (and thereby lose their seat at the partnership table) or they retain their seat at the table by proclaiming that they are able to achieve the unachievable. The pressures to adopt the second course of action, in the interests of agency survival, are very strong.

In order to survive within this context of funding and 'top-down' expectations, a process of misrepresentation has had to evolve. The incessant quest for further funding (or even simply maintaining existing resources, in local authority contexts) *demands* the presentation of a 'success' story: the target numbers have been reached, and quality interventions have taken place. In a few cases this may be legitimate; in most it requires at best a purposeful economy with the truth and at worst the complete falsification of accounts (not finances, but 'stories' and statistics). Misinformed in these ways, funding bodies (and, indeed, senior management who are also the recipients of such misrepresentation for different, but similar, reasons) have evolved unrealistic expectations, believing that established 'targets' are achievable. As a result, target led funding rarely acknowledges the *time* necessary to foster relationships and promote the confidence in young people for them to even *start* to consider re-engagement. There is a lot of rhetoric about the need to address the personal and social aspects of young people's lives in order to put in place the 'self esteem' and motivation for them to attach themselves to and sustain their commitment to either volunteering or employment, but there is very little acknowledgment in employment conditions, resourcing or target setting of the work needed to actually secure those ends. That work requires nothing less than a head-on assault on endemic cultures of resignation and resistance.

Cultures of resignation and non-participation

Having a 'life' historically revolved around having a 'job', which conferred a role and status on individuals and provided the resources necessary for 'stakeholding'

in society. Mass unemployment has altered this scenario and requires the adoption of different life values. Living as 'unemployed' relegates employment to a lower position in the hierarchy of the important things in life. This may be a rationalisation (for most research points to young people still aspiring to having a job and thereby finding a place in the conventional order of things - if it pays a decent wage), but it is also an essential coping strategy, for unless this is achieved a deep sense of personal alienation is established. To perceive work as 'exploitation' is one mechanism used by those unable to get work to lessen the pain of being discarded. But without a job what else is there to provide a positive identity and respected social status? Most of the estates and communities where unemployment is rife have little infrastructure to support different (structured and constructive) 'ways of living' nor the resources to buy in support. The 'social scaffolding' of voluntary and community initiatives which in the past maintained some level of cohesion has largely been dismantled, through the withdrawal of modest public funding (see Campbell 1993). Unable to obtain employment and without the means to create any alternative positive identity, many people have withdrawn into a sense of hopeless resignation to their fate. Their lives are atomised and individualised; there is no infrastructure of support and direction beyond that which they can secure themselves, through family, friends and neighbourhood.

For many young people living in such areas, this is the only 'culture' they have experienced. They have been raised in communities that exist outside the 'job culture'. They are encouraged by parents, families and friends to *evade and avoid* any form of course, scheme or programme apparently designed to help them into (nonexistent or undesirable) employment. They are deeply cynical about the values of the mainstream culture, whose intentions represent a path littered with broken promises and goals that were never (and probably never could be) achieved. The point was sharply made by Tyrone's uncle, who employed him when he could as a casual labourer: 'I'm not having Tyrone going on another one of these useless training schemes. He's better off where he is'. This cynicism is, however, rarely expressed directly to those in authority because any indication of 'unavailability for work' is believed to, and indeed may well, result in withdrawal of benefits. Increasingly under pressure to engage in futile job search effort and to attend agencies to find employment and without any form of legitimate protest left, the individual has only one course of expression left - non-participation. [One interpretation of Arnstein's (1972) ladder of participation might be that personal autonomy and control is maximised *either* by full involvement *or* by complete withdrawal.] Evading participation becomes a valued skill. What started with the parental generation as a coping strategy has evolved into a counter-cultural practice: a

means of retaining control and dignity through failing to enlist in what are perceived as meaningless measures.

We therefore use the term 'resigned' intentionally to indicate that no longer is unemployment simply a practical issue that can be resolved by providing a job. Even if more jobs were available, many young people would not be able to detach themselves from, and abandon, their cultural support system in order to sustain attendance. In order to deal with the trauma of redundancy and unemployment, the parental generation has unwittingly evolved a rationalisation of their rejection and predicament which conveys to their young people that there is no hope of change. By attempting to cajole and coerce young people into 'initiatives' (both 'special measures' and voluntary measures) we have created a cultural battleground and further entrenched non participation as a usually inarticulate but nonetheless quasi-political stance. These young people believe they are lifelong members of a jobless culture and are habituated to a routine of late rising and late nights, compounded for many by alcohol and drug use. This lifestyle is normative to many households and would not support individuals who were considering realigning their biological clocks to the timetable of a job, or their cultural priorities to the expectations of the workplace.

Just as an honest person in a house of thieves is a deviant, so too is the person with a work ethic in communities that have evolved a mentality and style of living to deal with what often seems inevitable - life on the dole. Any attempt to intervene in order to change this culture is riddled with difficulty and tension.

Interventions

Attempts at professional intervention in these communities have been diverse and multi-pronged, not just around employment and training, but in education, health, housing and criminal justice. There was once the idea of 'defensible space'; today there is 'zero tolerance'. More flexible, 'partnership' strategies have been encouraged, but their impact on the ground has been questionable, despite some high profile success stories. Many strategies have been directed at young people, particularly in terms of training and employment, but also around crime prevention and combating drug misuse. We would argue that given the informal and illegal counter-cultures of economic activity and the social relationships that sustain them, it has to be recognised that even with the very best support and training related to employment, many 'target' individuals would not respond positively or be able to sustain any motivation because formal employment would undermine (or be undermined by) their wider lifestyles and social networks: the values and routines of their social and domestic culture outside of the work environment would at best be distracting and at worst antagonistic. And, unless one can guarantee

some long-term future in more 'ordered' lifestyles secured by formal employment which pays a 'decent' wage, its achievement in only the short term jeopardises the capacity of individuals to survive in the long term, since survival depends on effective opportunism in what looks from the outside to be chaotic circumstances but is in fact an alternative culture. Dafydd, for example, a 19-year old poly-drug user, commented, 'Yeah, sure, I'd like to stop using, but I have to get my 'script [prescription for methadone] to make the money I need. How else can I get by?' Moving in and out is not always an option. Opportunities are often best sustained by staying *in*; any venture outrisks, at best, having to renegotiate entry if the individual 'falls back' and, at worst, exclusion and rejection by former peers. So it may not be wise to move out. Those within such cultures are often reluctant even to try because of what Shane Blackman (1997) has characterised as 'fear of the fall'. Professionals from the outside may be contributing to these processes by trying to coerce and manipulate more response to the 'job culture' when that is not what serves young people best within *their* daily culture. It smacks of imperialism, imported by those from backgrounds of material advantage and relative security, who can only view the behaviour of others through their own cultural values and concepts such as 'job satisfaction', 'life management', 'planning for the future' and 'career', which ring hollow in young people's cultural experience.

The issues outlined above are important when developing or reflecting on 'youth work' interventions. What is in it for more excluded young people? No wonder they are cautious about committing themselves to participation. Talk of empowerment and choice in youth work terms is very different from the ways in which marginalised young people endeavour to 'empower' themselves and make their own 'choices' within a very limited range of options. What youth workers find themselves up against is often 'in your face' opposition and hostility, from mistrustful young people who may well be drunk or stoned, who are not receptive to conversation or communication. It is a long way from the kind of youth work debated in policy and conference forums. It has more to do with 'harm reduction' strategies than constructive personal development. Planned programmes with set objectives to be achieved through the sensitive and responsive application of appropriate methods are *not* the order of the day; youth workers have to think on the hoof, coping with verbal abuse, sometimes aggression and most often complete disinterest. It is hardly textbook stuff, but it is the reality - a reality from which managers and policy makers are shielded through filters of self-interested information management.

We acknowledge the risks in such an argument, risks that have kept it unspoken to date. We do fear that one response to defining these cultures of unemployment and resignation as entrenched and unchangeable will be to raise questions

whether one should bother to fund youth work practice in such contexts. Our view is unequivocal. We should bother because the bleak current circumstances for these young people will get bleaker unless we can find the process that genuinely breaks the cycle. But to do this there needs to be time (long-term strategies), there need to be authentic, permanent escape routes (not mythical, temporary ones), and there need to be consistent and agreed cross-agency initiatives (not tokenistic, often short-term and sometimes competing ones) which are the result of listening to young people to create processes that are firmly embedded in the needs of these communities (not conceived from on high because they are political expedient). In other words, youth work - broadly conceived of as *work with young people* as well as its narrower definitions - needs to be firmly attached to a wider, coherent youth policy (rather that serving as a mythical panacea for its incoherence and failure). Any such youth policy must flow from a *realistic,* rather than aspirational, appraisal of the condition and attitudes of the young people at whom it is directed.

Implications and Conclusions

In this paper, we have endeavoured to portray two threads of argument concerning youth and community work intervention. First, there has been an increasing political and policy preoccupation with dealing with 'disaffection' amongst young people (especially young men) at a time when economic, social and spatial exclusion has been compounded both by institutional practices in education and training and by ever more protracted and uncertain youth transitions. For both institutional and individual reasons, young people are at greater risk of falling to the margins, or perceiving no value in remaining within mainstream routes to adulthood. Secondly, simultaneously, the voluntary organisations which have traditionally worked at the sharp end with such groups of young people have become more cash-strapped, image-conscious and outcome-focused, aspiring to a 'professionalism' which will establish their credibility with new funding and partnership regimes and thereby ensuring their survival. Many have elected to 'cherry pick' easier ground on which to work; others have concocted effective public relations to conceal the limited impact of their (usually short-term) practice in the tough territory which we have described. A spiral of delusion is being played out here. This is not to blame either the 'apathy' of young people or the 'ineffectiveness' of interventions. Young people are understandably cautious, but this does not mean that nothing works, although it may mean that things will not work as effectively and dramatically as is often hoped - by those observing from a distance. Young people who are genuinely 'disaffected' for a cluster of reasons present a tough challenge: persuading them that things can or might be different takes sensitivity and time. Nor are those who work within community-based voluntary organisations redundant (for they

can still often represent important, if modest, social glue and an independent source of personal support and advice), but they are the victims of misguided and unrealistic expectations on the part of funders and management. And, however committed they may be, they are also often the victims of the legacy and reputation of their predecessors. As a result, it is all too easy for them to become trapped between the sky-high expectations placed upon them from outside and a cynical lack of response from those they are expected to be working with. When trapped, it is understandable (once more) that they seek ways of salvaging their own personal and professional futures. Just like the young people they are trying to work with, they need receptivity to and support in dealing with the genuine, rather than idealised and aspirational, experiences that they are encountering on a daily basis.

Our central argument, therefore, is that cultures of resignation and non-participation, which are necessary psychological 'coping strategies' in areas of high unemployment and severe marginalisation, have been *compounded* by the failure of many past (and present) initiatives to sustain their attempts at intervention. Addressing and changing values and lifestyles is not a short term agenda; it will require, for the majority of individuals, long term support if they are to be able to seriously entertain and maintain their effort to change. There will have to be real and credible possibilities available for alternative ways of living - in the labour market or elsewhere. Too often, youth and community projects have run out of time before they can deliver such possibilities.

This is the nub of the problem. Short term funding has fomented a situation in which staff turnover is unavoidable. Yet a succession of workers in a range of community support agencies has inevitably created a cynicism amongst target groups about becoming involved at all. Cyril (50), the parent of one of the young men, noted wryly, 'You're the eighth worker we've had in six years. They all move on to better jobs and we're left here - with nothing'. Once bitten twice shy: after a dozen or so bites, withdrawal is the only sensible option. In such a context, individuals who put themselves forward for volunteering, training or employment are the exceptions that prove the rule. They may be heralded as examples of the potential for intervention, but invariably they do more to demonstrate the massive breach which has to be overcome if a wider population is to be reached. The pull of competing cultural pressures on the many is too great.

The first step in effecting any change and development is for an honest recognition of the deep-rooted (economic, cultural and psychological) issues that we are up against. Perhaps we cannot achieve much; if not, let us be honest about it, rather than massaging our work to portray it as a qualified success. It is hardly surprising

that young people are cynical about training schemes, because they so rarely lead to jobs (which is what they are claimed to do, or *were* until 'employability' superseded 'employment' as the primary policy objective). Atrophying skills can be more depressing than having no skills. Those who, for whatever reason, do find the motivation and enthusiasm to participate in training are seen as naive in believing that their effort will be rewarded and are in the eyes of their peers confirmation of the futility of their situation: if even the apparently motivated and talented are struggling to find decent work, what is the point?

We have lost sight of the bases on which young people make their decisions; projects directed at young people are overwhelmingly constructed from a top-down rationalist position, with neat target-setting, methodologies and considerations of 'value for money'. Practitioners at the sharp end, required to operationalise such crisp strategic thinking, are being set up to fail. The real challenge is to get into dialogue with young people and other residents within these communities to find out what is really going on. Only with a clearer understanding of the values that underpin everyday behaviour can we even start to think about how to redirect the cultures of such communities towards a more constructive agenda. An insight into those values and patterns would almost certainly convey an internal logic and would explain much of the lack of engagement with projects apparently designed on their behalf. This would, in turn, tell us one of two things. To give up and go home, or - more critically - to rethink the nature of our interventions, in terms of both its content and timescale, as well as appropriate 'outcome' considerations. Either would at least put an end to the cycles of delusion which are currently being played out by funders, projects and workers - to no benefit whatsoever to many of the young people who are allegedly the 'beneficiaries' of such initiatives.

Howard Williamson *is a Senior Research Associate at Cardiff University.*

Robin Middlemiss *is a detached youth worker with 'disaffected' youth in the Welsh valleys.*

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SEX FOR SALE:

A profile of young male sex workers' circumstances, choices and risks

SHEILA KERSHAW

Abstract

There has been a great deal of research interest into female sex work, however comparatively little is known about young men who also earn their money through selling sex on the streets. Having said this, amongst social workers, health, youth and community work professionals, there is a growing concern that some young men are increasingly involving themselves in sex work in large cities. They believe a significant number of young men are being forced by socio-economic factors into this 'risky' and often dangerous way of life. It is also their contention that discriminatory legislation has increased the young men's vulnerability in terms of their health, welfare and personal safety. Fear of having to disclose information about their lifestyle, young male prostitutes are inadvertently denied easy access to health, education and protection and as such put their lives at risk from sexually transmitted diseases including HIV and AIDS. This paper therefore intends to discuss some of these issues and to raise awareness of the need for appropriate health and welfare services and support.

Introduction: setting the context

'Sex work', 'commercial sex', 'prostitution', 'renting' and 'hustling', are some of the labels that imply the exchange of sex for money or other forms of payment. However these labels can be misleading and do not always convey the true nature of the work. For some young street sex workers, their lifestyle can carry the risk of physical violence, exploitation, humiliation, and sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV). The labels are also inevitably loaded given society's general disapproval of anyone selling or buying sex, and sex outside of marriage. In addition others argue that these labels are inappropriate to describe younger people selling sex and that young men under the age of 16 are victims of abuse and exploitation by older adult men (Council of Europe 1993).

Anecdotal evidence and empirical research (Harris 1973, Lloyd 1979, Donovan 1991) into this area suggests that around the world thousands of young men are engaged in sex work on a daily basis and greater numbers of men, (less so women), are buying into this service. (AMOC 1997, Plant and Plant 1992). Scouring the literature, what also becomes evident is that there are many differences between female sex work and male sex work, and many variations within male sex work itself.

Traditional taboos about homosexuality and men selling sex, means male street sex workers are generally more invisible, and thus more difficult for the uninitiated

to identify than are female sex workers. Male street sex workers tend to loiter in public places that provide easy access to large groups of people. For example bars, bus and railway stations, public toilets, gay cruising areas, street-corners and other public places, are all locations where they feel they are not easily identifiable, yet able to engage with potential clients. Also generally fairly well hidden, are the places where sex occurs. Examples for street sex workers would be in cars, toilets, cheap hotels, cinemas, customers' homes or derelict sites. These places also provide the sex workers and client with a legitimate reason for being there (Coombes 1974). Sex can be bought from massage parlours, saunas, escort agencies and through the internet. It is also advertised in telephone kiosks, in popular newspapers and magazines.

In many countries, selling sex is either illegal or semi-illegal. In those countries where the work has been de-criminalised, workers suggest this means the activity is tolerated by the majority but by no means accepted (AMOC 1997). For young men selling sex or engaging in similar activity with other men in the UK, if caught and convicted, the worst scenario is imprisonment. Consequently fearing stigmatisation, marginalisation or arrest, very few individuals involved in the male sex industry openly admit they are. Thus the combination of criminalising legislation and negative societal attitudes, create a climate of secrecy and forces some sex work underground (Scambler and Scambler 1997). It also means many young street sex workers are compelled to live unnecessarily closeted, isolated and lonely lives. Often this will exacerbate any personal, psychological difficulties they may have, as well as heighten any risk-taking behaviour they might engage in.

Young men selling sex is not a new phenomenon. For centuries young boys have been involved in prostitution (Foster 1993, Scambler and Scambler 1997). However a series of recent events has given rise to concern, bringing the issue to the forefront of professional and public attention. In England in the 1980s, sexual abuse of children and paedophile networks were uncovered as well as the international trafficking of children and young people for sexual purposes. Research into the physical and sexual abuse of children at home, revealed how many of these later became involved in prostitution. (Barrett 1995). These findings were supported by research by Stein, Frost and Rees (1994), commissioned by the Children's Society on young people and homelessness. Other research (Pitts (1997) also commissioned by the Children's Society) into the impact of changes in benefits to young people again highlighted their lack of economic power, noting that to survive, some resorted to selling sex on the streets.

In an International context, in 1993 the Council of Europe in Strasbourg published a report on 'Sex, Exploitation, Pornography and Prostitution'. The report highlighted

the number of young people involved in prostitution and links were made with international crime. In the early nineties, the increase in the spread of HIV and perceived risk of an epidemic generated a great deal of academic interest. Thus, a great deal of funded research was commissioned to consider the link between health issues and risk taking behaviour (Plant, Plant, Peck and Sellers 1989, Barnard McKegany and Bloor 1990). Some of this research focused on the lifestyles of groups generally viewed by society as sexually promiscuous. These included gay men, drug users and women involved in sex work. By default, and as such to a lesser degree, this often included young men who were also selling sex.

Finally in 1997, The European Network of Male Prostitution (supported by the European Commission) formed. This was partly in recognition that in many parts of the European Union, Boys (particularly from Northern Africa and Eastern Europe) were increasingly involving themselves in the sex industry. Many were marginalised, usually very isolated, poor, and because of restrictive immigration laws, they were identified as vulnerable to all kinds of dependency, exploitation and abuse.

Profile of the boys

With a view to highlighting the need for appropriate health, welfare and other support services, and raising awareness of other issues and dilemmas young street sex workers face, various pieces of research (McMullan 1998, Barrett 1995) have set out to establish a profile of the boys. There is however little research that focuses solely on male prostitution as much of our understanding has evolved within the context of larger pieces of research, particularly that into drug use, and HIV (Allen 1980, Bloor, McKeganey and Barnard 1990, Tomlinson, Hillman and Harris 1989). Homophobia and the taboos of selling sex have also made it difficult for some men to openly discuss issues about their identity and lifestyles. Hence research is not necessarily representative of all young male sex workers.

Various categories of male sex workers have been identified, (Raven 1963, Allen 1980) the number ranging from 3 to 5, some categories partly overlapping or merging. The first category of male sex workers are the full time street workers and bar hustlers. The majority of the boys in this category are between 15-25 years of age, engaging in homosexual behaviour but generally describing themselves as heterosexual. Having said this, even if they were homosexual, as many are, it would take courage to admit this because being 'gay' is associated with being effeminate, and alongside their peers and in their hostile environment they need to appear tough in order to survive.

Many of the boys who sell sex on the street are homeless (Craft, 1966, McMullan 1980) being runaways from home or local authority care. They are generally disadvantaged,

isolated and lonely often coming from broken homes and enter prostitution as a means of survival (de Muth 1994). These findings were echoed in research carried out by Yorkshire MESMAC, (MEn who have Sex with Men - Action in the Community 1996). They noted that some of the boys in their research not only lacked decent accommodation but were often engaged in drug and alcohol abuse. Similarly Harris (1973) studied 6 male prostitutes in Piccadilly Circus. He found that the majority had run away from home because of personal difficulties. They needed to survive and needed somewhere to live and thus engaged in money making behaviour they had never heard of before, or that they had previously rejected. Some had left overcrowded homes and poverty and travelled to London, arriving very starry eyed and just wanting to make money. Bennello's (1994) research confirms that frequently the boys are penniless, desperate, have no meaningful relationships, and sleep rough for long periods of time. De Muth (1994) refers to some being confused about their sexuality and suggests they see prostitution as one way of engaging in homosexual sex. McMullen (1988), having listed the background of the boys, found many lacked social skills, were unlikely to have educational qualifications or previous work experience, and thus little motivation to seek paid work. He also suggested many boys were likely to have been sexually abused, which resulted in them having a poor self image, identity problems and being emotionally disturbed. Research in Europe (AMOC 1997) suggested many boys were engaged in criminal behaviour, had no close friends, had little money or clothing and did not know how to claim state benefits. A few, they noted, were transvestite or transsexual. This research also suggested many boys were likely to have a series of sexual partners and be unlikely to have the same partner for long. Clearly this accumulation of research would indicate that, for a vast majority of the young men who sell sex on the street, their entry was not by informed choice, but instead brought about by a number of circumstances beyond their immediate control.

A second category of sex workers are young men often with backgrounds not dissimilar to those described in the first category. However they are described as members of gang subcultures in which strictly defined sexual acts are accepted on the basis of exploiting heterosexual or homosexual customers (Allen 1980). These boys regard sex work as a game, and an extension of other delinquent and criminal acts. The boys are not necessarily gay and often steal from their clients, knowing only too well the difficulties their clients will have if they decide to report a theft to the police. Anecdotal evidence from European agencies also notes boys in this group are often heavy drug users and when desperate for a fix, would not hesitate to steal money or drugs from clients, or even other sex workers in similar positions to themselves.

A third category of male sex worker is one who only engages in the activity part time. They are either gay or heterosexual and chose sex work as a means of supplementing their income. This can be for various reasons. Examples quoted in the literature (Sutcliffe 1994) include students who need to supplement their grants, interior designers and hairdressers who want to buy designer clothes and go on expensive holidays. This category of sex worker will often sign up with an escort agency for short periods of time. In Sutcliffe's (1994) study of male prostitution in London, young guardsmen fell into this category ie. when they were off duty they would go into the city to earn extra money. For this group, sex was just a means to an end and afterwards they returned to their everyday lives and partners.

A final category are those young men referred to as full time home workers, escorts or masseurs, who are often articulate, well educated, middle class homosexual young men. These young men can afford their own accommodation, go on holiday and generally do not have a serious problems with the law, drink or hard drugs. They chose to engage in this activity because they like sex, meeting people and enjoy a good life style including dining out and dressing smartly (Weisburg 1985). Hall (1994) suggests that in contrast to street work, working as an escort is a more lucrative way for young men to ply their trade and to be able to give a more discrete service to the customer. Anecdotal evidence suggests working conditions for this category of sex worker generally tend to include safer working environments ie. apartments, hotels and premises where sex is the sole purpose and where washing facilities and condoms are more likely to be at hand.

The young men in this final category are often older than those working on the street and generally far more aware of safer sex practices. Whilst their services are continually being advertised through popular magazines, gay papers and the internet, for new customers, they will also have regular customers. Hall (1994), writing in the 'Independent' said that at any one time you can find 20 addresses in London advertising escorts and masseur services for men. In 1998 there were considerably more than 20, and more still on the internet. Through this electronic medium hundreds of young men and agencies are advertising services including explicit photographs and personal details of the young men, charges for a variety of services, and contact numbers.

Thus the literature identifies several themes in terms of male sex workers' profiles, circumstances and motivations to engage in selling sex as well as more emotional aspects of the work. For example, for many boys, power and control was an issue in that many had felt vulnerable in their childhood and subject to the control of older men. Now, through their work, they felt they had some control over their lives, particularly in terms of money to satisfy their needs (Raven 1963, McMullan

1987). Sexuality was also seen as an issue, as some boys appeared to be experimenting with sex, testing out their sexual identity (Weisberg 1985, Coombes 1974). For others also questioning their sexuality, the willingness of men to pay for their time seemed to increase their self esteem and self image (Weisberg 1985). Selling sex has also been suggested as a means of satisfying human basic needs eg the desperate need for money to buy food and shelter or to buy drugs (Newman 1989, Rees 1993). Finally personal motivation has been acknowledged as a common motivating factor, in that many young men like the way they earn money, thus legitimising what they do. (Weisberg 1985, Coombes 1974).

Although the research profiling the young person is helpful, what research cannot tell us, because there are very few recorded statistics, is how many young boys are actually involved in prostitution. The AMOC project in Amsterdam suggests anything from 400-1000 boys are working in Holland every day. The ADZON project in Brussels have a drop-in facility, and in 1996, 342 boys made use of their facilities (AMOC 1997). The Streetwise project in London, a voluntary agency providing services to male street workers, reported having contact with 50-60 boys per month. It was also Streetwise (1991) that indicated that most of the young boys had had contact with the police and the criminal justice system. Many had been charged with highway obstruction, which seemed to be the way in which the police controlled street sex workers. This charge meant the boys were dragged in to the criminal justice system. Many were fined but couldn't pay which added to their pressures, often leading them to further involvement with the system. 15% of those who used Streetwise's drop-in were on probation, and 49% were said to be ex-offenders.

Clients

Although there is some information and a great deal of speculation, very little is known about men who pay for sexual services from young boys. However from the available information it is clear that there are many more clients than boys. McKegany and Bloor (1990) suggest that many of the men are covert bisexuals, or heterosexual married men who want occasional, same-sex encounters. Other men seek anonymous sex with different boys and with no emotional ties, and to pay money to a boy for sex is one way of achieving this. Other research (Europap 1997), suggests some men are primarily looking for sex, whilst there are others who look for entertainment and company. This study noted only a minority of the men were identified as gay. This seems consistent with other pieces of research (Health Education Authority 1997) which confirms that if gay men want sex they only need to go into the gay bars and have sex with their partner and neither of these measures incur any financial cost.

Risks: physical

Boys engaging in prostitution put themselves at serious emotional and physical risk, and seeing them on the streets does not adequately convey the risk they are taking. From research (Streetwise Youth 1997), it appears either boys deny the risks they are taking as a means of surviving or genuinely do not realise the danger they are entering into, for example, the risks of violent physical attacks and/or rape. These are common but rarely reported. The threat of murder also exists, especially for the street sex workers. For example, a 14 year old boy called Jason Swift agreed to accompany 4 men, who each offered him £5 to have sex with them. Jason went back to a house with the men and there they not only subjected him to violent sexual acts but also smothered him to death in the process. Similarly, Dennis Nilsen regularly picked up boys in a bar in London, taking each one back to his home to have sex with them before murdering them. Nilsen murdered 15 boys in total and each one of them had run away from home. Many boys are not murdered but nonetheless often find themselves forced into very painful, physically and/or psychologically damaging sexual acts and end up taking risks with their health either through unprotected sex or drug use. Many become the subject of pornographic films or videos and as such take the risk of being arrested. The Independent newspaper ran an article on the lucrative business of child pornography, quoting a study that suggested that 250 million videos of child pornography were circulating world wide. Many of the children in the videos were from Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Philippines, but it has also been my experience working with young boys in this country, that it wasn't uncommon for them to have been filmed having sex, including sadomasochistic sex.

Risk: Sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Gay men, drug users, and others involved in sex work, all have been at some time or another blamed for the spread of HIV. Ironically it is these very same groups who are generally well aware of the consequences of unprotected sex and the sharing of dirty needles and who organised themselves to raise awareness about transmission and prevention through safer sex campaigns. For example, national organisations such as MESMAC and Body Positive set up local self help groups, provided information about safer sex, distributed condoms, needles and needle wipes and organised various relevant workshops and training events.

Having said this, Tomlinson, Hillman and Harris (1989) from St Mary's Hospital, London, carried out research into young male sex workers and safer sex and they discovered that of the boys on the street, 50% of the sample did not wear a condom. Similar research in Edinburgh (McKegany, Barnard and Bloor 1990) found that 5% of the rent boys have HIV and an article in the Independent (Bennello, 1994) also indicated 1 in 3 boys were HIV positive. Bloor, McKeganey, and Barnard (1990)

reported one boy saying that in any one day he could have 6 clients and he worked 6 days per week. They therefore estimated that on average, this boy, would have approximately 1900 sexual encounters per year. In addition, many young men also reported the risk of having unsafe sex for more money, particularly when the difference between safer and unsafe sex was £40 or more and they were homeless and hungry.

For the most part, I have been referring to boys who work on the streets because there seems to be a difference between those and the boys who work in massage parlours and as escorts. In fact most of the latter do not want to be labelled as prostitutes because of the stigma and shame attached. Most of them will have some choice for their work and enjoy a private life too. Clearly there are vast differences between street workers and the other two groups. We only need to compare their circumstances and backgrounds. Different behaviours and circumstances have a bearing on the risk of HIV. There are also some differences between young male street workers and older female prostitutes. McKegany and Barnard (1996) suggest older women are well aware of HIV infection and unlike the boys, most use condoms as part of their job. The older women are also known to stick firmly to negotiating protected sex, and to make clear what their terms are, where the sex will take place and take payment first. Although at first sight it may appear that older female prostitutes in many ways are in control of their situation, yet they are still subject to innumerable risks from their clients as well as their pimps who, through various means, recruit them, control them, then proceed to live off the proceeds of their work (Hopkins 1996).

McMullen (1988) suggested that many young boys working the streets were not very articulate and as such are less able to negotiate safer sex. Some were embarrassed, others said that sex was sometimes negotiated through eye contact and as such they felt unable to raise the issue afterwards. More often than not, the boys do not have condoms anyway or money to buy them. Scambler and Scambler (1997) suggest many boys are too young to go to family planning clinics, others have no idea how to use condoms properly. As already indicated, where older female prostitutes made what was on offer clear to the client, most boys said they just gave the punter what they wanted, where they wanted it and asked for the money afterwards. Often they were not paid the amount of money they asked for. Finally, unlike female prostitutes who are usually initiated into prostitution by other women or pimps, most boys, on the whole, enter into it on their own and learn by trial and error. Sometimes they meet up with other boys after a while, although as already indicated, their career in prostitution is usually fairly short, sometimes only weeks.

Drugs

Drug use is prevalent in sex work for a variety of reasons and its use is known to increase once young men enter the world of sex. (Streetwise Youth 1995, Plant 1990). Drugs help the young men to suppress or switch off from the consequences of their actions, or on the other hand can increase feelings of lust (for example, poppers or cocaine). Drugs are also known to be used by clients in payment for sex. (Streetwise Youth 1995, Plant 1990). McKegany, Barnard and Bloor (1989) found drugs were often offered to the boys as payment for unsafe sexual activity. It has been known that some boys will have sex to get money to buy drugs and often give them to their regular partner and some boys have been encouraged by clients to take drugs prior to engaging in sex. At the same time, unlike information from other groups in Europe (AMOC 1997) where drugs are a major factor and motivator for selling sex, in comparison this seems to apply less in the UK. Although more up-to-date research is needed in this respect, current UK research (Plant 1993) suggests some escorts will admit to taking softer, trendier drugs such as ecstasy, cannabis, cocaine (non intravenous) and some street workers intravenous use of cocaine or heroin.

Sexual abuse

The boundaries between prostitution and child sexual abuse are very blurred. Firstly some boys will be under age, and therefore along with their female counterparts, should be subject to child protection procedures. Secondly, as McMullen (1988) notes, male prostitution is seldom perceived to be linked with sexual abuse and suggests reasons for this are that the boys tend to be elusive, ask no questions and to have restricted contact with schools, social workers and families. If they had contact, then they would perhaps be referred to Social Service departments and as a result child protection procedures would be instigated as noted above. In a similar vein, Cockrell and Hoffman (1989) suggest that the non existence of policy and guidelines specifically related to boys involved in prostitution is unhelpful as is the lack of knowledge and understanding in this area of work. These feelings are echoed by Bennello (1994) who feels that agencies view young male sex workers as low priority.

There is another link between selling sex and child sexual abuse in so far as some of the boys at least will have been victims of sexual abuse before engaging in the work (McMullen 1988). A study in San Francisco (Weisburg 1985) found a large number of young men had been sexually abused as children, therefore recognising early on the value of their bodies. Silbert and Pines (1981) examining the effects of sexual abuse concluded that sexual abuse did not cause young people to engage in selling sex, but their experience made them more vulnerable and created a disposition

which made them more likely than a non abused person to engage in the activity. An article in 'Community Care' (Redding 1989) referred to boys being picked up at railway stations and taken away for sex or recruited through bogus adverts in newspapers. Research (Raven 1963) suggests that many boys working the streets engage in sex but are not necessarily aware that they are being exploited and abused. As already indicated, the boys will legitimise what they are through the money they earn, yet talk about self blame, guilt and shame. They often feel angry, depressed and suicidal. Their situation makes them feel helpless and they feel no one cares. They talk about taking a passive role in sex, doing what they are told but at the same time objectify the man. Many disassociate from all emotions. Many of the boys feel defenceless, with nowhere to turn. All of this sounds pretty familiar for those of us who have been involved over the years with children who have been sexually abused. Certainly some boys seem to make a choice to enter into prostitution, and feel all right about casual sex for money. However it is clear that for a large number, particularly those boys on the streets, sex is, or is perceived to be, their only commodity for survival.

Although there are several voluntary organisations in major cities, who work closely with male streetworkers, offering practical services and support, it is still an under resourced area of work. Whilst the struggle for resources continues, many young people remain in desperate need of help. Only when some of the more pertinent issues are addressed and further insight and understanding into the lifestyles, choices and circumstances of many young men is available will we have the means to begin to work towards some change in the lives of boys engaged in this risky and often dangerous way of life.

Sheila Kershaw *works at Liverpool John Moores University, School of Law and Applied Social Studies.*

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LEARNING TO LISTEN:

Involving children in the development of out of school care

FIONA SMITH AND JOHN BARKER

Introduction

The 1990s has been a volatile decade for children in the United Kingdom. The number of mothers employed outside the home has increased substantially, as has the number of children growing up in lone parent households. In addition, fear for children's safety in public space has escalated, fuelling the moral panic surrounding childhood. These social changes have led to a dramatic rise in the number of children being cared for in out of school clubs. Usually referred to as after school clubs, breakfast clubs and holiday playclubs, these adult supervised environments provide play and learning opportunities for children and young people aged 4-14 years, after school and during the school holidays. As this paper will highlight, the service has been and, is being, developed primarily to satisfy the needs of adult users, including parents and local employers. Consideration of the views and specific needs of the rapidly growing number of children using the service is not, therefore, at the top of the policy makers agenda.

Yet children are the primary users of out of school services. As such, their views need to be taken into account during this period of rapid expansion. Drawing on the preliminary findings of research being carried out throughout England and Wales[1], this paper explores ways in which children and young people can be consulted over the development of the service. The implications of this research can be extended to the wider policy arena.

National Policy and Out of School Provision: 1993-1998

The rapid expansion of the out of school service was initially facilitated by the Conservative Government's 'Out of School Childcare Initiative' which invested just under £60M between April 1993 and May 1997 to expand the number of clubs from approximately 1,000 to 3,500 (Smith and Barker, 1998a). This initiative was 'employment driven', aiming to reduce structural constraints to parental (in particular maternal) employment opportunities. Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) were chosen to develop the service at the local level. At the launch of the initiative, Gillian Shephard, the then Secretary of State for Employment argued that:

> *TECs are key institutions in the **local labour market** and it therefore makes sense for them to take the initiative. They know about the job and training opportunities, the local transport, the local wage levels, they deal all the time with employers, women returners, aspiring entrepreneurs and people*

wishing to move up the career ladder. They understand the particular problems of their localities, whether inner cities or rural areas (emphasis added).
(Department of Education and Employment, 1997)

TECs, it was thus argued, were ideally positioned to develop a local strategy for out of school childcare provision and to consider the needs of the *local labour market.* Strategic planning of provision to promote not just childcare but equal opportunities, employment for women returners, training and educational opportunities and economic development were intrinsic to the initiative's brief. One explicit result of delegating responsibility to the TECs, therefore, was to (re)define out of school childcare primarily as a service to aid economic development and employment growth.

The link between out of school provision and parental employment is set to continue with Labour's plans to expand the network of out of school clubs as part of its 'Welfare to Work' and 'New Deal for Lone Parents' Programmes. Much of the new provision is to be developed through Single Regeneration Strategies, emphasising the importance of out of school care to the economic well-being of communities. Following last November's pre-budget announcement by Gordon Brown that £30M from the Windfall Tax, £50M from the Out of School Childcare Initiative and £220M from the New Opportunities Fund will be invested over the next five years to establish 30,000 new clubs providing one million new out of school places, the following statements were made by Government Ministers. Harriet Harman, the (then) Secretary of State for Social Security, commented:

The £300M package for childcare is an investment which could transform all ***parents*** *lives, particularly* ***lone parents****. It means out of school childcare for every community in Britain. (emphasis added)*
(Department of Education and Employment, 1997)

David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education and Employment, noted that:

At least half of all secondary schools and a quarter of all primary schools are expected to receive lottery funds to allow them to offer pupils educational activities outside the school day. Such clubs will also be of help to ***working parents.*** *(emphasis added)*
(Department of Education and Employment, 1997)

Chris Smith, Secretary of State for National Heritage, added:

By extending the out of school childcare activities we promised before the election we will be able to help more children do better at school and at the same time provide the high quality childcare that all ***working parents*** *want. It's a win for kids and win for their mums and dads. (emphasis added)*
(Department of Education and Employment, 1997)

Whilst the Ministers mention the potential educational benefits of an extended out of school service for children, the emphasis on the benefits for *'working parents'* is clear from these soundbites. What is less clear, however, is how the service will impact upon the lives of the *children* using it and, in particular, what *children* perceive the benefits of the service to be. Thus far the Government has not included children and young people in an evaluation of the out of school service, as the focus has been upon economic gains and parental employment. The implication is that the service will be developed to meet the needs of *'adult users'* rather than those of children and young people who are the primary users of out of school care.

In this paper we wish to consider how policy makers can develop a service which meets the needs and desires of those children and young people using it. It is crucial that children and young people feel happy to spend time in their out of school club as these environments will play an increasingly significant role in their day to day experiences. The Government's new proposals aim to provide childcare for one million children and young people by 2003. Moreover, these children will spend up to 750 hours a year in these new settings - potentially more time than they spend in school or awake at home. The impact on children of the recent policy developments will arguably be the most significant outside of the formal education system this decade. As we will argue, these developments must consider the views of children if we are to be confident of the growth of a service which meets *their* needs and desires.

The case for consultation

> *Children must be allowed and encouraged to participate in decision-making especially in policy areas such as [out of school care] where they constitute the significant consumer group.*
> *(Franklin, 1995, p19)*

Children and young people make up nearly a quarter of the British population. They thus constitute a significant proportion of British society, but one which is not actively engaged in the political process. Whilst children are intrinsic to the communities in which they live, they are politically disenfranchised from the rest of society. In most political arenas, particularly at the level of central government, '[t]he old adage *children should be seen and not heard* epitomises their invisibility' (Willow, 1997). Despite some notable exceptions at the local level, children are rarely consulted about the services they receive, including out of school provision.

However, children and young people, like adults, are human beings who have basic human rights. As Willow (1997) argues, they have the right to contribute and participate in the decision-making processes about issues which affect their lives.

Participation by children and young people benefits those individuals taking part, who gain a sense of social responsibility, as citizens within their wider communities.

> *The capacity to demonstrate a sense of awareness and responsibility towards others must derive from the experience of being offered opportunities to exercise responsibility oneself. It is the very act of respecting children's right to participate in decision making that contributes to the development of a capacity to exercise a sense of social responsibility.*
> *(Lansdown, 1995, p31)*

Moreover, there are pragmatic reasons for consulting user groups. The ability to establish a consultative relationship with service users enhances, as has been found time and time again in the case of adult users of a plethora of services, the quality of the service and satisfaction of the clients (see LGIU, 1995 for examples). So why are these principles rarely adopted in the case of children's services? This question is particularly perplexing considering the fact that the idea that children should be consulted about the services they use is central to the United Nations Convention (1989) on the Rights of the Child. By ratifying the Convention in 1991, the UK Government declared its intention to uphold the Convention's 54 Articles, including Article 12 which states:

(1) Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

(2) For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

As Gerrison Lansdown (1995), (Director of the Children's Rights Unit), argues, Article 12, in conjunction with the other 53 Articles of the UN Convention and the 1989 Children's Act, provides: 'a powerful assertion of children's right to be actors in their own lives and not merely passive recipients of adult decision making' (Lansdown, 1995, p2). However, as stated previously, children in the UK are rarely consulted about the services they receive. In 1995 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child noted the lack of children's and young people's participation in the UK. Whilst the report recommended that the UK government 'consider the possibility of establishing further mechanisms to facilitate the participation of children in decisions affecting them', (Willow, 1997) little progress seems to have been made at the level of National Policy. Children were not consulted by the

Conservative Government at the inception of the 'Out of School Childcare Initiative' and are not being consulted by the present Government in the development of the National Childcare Strategy. The UK is thus failing to uphold the UN Convention of which it is a signatory.

The process of consultation: an example from the research

There are many different ways in which children can be enabled to participate in decision-making processes about issues which affect their lives. Hart (1992) identifies different degrees of participation, ranging from those initiated by adults, to those initiated by children. This recognises the need for adults in certain circumstances to play an active role and to step back in other arenas where children can exercise more control. Due to the invisibility of children's views in the development of the out of school policy, we believe it is currently necessary for adults to work with children in order to illicit their views (Smith and Barker, 1998b). In the development of our project entitled 'Child centred after school and holiday childcare', we therefore felt it necessary for us, as adult researchers, to facilitate the participation of children and young people. We thus concur with Franklin (1995) who argues: 'Children have been excluded from participation in formal decision-making for so long, that it seems unlikely that they could enter this arena without the initial support and advocacy of adults.' (Franklin, 1995, pp14-15).

Adult advocacy within children's and young people's participation can be problematic. In addition to recognising different types of participation, Hart (1992) also identifies three types of non-participation. These are activities which appear to be participatory but belie a deeper level of exploitation, in which adults use the pretext of participation to promote their agendas, rather than those defined by children and young people. Such work can be tokenistic, manipulative and decorative (Hart, 1992).

The 'Child centred after school and holiday childcare' project attempted various strategies to ensure meaningful participation by children and young people. This was achieved through incorporating the views and wishes of children and young people at all stages of the project. Children and young people were consulted during the pre-pilot phase of the project through focus group interviews. This enabled the research design itself to take on board children's and young people's own views about what parts of the service should be evaluated. They identified the following five themes as key indicators and issues for the project to consider:

1. *Children and young people's evaluation of the activities on offer*
2. *Children's views of playworkers*

3. *How safe and friendly children thought the clubs were*
4. *The rules of the club and children's reactions to them*
5. *To what extent children participated in what happened in the club.*

This initial stage of consultation with children and young people ensured that it was their agenda influencing the project, rather than simply that of the adult researchers. This initial stage of consultation aimed to prevent the project being tokenistic, decorative or manipulative and ensured it was children's agendas influencing the project's design. It was also encouraging that the issue of participation was one raised by the children and young people themselves.

Children and young people were also consulted at this time to develop appropriate mechanisms for participation, or 'participatory tools'. Adult defined and adult centred methods of research and consultation have been shown to be inappropriate and ineffective with children and young people (Morrow and Richards, 1996). Many children and young people are simply bored by adult created research and participatory activities (David, 1992). This project developed effective participatory tools by asking children and young people, *the experts*, the best ways in which we could find out about their views.

The children and young people identified the most appropriate ways to involve them in a process of consultation. They commented that such 'participatory tools' needed to be fun, interesting and curious to engage their attention. They suggested:

1. *The use of instant cameras - to capture what they liked about their club and what they would like to change.*
2. *Interviews - both with the adult researchers and those constructed and facilitated by children and young people themselves.*
3. *Artistic methods such as drawing and painting - to show what they liked about their clubs, what they would like in the future and 'ideal' after school and holiday environments.*
4. *Video cameras -films, shot by and with children, to show what went on in their clubs.*

One key feature identified by the children was the need for variety. The children and young people continually noted that some would enjoy some activities, whilst others would prefer different ones. Different children and young people would prefer different methods on different days. The project needed to have this flexibility built in to ensure maximum participation.

Despite its success in other research contexts (see Mayall 1993), the children and young people strongly recommended that written methods, such as sentence completion exercises, and essay writing, should not be included. They saw these as 'school work', unpopular in the out of school context. They commented that few children and young people would be willing to engage in the research if this method was used.

This example shows that it is both possible and desirable to engage with children and young people to determine appropriate 'participatory tools' and that such 'tools' can only be developed through a period of direct consultation. It also demonstrates the need to develop participatory tools for specific contexts; it was very clear that written forms of communication would be inappropriate in a play centred context. This information was only gathered by entering into consultation with the users of the service, the children and young people. Participatory tools need to be effective for children and young people and also specific to individual needs in individual contexts.

Furthermore, the example highlights the importance of developing a *process-focused* consultation. This project demonstrates the need to incorporate children's and young people's views into all stages of the process to develop a meaningful level of participation. In both research projects and the policy process, participation cannot be conceptualised as a 'one off' consultation exercise, but rather an ongoing process.

The 'research agenda' and 'participatory tools' developed by the children and young people are now being used in the research collection phase of the project. So far, over 300 children have contributed their views about out of school care. As part of the project's commitment to the on going participation of children and young people, the clubs taking part in the research will be revisited and the results triangulated with the children and young people to ensure their validity. Training programmes with playworkers have also begun, and development packs are being created in order to ensure children and young people continue to be consulted about the development of their clubs.

At this stage of the project the vast majority of clubs visited lack any effective mechanisms or participatory tools to enable children and young people to be consulted about the service they receive. There are a small number of excellent local examples of children's and young people's participation in out of school care, amongst which are those developed by Camden Play Service, in the London Borough of Camden, and 'The Children's Participation Project' developed in partnership between Kirklees Metropolitan Council and Save the Children Fund

(Save the Children, 1996). These projects have developed appropriate 'participatory tools' and enabled children and young people to influence the development of their own clubs, and government policy, at the local level.

However, although there are some excellent models of effective participation with children and young people, these models of good practice remain fragmented throughout the UK. There is, as yet, no national policy to engage with children and young people over the development of the out of school service and this group has, as yet, not been invited to respond to the recent National Childcare Strategy.

Conclusions and policy implications

The rapid development of out of school care over the next five years has significant implications for the nation's children and young people. As this paper has highlighted, over one million children and young people will be cared for after school and during the school holidays in adult supervised and adult controlled environments. If we are to ensure that children's own views are respected and needs are met by this increasingly important service, we must advocate that they are given the chance to participate in the development process. To date this has not happened at the level of national policy and is all too rare at the local level. While the UK Government can claim to have ratified the UN Convention, it will only realise its potential with effective government legislation promoting children's participation at both these levels. Moreover, effective ways of consulting children clearly need to be adopted by policy makers to make children's participation a reality.

It is hoped that the processes outlined in this paper will add to the small but growing body of literature, training materials and practical examples, advocating the participation of children and young people. Only by enabling children and young people to contribute to the development of policy at both the local and national level, will policy makers be sure that they are developing a service which truly meets the needs and desires of its primary user group. To do so will also necessitate the reconceptualisation of children as citizens in their own right and perhaps, at long last, lead to an end of the old adage: *Children should be seen and not heard.*

Fiona Smith *and* ***John Barker*** *work at Out of School Childcare Research Unit, Department of Geography and Earth Sciences, Brunel University, Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, UB8 3PH*

Notes

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DEBATE

THE MINISTER FOR YOUTH

TONY JEFFS

Yet again discussion regarding the desirability of creating a designated Minister of Youth has surfaced. It was probably inevitable that a new administration in Whitehall and the imminent arrival of devolved government in Wales and Scotland would focus attention on administrative structures.

The absence of a consistent youth policy has long been lamented by some. This along with the uneven levels of provision which flow from local government autonomy and the scale of the voluntary sector have for over half a century under-pinned calls for a designated Minister to take responsibility for young people (Brew, 1943; Ewen, 1972; Warren-Adamson, 1992). As long ago as 1943, during another period of governmental overhaul, Josephine Macalister Brew articulated the case for creating a department to

> *look after the whole life of the adolescent, and which shall neither exploit them on the one hand nor coddle them on the other ... In order to accomplish this and in order to prevent wastage and overlapping, all the influences which affect their lives - school, industry, employment bureau, youth organizations, health services, should be regarded as one Ministry. (1943, p.272)*

Then, as now, the suggestion although popular in some sections secured little support amongst politicians nor, I suspect (but have no hard evidence to cite), youth workers. Civil servants and politicians have long resisted calls for the creation of new ministries which cut-across traditional lines of demarcation. Where pressure groups have persuaded a reluctant government to create them they have invariably been attached to an existing Ministry. There they hover in a junior capacity lacking both an independent voice and budget.

Local politicians also predictably demonstrate little enthusiasm for such a ministry as it can only acquire power and influence at their expense. Many voluntary organisations share that fear. For centralisation, in Britain and elsewhere, has always weakened never enhanced the influence of both. Their resistance to this trend was apparent in the way they forged an unspoken alliance which ultimately reduced to a farce the three Ministerial Conferences held in the early 1990s. Although they never articulated a common line it became clear they would not easily co-operate in the creation of 'a national curriculum for youth work'. Eventually forcing the responsible Minister to conclude that the youth service wanted:

> *the process of planning, delivering and evaluating a curriculum determined locally, in individual organisations, not nationally. This demonstrates that*

the strength of the youth service lies in its diversity and ability to respond flexibly to local needs at local level. (Forman, 1992 p. 3)

Just because powerful elements within the youth work equation show scant enthusiasm for a Minister of Youth does not make it a bad idea. Nor will indifference in other quarters make it evaporate. Therefore we hope others will join in the debate and perhaps for the first time allow those who remain uncertain to better make up their minds. For that reason we are publishing two contributions which hopefully will encourage others to respond. The editors look forward to hearing from you.

Tony Jeffs *teaches at the University of Durham.*

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YES TO A MINISTER FOR YOUTH

DOUG NICHOLLS

Allegedly the government is interested in long term economic prosperity through sustainable growth, the inclusion of young people in social processes and joined up governmental thinking. One of the best tests of their commitment to these will be whether they will introduce a Minister for Youth. Most other European countries have already done so. Joined up thinking conveys the idea of doing something more co ordinated and adult than previously; of writing poetry, not limericks; of conducting Whitehall, not letting it perpetually warm up. Such an approach has yet to influence youth policies and if it fails to come, could easily scupper some of the excellent initiatives now starting.

High profile youth related plans have poured from the government: millennium volunteers, the new deal, new start, behavioural support units, the anti drugs campaign, homework clubs, the Crime and Disorder Act, citizenship education, community safety, youth offender teams, lifelong learning. Yet there is no central co ordinating body for these initiatives, no obvious coherence between the work of the social exclusion unit and other departments, no link for example with lottery funding priorities directly, or regional policies. Between the government's departments you can still see the unjoined thoughts as far as young people are concerned. Catching the general drift is not enough.

From the Thatcher period when Ministers denied in the House that there was any such social category as youth, to the situation now when there appears to be nothing except the social priorities of youth, we have moved from studious neglect, to potentially chaotic over attention. Orphaned youth could get smothered by care, or like the lone children under the one child family policy of China, become bloated unhealthily by dotage. While developing its many youth friendly policies the government, particularly in England, has puzzled the one profession closest to the provision of coherent services for young people, that is youth work, by consistently ignoring its ability to contribute. As a result, there are lots of potentially brilliant bits and pieces for a new social model that values the young, but there's no glue. Glue can come cheap and have a spectacularly hidden benefit.

In reaching for the glue, the government needs to consider more carefully the role of the Youth Service and the sense that could be made of complementary policies if a Minister for Youth in the DfEE were created and able to act cross departmentally. A Minister could be advised by a consortium from the field and interdepartmental teams. In the pre election period both of these considerations were suggested by a very thorough Youth Policy Task Group set up and managed by Peter Kilfoyle MP. This group considered an integrated approach to youth issues, took advice from a range of providing agencies and experts and made some important recommendations for the future cost effectiveness and cohesion of government policies for young people. Among its many proposals was the idea of a Minister for Youth a proposal strongly suported by the Union, the British Youth Council and I believe the Liberal Democrats. The report envisaged this Minister working with an advisory group of representative agencies to co ordinate youth policies.

The closest we have at the moment is a Junior Minister for Lifelong Learning in the DfEE who, as in previous administrations, has a responsibility for the Youth Service, within a massive portfolio. Ministers in this position have traditionally had a remarkably short shelf life on their way elsewhere and the 16 or so strong Youth Service Unit within the DfEE's preparation for adulthood division has never had the full brief it could.

The government is also lagging behind best professional and local authority thinking in this regard. Progressive councils have adopted youth affairs models ensuring that one pivotal Youth Service role is to link different departmental plans and involve young people and youth agencies in decision making and service delivery from housing to education. Many have active youth committees of professionals advising on policy and young peoples' forums to develop this.

Similarly within the profession, the last three years have been marked by increasing collaboration between the erstwhile disparate and often competing quangos

and support agencies. UK wide representative meetings are now common, joint working and shared projects are seen as being essential. As a result the government has a tangible network of supporters for a Minister for Youth. At last there are also closer working relationships between academic and vocational researchers into the plight of youth and models of practice. Within training for youth work there is now greater collaboration and commonality of purpose, including qualifications for part time staff and volunteers.

None of this interagency collaboration and pooling of sovereignties is being matched at government level. There we have different ministers with different degrees of interest in the subject. There is a Youth Service Unit in the DfEE, various task groups, a Voluntary Sector Unit in the Home Office effecting the community development context in which much youth policy is formulated on the ground, sports initiatives in the Department for Culture and Sport including the validation of play work and children's work, and a plethora of youth related initiatives within the Department for Social Services.

There is no evidence of any thinking through of the interconnectedness of these initiatives. I go to identical meetings in at least four departments! Furthermore, the Treasury and Department of Environment at the critical moments in budget setting rounds are addressing the bids of different departmental youth initiatives without fully tallying their duplications and costly lack of harmony.

If half the population are women and have a Minister, why not a recognition of the needs of twenty million young people in Britain? There would be no extra government cost, the government machine would run more sweetly and I would put my life on it that millions of ecus would be saved.

Appointing a Minister for Youth would have the effect of turning on a light across all departments and also of ensuring that someone is monitoring when too many wasteful lights have been left on. It would make Britain really new and include the young not just symbolically, but operationally at the highest level. You reap what you sow long term. The trick at local authority and national level is to appreciate the particular role of the Youth Service. George Mudie MP the Minister now responsible described our work as 'the vital interface' for many government policies. This recognition that youth workers have a distinct and cohesive role to play has become unfashionable in some quarters. The idea that youth work is dead is a mirror reflection of the Thatcherite notion that there was no such thing as youth. As the recent audit of the Youth Service in England has shown young people get a better personal and policy deal where well resourced youth services staffed by

qualified professionals are in place. A statutory youth service would therefore best underpin the work of a new Minister for Youth and best enliven local democracy.

Doug Nicholls *is General Secretary of the Community and Youth Workers' Union, the specialist trade union for youth workers, and was a member of the pre election Labour Party Task Group on Youth Issues which recommended among other things the creation of a Minister for Youth.*

NO TO A MINISTER FOR YOUTH

TOM WYLIE

The recent outburst of activity from the new Minister for Women (who can name her and her predecessor?) has understandably promoted fresh calls for a Minister of Youth. But one cautionary note should be that women's issues have been an important theme in Labour politics for more than a decade; and there are over 100 women Labour MPs. If a women's minister cannot secure a high, continuing profile for women's issues, and action on their key concerns, what hope is there for a Youth Minister?

Of course, the idea of having a Youth Minister has a certain populist appeal and might prompt all manner of press comment - 'does the Minister know what's currently "Top of the Pops"?' or, more critically, a profile asking 'How can we have a 52 year old Minister for Youth?'

But it is not likely to lead to serious policy-making. Why not? Because, like or not, Britain has a system of thematic government departments standing like great smoking chimneys above the affairs of state - education, health, transport. These are major spending departments with massive budgets. Any Minister for Youth would require a substantial budget to be able to look them in the eye.

Getting the budget would require any ministry to have a defined set of functions, presumably by brigading together governmental tasks. We will all agree that a Youth Ministry should include policy and better funding for Youth Services - much neglected over two decades. Presumably it could also take in youth justice policy (but stop short at prisons?). There is much concern about young people's health - so we'd better slip in responsibility for drugs policy, health promotion, perhaps also teenage pregnancy and young people's mental health (which is scandalously neglected).

Then there are those vulnerable groups - the young homeless, young people being looked after by the local authority and who are dealt a poor hand in their life chances. Hold on: we've constructed a youth ministry which is largely a collection

of young people's pathologies! Better put in some positive responsibilities also - how about young people's cultural development - all those wannabe rock groups meeting in garden sheds - and their sporting development? It's all a bit soft-edged though: shouldn't we have some more direct economic responsibilities: perhaps social welfare benefits, the minimum wage and the 'New Deal'. But it really does not seem to make a lot of sense to deal with employment and training policy if we haven't also got a grip on education policy. But not all of it surely? OK, no need to concern ourselves overmuch with primary schools, perhaps not universities either. Let's just deal with secondary schools and FE; pity about student grants, though.

So we have won the budget but this is a pretty daunting set of tasks, managerially and politically. It requires some disentangling of what are overarching policies, for example - young people's health as part of Health, adolescents' education as part of Education. It also opens up the issue of relationships between tiers of government and administration, for example the linkage with the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions and its role towards local authorities and regional development agencies. And it could place any free-standing Minister in constant war along its boundaries with colleagues in other departments.

Yet young people are a distinctive group in society, and have distinctive needs to be met if they are to make secure transitions to adult life (albeit a life which is now itself much more transitional than the 1950s). We know that the linear transitions of the post-war period have become both discontinuous and, often, reversible whether one is speaking of the move into the labour market, into independent housing or family formation. We know too that adolescents continue to be risk-taking and that their use of drugs, for instance, may be an attempt to insulate themselves from present realities and future uncertainties. Government has an imperfect grasp of the post-modern world and their policies, local and national, need to be shaped with greater attention to young people's interests and involve them more fully in decision-making. We need policy-makers to have a much greater awareness of young people across the whole range of policies which affect their lives. We need to eliminate those disjunctures in policy-making which produce outcomes which collide, knocking down some young people in the process.

Such considerations point to the policy initiatives which could be taken, to improve the quality of life for young people - and their life chances. They are:

- *all departments should be required to make a youth impact statement on any policy;*
- *there should be a high-level ministerial committee, chaired by the Secretary of State for Education and supported by a similar committee of officials;*
- *a National Youth Commission should be set up to establish regular, transparent, systematic consultation, information and advice across the field of youth affairs;*

- *The Secretary of State for Education should be required to make an annual report to Parliament and the British Youth Council should be funded to make a similar report on young people's condition from their perspective;*
- *there should be a citizenship fund designed to encourage political literacy and promote young people's active involvement in civic leadership;*
- *the Youth Service, the only service focussed on the personal and social development of young people, should have an unequivocal legislative basis, adequate funding (probably double its present level) and personnel better trained to work in it.*

The existing Minister with responsibility for Youth Service should get on with setting the right policy framework for youth and, when that is done the Minister should pick up the brief to negotiate on behalf of youth affairs across government.

Tom Wylie *is the Chief Executive at the NYA.*

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pp 216

Phil Scraton (ed)
Childhood In Crisis
UCL Press, 1997
ISBN 1 85728 789 4 (pbk)
pp 224

Allison James, Chris Jenks and Alan Prout
Theorizing Childhood
Polity Press
ISBN 0 7456 1564 3 (hbk)
ISBN 0 7456 1565 1 (pbk)
£45.00 (hbk)
£13.95 (pbk)
pp 247

Thomas P. Gullotta, Gerald R. Adams and Raymond Montemayer
Delinquent Violent Youth - Theory and Interventions
Sage, 1998
ISBN 0 7619 1335 1
pp 320

REVIEWS

Sandy Hobbs and Jim McKechnie
Child Employment in Britain: A Social and Psychological Analysis
Children in Society Series
The Stationery Office, 1997
ISBN 0 11 495816 5
£19.99 (pbk)
pp 156

Annie Franklin

This is a timely book, since there is a lively current debate worldwide about child labour. As the book informs us, this debate ranges over the definition of child and labour, whether children should be allowed to work at all and if so, in what circumstances and with what regulation. The context of child employment is set across the world through a series of cameos of working children, which the authors state are not representative, but merely illustrative of the variety of circumstances in which work is a significant part of a child's life.

But the focus of this book is child employment in Britain, which it sets in its historical context. This reveals the myth that child employment in Britain is a thing of the past and that regulation is less necessary than formerly, or elsewhere in the world. It is interesting to note that the UK Government withheld support for that Article of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which requires work for all under-eighteens to be regulated, and also opted out of the European Union directive on child employment.

The meat of the book lies in its research into the extent and nature of child employment in modern Britain, based on recent numerical research, including that undertaken by the authors in Scotland and northern England. While acknowledging the difficulty of precise measurement they conclude that employment is a majority experience for school-aged children in Britain, with most children having at least one job before they reach school-leaving age. Nor did the researchers find that the work children engaged in was always of the type described as 'children's jobs' such as newspaper delivery. Less than half of the children surveyed recorded delivery work as their employment, with many working in shops, hotel and catering, packing, gardening, cleaning and sometimes building. They note strong gender and regional differences in the type of employment children experience, with many girls engaged in babysitting and tourist areas offering more work in hotel and catering (unsurprisingly). Hours worked varied, but some children were found to be working up to twenty plus hours per week.

Earnings also varied and while it is presumed that children work for 'pocket money' - and certainly the rate of pay is peanuts (usually less than £2.00 per hour) - several studies indicate that some children's earnings contribute directly to family income. The authors acknowledge that further research is needed to provide a reliable picture.

Regulation of the employment of children takes place at both central and local levels. The key legislation is contained in the 1933 Children and Young Persons Act (1937 in Scotland) which may be enhanced in local byelaw. The legislation states children must:

- *be a minimum of 13 years*
- *only work a maximum of two hours on a school day and Sundays*
- *not work before 7am or after 7pm*
- *not lift, carry or move objects likely to cause injury.*

Local authorities can issue permits to regulate child work and most administer such a system, although the great majority of children are employed without the necessary permit. Many children work outside the 7am to 7pm watershed, although the maximum hours worked was less likely to be breached. The children interviewed in the studies cited, were in the 14 to 15 year age bracket, but many reported first starting work before they were 13 years. There is little reliable data about types of work carried out as categories are often too broad to specify tasks, but some examples indicate that children do undertake prohibited activities, some of which are hazardous ie in a sawmill. A look at health and safety statistics for accidents and deaths shows approximately 20 per cent report accidents at work of some nature.

The book contains a more detailed description of a longer term study the authors carried out in Cumbria, which helped to demonstrate that the results of their own and others' earlier 'snapshot' studies were justified.

The second part of the book focuses on the effects of child employment: the relationship between work and education; costs and benefits; the outcomes which are at the heart of many of the disputes about child employment. The authors are unable to come to a firm conclusion about the educational value of work, for lack of hard evidence, but point out that part-time jobs cannot be condemned out of hand and there is no general tendency for workers to perform less well academically than non-workers. But they underscore that parents and policy makers should be aware that the relationship between work and schooling is a complex one. Put simply, whether work is harmful, depends on the job.

Looking at costs and benefits is also hampered by lack of research in the British context and the authors cite mainly American studies, which look at the balance between positive outcomes and negative effects.

This is a clearly written and well-structured book which offers a useful contribution to the debate on child employment and sets the current British experience in a wider geographical and historical context. Most importantly it underscores the need for a better regulatory framework and more research into child labour, setting out an agenda for both and finally calling for more debate on this key issue. I'll finish with their last words.

> *There is a need for a serious debate about the role of work and education for those still within the compulsory school system. This debate needs to incorporate the views of children. Adults need to accept that children have a right to be heard.*

***Annie Franklin** works for Children's Information Service in Sheffield.*

Patrick Angier
Changing Youth Worship
National Society/Church House Publishing
ISBN 0 7151 4892 3
£5.95 (pbk)
pp 114

Dave Rose

Patrick Angier is a Youth Worker of many years experience currently working in Bedworth. This book comes from the Evangelical wing of the Church of England, though it will have relevance to youth workers from other Christian traditions.

Angier sets his book in what he perceives as a time of significant change, the change from Modernism, with its certainties of 'progress' and 'order' that has been the world view dominating western thought since the Enlightenment, to Post-Modernism, with its fragmentation and pick and mix approach to all aspects of life, including faith.

Young people, Angier argues, will be in the forefront of this change, fully engulfed in the fluidity that is Post-Modernism, whilst the Church is bypassed, left set in the concrete of Modernism.

Young people from 'non-church' backgrounds have always found it difficult to assimilate into traditional Church culture, whatever the nature of that tradition, but now, Angier argues, it is likely that even those young people who are familiar with Church culture, those who come from Church going families, who have attended Sunday School, Church youth group, even sung in the choir, will be less likely to relate to the inherited cultures of the Church.

This is the background that Angier paints, and alongside it he sets an imperative for the Church to engage with young people, to 'make God real for them'. Once that imperative is accepted, the search is on for a process that will enable the crossing of the 'primary frontier', the boundary between the Church and the cultures of young people today. Recognising that this is a missionary situation, Angier looks to missionary theory for a solution.

Today, unlike in the past, missionary practice would seek to 'enculture' the Christian message, what Angier describes as 'the process of removing one set of values and codes from something and expressing it through a different culture's set of values and codes.'

Transferring this process to the contemporary youth scene, Angier calls for something that he describes as 'culture-specific worship', that is 'worship that is produced by, with or for a particular culture'.

In this book Angier explores some of the elements that make up existing experiments in youth culture-specific worship, the hard elements, such as the uses of imagery, created space, rituals, music, silence, light and multi layering, are covered well, but I would have liked more on the soft elements, the youth work process.

The need for young people to feel they belong and to have real participation is emphasised, as is the general youth work question of who really has the power, who 'owns' the youth project, or worship experience - the worker or the young people? But we are left with the question, how do we bring about that sense of belonging, how do youth workers relinquish power without creating a vacuum for chaos to inhabit?

Given the likely readership of this book, (clergy, volunteers and Christian youth workers), more on the processes of empowerment would have been very appropriate. The sorts of processes needed are touched upon in the book, but I feel insufficient depth.

For me this is a problem with the book, too many issues looked at, but not explored. For example, the Chapter 'Getting Behind the Scenes', is a bit of a gallop through the contemporary scene mentioning in passing six reasons for the rise in the numbers of full time Church youth workers and the impact that has had, plus, the decline in young people in Church, the need for greater participation, the issue of disaffection in young people, the failures of family worship, seeker sensitive services, technological influences, liberation theology, feminist theology, environmental theology, Celtic spirituality, the charismatic movement, the church planting movement, post modernism, culture abuse, dance music, millennialism and searchings. All in less than twenty five A5 pages!

There is a short chapter explaining why culture-specific worship is true worship and a valid manifestation of the Church, then it's a charge through Faith Development Theory. Westerhoff is covered in less than one side of A5, with Fowler not doing much better. If someone was not already familiar with their theories, I am not sure how much wiser they would be after these summaries, especially with Fowler, where the critical linking of stages in faith development to age and general social developmental needs is omitted. Angier criticises Fowler thus:

> *...there are a number of problems with defining faith in terms of a world view rather than in terms of Christian belief. We are left with a range of uncertainties: Is it saying that belief is left behind as faith develops? Does the process imply that liberal faith is a higher stage than more conservative belief?*

Angier's criticism of Fowler seems to revolve around a particular understanding of the terms 'Faith' and 'Belief'. Fowler, along with the Church of England, would see 'belief' as a component of 'faith'. Fowler talks of Faithing, to emphasise that Faith is an active outworking of belief structures, whilst the Baptismal Creed defines Faith as having the components of belief and trust, the trust being evidenced by action.

I do not recognise the picture Angier gives of Fowler's theories, especially concerning the movement between Conforming and Choosing Faith, so I do not have the problems in using it that he evidently has.

Later Angier introduces the concept of 'parent belief', as the 'overarching belief system of the Church and home in which a person is brought up', and seeks to explain the movement between and out of different forms of Church structure by young people at the transition between faith stages

three and four, as one of seven reactions to that 'parent belief'. I can see no point to this level of analyses, especially as Angier admits 'these responses are not discrete: rather, young people's action may be a combination of responses'.

Chapter six, 'Putting it into Practice', is strong on good advice, including the recognition that youth work processes take time, because relationship building takes time, whilst chapter seven examines possible future developments.

This book offers an overview of a complex situation rather than a detailed examination, so I would recommend consulting the books listed in the Bibliography. Given that, it is worth reading, especially by Christian youth workers concerned with trying to reach young people with the reality of God today, or by anyone interested in understanding some of the ideas and practices current in the Church of England.

Dave Rose CA *is a Youth Worker and Church Army Evangelist, currently employed as Youth Work Adviser to the Anglican Diocese of Lincoln.*

Amanda Palmer
Schooling Comprehensive Kids: Pupil Responses to Education
Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1998
ISBN 1 85628 889 7
pp 227

Carl Parsons

This is a study of the experience of pupils in an urban comprehensive school. It examines achievement, experience and expectations in relation to race, gender and class. It has to be said at the outset that no reader will fail to notice that, in this 1998 publication all the empirical work, indeed all the references, are from 1988 or earlier. This is pre-national curriculum. Much has happened since this data was gathered. There is much other ethnographic research to refer to and these young people are now well into their 20s. Published now, one might reasonably have expected a follow up. It does mean that to be worth its space on a library shelf it must be good history, methodologically innovative or have enduring messages. That is a tough challenge.

That large proviso aside, there is a great deal of interesting and readable material to be found in the descriptions and verbatim quotes of conversation and interviews which resonates with much else of that ilk written around that time. I am not sure that the book actually works with its data to the best effect. There are chapters on gender, ethnicity and class and the structure has a little bit of data, a little bit of commentary and a little bit of reference to other literature. The arguments are not sustained and there is not a depth of questioning as to why the attitudes amongst teachers or amongst pupils are as they are (or were as they were).

The chapter on class has a particularly dated feel to it. Class, after all, in 1998 is different to the way it was in the mid 80s. The datedness comes through also because there has been a resurgence in youth sociology in the 1990s of which there is no sign in this book.

Perhaps one ought not ask of an ethnographic study that it *explain* the phenomena it describes; perhaps 'thick' description is enough. The author, however, has not made up her mind about whether the book is sincerely ethnographic, aiming for breadth in discussion of the experience of young people in education, or whether she wants to explain. The final chapter does not 'take off' and continues with the rather low level and specific commentary that has gone before.

All in all the book is an interesting read but with nothing new. There are some good old sociological classics and it's good to be reminded of their continuing relevance. there is also a feeling of the underdog-supporting anthropologist which it is rare to find today. I just wish Amanda Palmer had written it 10 years ago. That follow-up really deserves thinking about since there are too few longitudinal studies, planned or fortuitous. What, after all, became of 'the white and black working class achievers' and what would count as success or failure for them in 1998, 1999 or 2000.

Carl Parsons *Canterbury Christ Church.*

REVIEWS

Felicity Fletcher-Campbell
The Education of Children Who Are Looked After
National Foundation for Educational Research
ISBN 0 7005 1455 4
£8.00
pp 159

Don Blackburn

In 1994, there were about 49,000 children and young people in care. This book is a study that evaluates the responses to the needs of those children in England and Wales, who are looked after, in respect of recommendations made by the Department for Education and the Department of Health in 1994. The study is based upon research into the responses of all local authorities to the needs of this particular group of children and young people. All local authorities in England and Wales were contacted and in the event, 66 authorities responded to the questionnaire. Of those who responded, 25 had policies in place, 36 had no policies for the education of children in care, one authority response indicated that they did not know, and there were four missing cases. Out of the 66, only 28 authorities replied that they had training in place to meet the needs of this group of children and young people.

From the research, the problems for these young people often included many changes of school, poor attendance due to factors outside schooling, the low expectations of teachers, and some (unsurprising) evidence of low attainment. The evidence was of schools often regarding their task as simply one of ensuring attendance from young people, or aiming at containment within the system for them. What was found to be lacking in many cases was a sense of the young people making educational progress.

These problems were compounded by the list of depressingly familiar difficulties that teachers and others faced in trying to offer service and support to this group of children and young people. A central point made in the study is of the importance of the educational process for young people. This is to say that requiring attendance at school is insufficient, these young people require a more active role from teachers in ensuring that their school careers are as integrated and coherent for them as it can be. As a foundation for successful responses to need, the research reinforces the requirement for effective liaison, treating education as the key element in any child's or young person's experience. The need for integration into the full experience of the school is emphasised in the study, but equally

the difficulty of achieving this, despite the rhetoric of many organisations about interdisciplinary work. A key difficulty in achieving this is the fragmentation of information about the education experiences of these young people, so it is difficult to indicate to staff what progress young people can make in learning. Equally important is the need for integration in the personal lives of the young people concerned. Their lives are marked by a fragmented experience of care, school, and other institutions, and a substantial range of involvement of officials of various organisations. This is hardly a recipe for stability. In many ways, the lives of these young people can be seen as a heroic struggle against massive odds.

On a positive note, the study does highlight good evidence that it is possible to respond effectively to the needs of young people in this position. Their difficulties can be addressed. When schooling worked properly, there was clear evidence of the value of the educational system in providing stability for young people and in enabling and supporting their personal development. The overwhelming response from all quarters was for more educational support services. What is also heartening is the extent to which some children and young people can transcend these difficulties and construct such a tolerant and well-adjusted analysis of their experiences. This only serves to emphasise the possibilities for this group of young people if only they had a more equitable treatment. It also underlines the iniquity of their treatment in a system which is ostensibly founded on the slogan of 'Education for All'.

The book does indicate that there are some authorities which treat this issue seriously and that have created effective services. This does indicate the possibility that these children's and young people's needs might be met effectively. Apart from these bright spots, the book paints a picture that is effectively one of a national disgrace. I believe that the education system is tested in areas like this, by examining the ability of schools to respond to those in greatest need. The study reinforces the story from other findings of the negative effects of the competition in schooling introduced by the Tories, and which in many ways is being continued by the Labour party. The image consciousness of schools leads to a lower tolerance for children and young people with different needs. Head teachers seem these days to prefer putting their efforts into marketing and glossy brochures, rather than their civic responsibilities to the whole community.

No political party has yet shown much concern for young people like these, other than the occasional rhetorical flourish. Of course, there is the usual pious wringing of hands after the most recent residential scandal. However, there are few signs of concerted state initiatives, or of a properly funded and trained service in this area. This issue does not appear to inspire even the dullest of gleams in any politician's eye. It was always a futile exercise to expect the Tories to have the slightest regard for the dispossessed. The Labour Party nowadays seems to have far more important things to do in getting the Millennium Dome built and supporting worthy social causes such as motor racing, fox-hunting and the rights of adults to assault children.

In conclusion, the book is to be welcomed. It offers a clear picture of the present position in the education of children and young people who are looked after. The study is always presented in a clear and readable fashion, and the extent of need is outlined well. The mixture of quantitative and qualitative data emphasises the issues that need addressing, but importantly the book also identifies a range of good practice.

Don Blackburn *works at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside.*

REVIEWS

Anthony Swift
Children for Social Change: Education for Citizenship of Street and Working Children in Brazil
Educational Heretics Press
ISBN 1 900219 90 3
£11.95
pp 194

Rob Wheway and Alison Millward
Child's Play: Facilitating Play on Housing Estates
Chartered Institute of Housing & Joseph Rowntree Foundation
ISBN 1 900396 26 2
£9.95
pp 74

Roger Smith and John Bradford
Children and Divorce
National Society/Church House Publishing
ISBN 0 7151 4888 5
£4.95 (pbk)
pp 90

Marion Leigh

The books reviewed here each in different contexts address the situation of children and their needs. All are well written, adequately researched and very readable.

Children for Social Change is about the attempts of street children in Brazil and of the street educators working with them to gain some power for themselves and about the process involved in a children's movement for social change. Death squads to remove children from the pubic scene are not part of the British experience, though the cultural sanctions for 'removing the homeless from the streets of London' had alarming resonances. That apart it is easy to read Britain for Brazil for the book describes the situation, the needs and the education process by which a toehold on existence might be found in any part of the world including here.

This is a book for all who are concerned about children. It paints a vivid picture of an educational process which existed here but has been expunged over twenty years from public consciousness. Its previous practitioners are dispersed or are now in the strait jacket of current policies and practice.

In the same week in which I received these books children impinged on my consciousness through various conflicting images. They were headline

news both as murderers and as murder victims, as young carers in a national discussion of their situation, in my small village as invisible, because they are not on the electoral register and parish attempts to develop play provision had first to establish the facts for we did not know exactly how many children there were. Then finally, of children as young as six deemed uncontrollable in the classroom.

The gentle holding therapies, developed first in Canada and gaining ground here in the 60s and 70s would probably be appropriate in such cases but have been swept away with the therapeutic communities who developed them. All we learned from Susan Isaacs, from Maria Montessori, A.S. Neill, Dorothy Heathcote and a host of other imaginative educators is still there but fragmented into the private domain. For example it was murders committed by two thirteen year old boys which started Neill as a young teacher in Glasgow in 1913 on the path which led to Summerhill and a coherent philosophy of education rooted in practice.

What all children have in common worldwide is that they cannot take that most elementary and basic step in exercising power, that of a vote. They are dis-enfranchised too by race and gender and the growth here in the class divide of rich and poor is as marked in rural communities as elsewhere.

Public responses to children seem at present to be openly dictated by economic and utilitarian imperatives, rather than by the physical, social or emotional needs of the children themselves. So children are concurrently evil monsters, hapless victims and ignored invisibles. Folk devilry and associated moral panics have slipped a notch with children replacing the 'youth' of the 60s and 70s as the present-day folk devils around which the moral panics blaze. These panics are not as violent as in Brazil, but still punitive rather than reparative in tone.

Another characteristic of the unenfranchised or dis-enfranchised is their lack of a history. As long ago as 1849 Matthew Arnold wrote *The Forsaken Merman*, that great poem about alienation. Yet it seems almost as if the issues of alienation, powerlessness, of autonomy, on the young, autonomous groups, their education, needs and aspirations, have never been seriously addressed. This absence of history means that each group or individual must start again from scratch.

It is this seeming invisibility which makes these books so timely and so welcome. To quote Anthony Swift, who hopes that his book has 'relevance to the host of those, including me, who are trying to recover some

sense of community and individual purpose following the social vandalism of the Thatcher-Reagan era.'

In divorce again there is invisibility, for where are the public recognitions of the child's experiences? *Children and Divorce* helps to make these visible and discusses from the child's viewpoint the changes implicit in divorce. The chapter on 'What Happens to Children' in particular would be of great help to relatives or those working with children who are experiencing divorce.

Institutions which give public acknowledgement of private personal events of both grief and celebration are undergoing rapid change, but without some public social acknowledgement, whatever the setting, a sense of community and belonging would be hard to sustain. The book concludes with examples of liturgy which might be used to give public acknowledgement of what has happened for the child concerned. These helpful examples might be adapted for secular contexts where a religious one was not appropriate.

Children and Divorce is sensitively written and of relevance to all who may encounter divorce, for as the authors point out, there are now very few who are not touched by it.

Child's Play assumes that children play and that play provision for children is necessary. This makes a refreshing change from many recent public statements on children, and public indifference to the rapid disappearance of play spaces.

The book is based on a study of over 3,500 children at play on 12 housing estates. It deals with issues of safety, of travel, of design and play itself. It has useful sections on gender differences and on natural and built environments.

I would like to make *Child's Play* compulsory reading for every single politician, authority, planner, or any person having any dominion whatsoever over children. It is easy to read, again takes what children actually did as the starting point and is as relevant to the play needs of children in rural areas as to those on the urban housing estates which are its focus.

These three books address the realities of children's lives. As such they are a welcome antidote to the punitive attitudes and utilitarian approaches to the education of the young currently in circulation.

Marion Leigh *worked as a group worker and counsellor.*

REVIEWS

Janet Holland, Caroline Ramazanoglu, Sue Sharpe and Rachel Thomson
The Male in the Head: Young People, Heterosexuality and Power
Tufnell Press, 1998
ISBN 1 872767 95 8

Janet Batsleer

This is an important and rather depressing account of the nitty gritty of young people's early (hetero)sexual encounters and relationships. It takes a close look at the evidence generated by interviews with a sample of 148 young women in Manchester and London, and with 46 young men in London. The writers cover themes such as safe sex and the use of condoms, learning about sex and how sexual knowledge comes about, chatting up and dating, the link between sex and love, what sex is like, and the different kinds of power boys and girls, young men and young women have in negotiating heterosexuality.

It is an important book, because it is dealing with material which - even in the days of global saturation coverage of the sexual practices of the President of the United States - is rarely discussed. It conveys strongly a sense of the difficulties and embarrassments, as well as, for some boys the sense of triumph, involved in early heterosexual encounters. One of the strengths of this research project is that the researchers never let go of a focus on sex and a sense of the importance of sex, even when they frame their research in a discussion of sexuality. But it doesn't stay with the 'techniques' of sex; instead the researchers have probed the conversations and (more often), the silences which surround sex, to discover why receiving information does not itself enable the practice of safe and mutually satisfying sex. The riskiness, they suggest, is most often in the silence. It is a depressing book, because it suggests that accounts of girls increased achievements in education and in the workplace cannot be matched by an accompanying transformation of heterosexuality, with an increased prospect of mutuality.

The whole argument of the book is that 'proper sex' is the young man's action. It starts with his arousal and finishes with his climax. 'First sex' is the young man's moment. There is no equivalent definition of the sex act in terms of female agency, action or desire. For women the issue is loss: 'loss of virginity', and the view that she gives her virginity in exchange for protection, both emotional and material is, the authors argue, still strong. This pattern of masculine agency and feminine invisibility, of masculine dominance and unsafe femininity is reinforced in all sorts of ways: sometimes through violence certainly, but also through particular kinds of

sexual practice (the irresistible nature of the erection!) through particular kinds of learning in families, in schools and through magazines, including pornography, and in talk and silence. One of the most depressing sentences in the book to this reader was 'Young women reported almost no discussion in school of nonreproductive aspects of sexuality, including homosexuality, masturbation, relationships, love, sexual violence.' Rather, it seems, as if information about the clitoris has been erased in many diagrams of female genitalia in sex education materials.

The research is framed by a feminist analysis of heterosexuality as a social construction shaped by masculine agency and feminine collusion or resistance. This case is densely argued, and certainly the research material presented does make sense within this framework. The work is collectively authored and that is an impressive achievement. Sometimes, however, the particular voices of the young people are swamped in the presentation of the analysis. As a feminist I wanted to know more about how all this might change. The two chapters on the empowered woman and the empowered man do offer some clues. The authors argue convincingly that empowerment for women involves resistance to the 'male in the head', and show examples of how this occurs in intellectual, emotional and practical ways. The case studies they present show women with different strategies for negotiating that dominance: ironically, they present the extreme feminine strategy of 'saying no' and hanging on to virginity as stronger than 'being like a man' and being sexually active with a number of partners, which they present as a strategy which leaves the young women vulnerable as a result of unprotected sex. A young woman who is able to negotiate her own pleasure and resist the 'norm' of his penetration and pleasure being the focus of sex is presented as the most empowered. Young men are presented as having access to power already to some degree, including access to violence. Her empowerment will mean his disempowerment. If a model of heterosexuality based on mutuality is to emerge, men will need not only ways of being powerful, but also ways of being vulnerable. Having access to a language of the emotions will be vital. The poverty of masculine talk about sex reported in this book is scary. Still, one young man's voice leapt off the page: 'one young man reports being reassured by his parents that real sex is not like pornography'. Thank goodness he asked!

Lastly, I wonder why the researchers have presented so little material about the impact of the silencing of homoerotic desires for both men and women in this model of heterosexuality. While the project of reconstructing

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heterosexuality remains a very necessary one, that will benefit both men and women in the end, it cannot be separated from the equally necessary project of affirming same sex relationships. It's hard to believe that none of the young women or young men interviewed ever wondered if they wouldn't be happier gay.

Janet Batsleer, *Manchester Metropolitan University.*

Nicholas P Gair
Outdoor Education: Theory and Practice
Cassel
ISBN 0 304 33944 X
£16.99 (pbk)
pp 214

Ken McCulloch

The most significant feature of this book is what it is not; it is not another book about how to 'do' outdoor education activities without tears. There are already plenty of texts giving guidance on techniques, activities, equipment and safety, and it was a relief to discover that this was not quite more of the same. I say not quite because it would be difficult to write meaningfully about outdoor education without addressing these practicalities in some degree. What Nick Gair has attempted in this book is firstly to offer outdoor education practitioners a set of frameworks for understanding and analysis, and only secondly to offer advice on a range of practical matters. The frameworks offered are the result of serious efforts to theorise practice in an area which is often treated by practitioners and observers alike as being entirely practical and theoretically unproblematic. To put it another way, this book seeks to promote Schön's (1983) notion of 'reflective practice' in the outdoor education domain.

It is aimed at an audience of professionals in formal and non-formal education, and is well grounded in the author's understanding of the complexities of local authority organisation and of the current climate of licensing and regulation in outdoor and adventure programming. The tone is well chosen for this audience in that the balance between problems, questions, solutions and answers is, for the most part, well managed. Theoretical analysis may often seem to be of limited value to practitioners who, with limited time to spend on professional development are looking for answers to current problems, advice on avoiding trouble or simply for

ways of doing whatever they do better or more effectively. Gair acknowledges this imperative in his many practical examples and suggestions, while at the same time continually raising more theoretical questions about, for example the nature of risk and the problems of risk assessment.

A significant weakness is in relation to the range and nature of source texts cited. There is an over reliance on secondary sources; for example on p 136 an important study is quoted but only indirectly from a *Guardian* article. This would be perfectly reasonable if the primary source was a publication not readily accessible to the author. Given that in this case the source is a paper in *The British Journal of Sports Medicine* there is little or no justification for a London-based author not going to the primary source. There are also one or two surprising omissions, most notably the lack of reference to Miles & Priest's (1990) *Adventure Education,* surely the touchstone for academic work in this field. It would be unreasonable to expect a work of this kind to cover all the possible theoretical ground, but given the attention in chapter 3 'Is Fear the Key? Exploring the concept of risk in Outdoor Education' to risk as a social phenomenon and cultural construct, the omission of reference to Beck's (1992) seminal *Risk Society* seems rather more than an oversight.

A more practically oriented concern is with the way in which *Outdoor Education* is conceptualised and defined. The choices which educators exercise in relation to the activity focus of outdoor education are surely critical, and the differences between canoeing, rock climbing, walking, mountaineering and offshore sailing as activities are profoundly significant. The acknowledgment by the author of the text's primary focus on mountain walking and expeditions as core activities attempts to legitimate but failed to convince me that the claim 'every process covered [in this text] can be transferred among all forms of outdoor activity' (p 25) was justified. Some more careful consideration of the merits of different forms of outdoor education would have been particularly useful and the absence of such material represents a missed opportunity. A common criticism of outdoor educators is that the focus on particular activities arises out of the adult instigators' own preferences and interests rather than out of serious analysis, and it would have been particularly useful to explore the problematics of such criticism and possible rebuttals.

There is nethertheless far more to praise than to criticise about this book. For the mainstream of outdoor education as practised by youth workers and teachers in the UK there is a wealth of useful material here. Whether

it is the attempt to conceptualise risk and develop more refined strategies for its management, the many useful tools and techniques for planning and review of activities and projects, or the survey of the changing discourse of outdoor and adventure education which the opening chapter offers, there is very definitely something useful in this book for anyone interested in or concerned about outdoor and adventure education either as a practitioner, or as a manager or policy maker. Nick Gair and his publisher are to be congratulated on a worthwhile and useful contribution to an important area. If I was not in the privileged position of having been given the book to review, I would certainly buy myself a copy; I very much hope this book will achieve wide circulation and healthy sales among the practitioners of outdoor education and others with a legitimate interest.

Ken McCulloch *is a lecturer in Community Education at Moray House Institute of Education, Edinburgh.*

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Night Shift Enterprises
The Big Red Book of Youth Work
ISBN 1 874141 01 2
The Big Red Book of the Youth Work Curriculum
ISBN 1 874141 01 0
Managing Your Youth Work
ISBN 1 874141 02 9
Group Exercises for Youth Work
ISBN 1 874141 03 7
£32.00 for set
Available from: Night Shift, PO Box 23
Abergavenny, Gwent. NP7 7YE

Bren Cook

One of the joys of being a coordinator of training is you tend to receive a plethora of mail advertising the latest solutions to the burgeoning training needs of your organisation. One such mailing recently floating across my desk was from Night Shift Enterprises, the Abergavenny based training team. This enterprising team offers consultancy and training programmes

but the mainstays of their offerings are four publications entitled 'The Big Red Book of Youth Work'; 'The Big Red Book of the Youth Work Curriculum'; 'Managing your Youth Work' and 'Group Exercises for Youth Work'.

'The Big Red Book of Youth Work' is a basic manual for the youth worker who wants to know what it's all about or to be reminded. It is a comprehensive grounding in the art of working with the young. Likewise 'The Big Red Book of the Youth Work Curriculum' takes the reader through the process of designing and implementing a person-centred curriculum in a wide ranging way. 'Managing your Youth Work' systematically explores the complex task of managing the work, whilst 'Group Exercises for Youth Work' gives workers a blow by blow guide to work activities.

They are all in A4 format and crammed full of material aimed at youth workers at all levels. The pages are bordered and clip art is sprinkled on the page so as to enhance the text. 'The Big Red Books' are loose leafed and bound in a plastic clear fronted document folder whilst 'Managing Your Youth Work' and 'Group Work Exercises' are in a more traditional format.

The content is a mixture of chunks of text, checklists, charts, tables and rhetorical questions. The four books covers a comprehensive range of subjects in an interesting and lively way.

Each book shares a common style even though the purpose of the publications are different. They are all intensely practical. They seem to have been written by people that have 'been there'. For example 'Managing Your Youth Work' doesn't baffle the Youth Work Manager with the latest in management speak from corporate America but rather takes the reader through a series of tasks underpinned by a systematic approach to the job of managing. This makes the complex task of managing seem manageable.

This practical approach permeates throughout the whole series and is therefore the ideal set, along with classics like 'Youth Work that Works' and 'Creators not Consumers' to decorate the shelves of every Youth Club.

I particularly like the way Night Shift use checklists. In the 'Youth Work Curriculum' book there are three checklists, one for management, one for staff and one for young people. If clubs used them only once a year I'm sure practice would improve or at the very least enable staff to feel they were on-line. They use the principles of standards without using the words that seem to come with them.

There are, however, some shortcomings to the books. They do seem slightly dated especially the curriculum book with its reference to the

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Ministerial Conference around core curriculum. New Labour, New debates, time for a New rewrite. The general tone of the set did seem to take me back to the early to mid eighties. This said I found much that was of relevance today. Many of the themes bear revisiting, brushing up and re-using.

The text needs a re-working. There is too much small lettered, paragraph free text. With the arrival of the Disability Discrimination Act publishers need to be aware of their obligation to the partially sighted, let alone those of us who get overfaced with lots and lots of close set writing.

There is a tendency to be youth club focused and therefore to make it fit some of the more diverse types of provision you would have to adapt the material. It is a task worth doing, however maybe it's time that Night Shift did it for us.

The layout of 'Group Work Exercises' is a bit fiddly and not too easy to read. It seems that the software used to produce these manuals is actually limiting the authors, which is a shame because the content is really useful. It just needs updating, re-setting and broadening.

It costs £32 for the four books and at that price I would expect a better produced package than the one we have here, however the content is accessible, lively, practical and solid. They could be very useful in training and staff development and I would recommend each youth and community service in the country to have at least one copy; not just to sit on a shelf but to be used.

Bren Cook *is a Training Coordinator for Lancashire Youth and Community Service*

Ian Butler and Gwenda Roberts
Social Work with Children and Families: Getting into Practice
Jessica Kingsley, 1997
ISBN 1 85302 365 5
£15.99
pp 287

Robbie Gilligan

The book is aimed at beginning social work practitioners (and their trainers). The authors hope that the book will encourage practitioners 'to reflect

on what they do'. They assert that irrespective of what technologies of intervention emerge in the future, 'ultimately it is people who change people'. Fair enough, but perhaps it would to truer to say that it is other people who create conditions in which it is safe to contemplate, try out and sustain change. In fact, his key helping relationship gets very little attention in its own right throughout the book.

In terms of structure, the book is made up of ten units, six in a section 'Developing Basic Knowledge and Skills' and four in a later section 'Developing Specialist Knowledge and Skills'. Each unit comprises 'course text', exercises, 'study text' aimed at assisting completion of the exercises and 'points to consider'. There are also 'notes and self assessment', recommended readings and trainers' notes. If this sounds complicated, I think it is probably fair to concede that it is, even if the authors and designers have tried quite hard to make this structure user friendly.

The authors have written generally with clarity and with a sensitivity to the reader's own experience. The book's style invites the reader's engagement, and is also alert to how issues covered may resonate with hurtful episodes in the reader's past. It correctly stresses the importance of assessment and of appreciating it as an 'interpretive art rather than an exact science' (p 168). There is a very helpful chapter on court work and a useful bibliography. I would expect that the target audience will find the case examples/exercises which pepper the book helpful, especially if skillfully used by a trainer. There is a very good exercise on views of abuse (pp 142-144) and an important emphasis on worker's self, attitudes, values and knowledge.

One of the book's strengths may also be a weakness. Whilst the book shows faith in the value of the readers' views and experience, the authors may at times be too reticent in actually teaching about a complex area to identified novices. Are exercise questions a satisfactory substitute for fuller input? Perhaps the authors should not be so hesitant about owning their expertise and *teaching*. Structured reflection may not be the only appropriate source of guidance in an area such as this.

The book tends to be quite ethnocentric or more correctly anglocentric in its purview and its conception of what constitutes social work. Kinship care is not mentioned despite it being vitally important in many other jurisdictions. Even if it is not a major feature in Britain, it still raises interesting issues which surely merit some attention. Certain key topics are thinly covered, eg foster care, helping relationships, parenting, social support.

Fathers appear only once in the index, schools and teachers not at all. There is little or no discussion of messages from research on the impact of abuse or the factors which might mediate or mitigate its effects.

I admire the work and thought that has gone into this book and the degree to which the authors have managed to render many complex ideas in a stimulating and accessible way. The authors clearly have a deep knowledge of the field within their own national system, although I personally find the work stronger in terms of its sociological rather than psychological underpinnings. The emphasis on the worker's self and approach is commendable.

Yet reading this from outside the British policy arena and jurisdiction I can't help feeling slightly disappointed, if the scope and depth of this book represents the 'adult' state of child and family social work in what was and in many ways still is an advanced welfare state. The book seems constrained in its vision of what is or could be social work with children and families. There is little emphasis on relationships, on direct work with children or on innovative ways of responding to the needs of children and families. Areas such as ongoing work with children post-abuse, or prevention get little if any attention. It almost seems oddly appropriate that the book should culminate in a chapter on 'going to court', as if this represents the end or high point of work in this field. Surely new practitioners are entitled to be challenged to a fresher (and older) conception of what this field is really about. Word limits may reasonably be pleaded as a defence for the limited coverage of certain issues, but some explicit disclaimer on this point might have been reassuring for this reader at least. In fairness to the authors my comments are probably more properly aimed at the direction of social work with children and families in Britain. They have merely served up an introductory text book geared to what they read as its needs.

Robbie Gilligan *Senior Lecturer in Social Work, University of Dublin, Trinity College.*

REVIEWS

Peter G Christenson and Donald F Roberts
It's not only Rock and Roll: Popular Music in the Lives of Adolescents
Hampton Press, Inc, Cresskill, New Jersey, USA
(distributed in Britain by The Eurospan Group, London)
ISBN 1 57273 143 5
£18.50 (pbk)
pp xi + 305

Mike Waite

This book both describes and intervenes in the ongoing debates in the USA about the impact and effects of 'popular music' on young people. It is a strange book in a number of ways. It takes the form of an academic study, complete with pre-publication blurb quotes from a few professors, and a fifty-odd page apparatus of references and indices. But its tone and structure make clear that it is primarily addressed to anxious parents concerned about the malign influence on their children of their listening and (MTV) viewing habits. Indeed, one of the roots of the book was the concern of one of the authors when he found his eight year old listening to Snoop Doggy Dog, and found that saying 'Son, Snoop's nothing more than a common hoodlum' wasn't enough to break the child's 'infatuation'.

Anxiety about 'devil music' has a long history, or course, and the book's main value is in mapping the shape of recent and current moral panics from the perspective of those who've been unsettled. The authors take a rationalistic approach, trying to separate the facts from the myths. Many of the concerns detailed by Christenson and Roberts deserve serious consideration. They cannot be caricatured as the puritanism of the religious right or paranoid middle class. Most readers of this journal will share the authors' disgust at some of the racist, woman-hating and anti-gay 'lyrics' cited in passages on 'gangsta rap' and heavy metal.

But such passages lose their force in the context of a book which cites concern after concern about nearly *every* form and aspect of the music which 'kids' listen to. The overall impression is of parental voices which are absolutely distressed to find that there are whole areas of cultural life which their children are part of and relate to and learn in, but from which they are excluded and which they cannot control and do not find easy to understand.

No amount of empirical analyses and survey reports about what meaning groups of teenage listeners take from particular song lyrics can overcome this failure of understanding and empathy. There are graphs detailing

how much time young people 'spend with music media', passages correlating 'political orientation and music preferences', and anguish about the effects of 'rock and roll' on academic performance and sensory cells in the ear. But none of this really gets hold of how and why music is owned, consumed and created by young people. This is mainly because the book does not consider musical forms as elements of subcultural activity in which young people work out their own identities. The fearful view that young people may be passive and naive recipients of pop stars' exhortations to commit suicide or even have sex overarches the book's arguments from start to finish.

The failure to consider young peoples' relations to styles of music through subculture has to do with an ignorance on the part of the authors which leads them to begin by saying that 'we believe that this is the first book to be written about what social science research has to say about adolescents and popular music'. Well, this isn't so. They even cite Simon Frith's 1981 book *Sound Effects,* a reference to a British author that one might have expected to lead them on to consider Dick Hebdige's 1979 *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* and other cultural studies works drawing from the same roots. Whilst Christenson and Roberts shouldn't have missed Hebdige, who has taught in the USA for years and whose work is available there, they should even more surely have explored cultural studies material relevant to their subject written by American authors. Stephen Duncombe's excellent 1997 book *Notes From Underground* is a recent example.

Instead, the book concludes with a chapter called 'what should we do about popular music?'. This considers the pros and cons of government censorship, industry self-regulation, and 'parental advisory' stickers - the discussion on this subject being actually quite interesting. The last pages, predictably, are addressed to parents. Given the moral concerns of the book, the authors' advice probably represents quite a liberal line. They urge parents to keep things in perspective, not to lecture their children, and to work for a 'negotiated family policy in which adolescent music preferences are respected' without parents ceding 'authority to their adolescent offspring'. The reactions to such efforts of a young man who was into Snoop Doggy Dog at the age of eight is, no doubt, the subject of much discussion in one of the author's households these days.

Mike Waite *is Community Development Manager with Burnley Borough Council.*

REVIEWS

Bob Broad
Young People Leaving Care: Life After the Children Act 1989
Jessica Kingsley 1998
ISBN 1 85302 565 8
£17.95 (pbk)
pp 281

Dustine Evans

Broad's motivation for writing this book is simple, yet so very important, that: 'young people leaving care must get a better deal than they do at present' (p 11). A similar view, I recall, was expressed (and expected) during the build up to the Children Act (1989). This book does not solely address the Children Act, but also a wide range of other factors that impact on young people leaving care. The Children Act is related to other pieces of legislation, such as that relating to benefits which ignore the needs of independent sixteen and seventeen year olds who have no reliable parental support. Evidence for Broad's conclusions and recommendations stems from substantial data collected from leaving care projects throughout England and Wales.

Presumably for easier reading, this book is divided into three parts, the first being entitled 'Legal and Policy Perspectives.' A necessary title that warrants personal motivation before attempting to read on. Fortunately, Broad's enthusiasm for change becomes focal immediately, leaving a feeling of inspiration. Important child care legislation is briefly explained which assists in placing the Children Act in perspective. An interesting argument about the transition of young people into independent living is also given. Based on evidence by Jones (1995) that young people living away from home require certain 'essentials': financial support, somewhere to live, a desire to leave home and support networks, (to mention a few), Broad emphasises the complex web of aftercare for both workers and, especially, young people.

Here, there are also some important points raised to anti-discrimination and how it can be interpreted within legislation. Broad is forthright in how anti-discrimination ought to be approached:

> *The Children Act 1989 and associated guidance is concerned less with anti-discriminatory understandings and approaches than with encouraging non-discrimination, which is quite different, and to my mind a limited and dated understanding of anti-discrimination.*

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In 1992, questionnaires were sent to 48 leaving care projects and the findings presented in Broad's earlier book 'Leaving Care in the 1990's' (1994). The second part of which, on similar lines, compares those findings (as far as is possible) with a more recent, larger scale survey. Research in this field has tended to focus on specific geographical areas, such as Leeds and London, leaving then open to criticism. That the data summarised in this book has been collected from leaving care projects throughout England and Wales makes it unique. Although an exciting breakthrough in leaving care research, it is not always the easiest part of the book to follow. Broad tends to fluctuate in the amount of prior sociological research knowledge he assumes. Despite this, however, there is still a great deal to be gained. Certain issues for young people leaving care were targeted specifically by the researchers. These were chosen as they seemed particularly prevalent at the time and to make demonstrating a correlation or contradiction between both surveys easier. These issues include, support and access to education, housing, young people's participation in projects, anti-discrimination, financial support, monitoring and evaluation and management.

The final part of this book offers a wealth of recommendations from both the projects and Broad. With this, there are, sadly, no real surprises. Concerns raised because of the Children Act, in its initial stages, remain - that 'powers' within the Act ought to be changed to 'duties' and that there are huge discrepancies between Local Authorities in terms of what a care leaver can expect to reveive, are just two. What is heartening, however, is the never relenting effort for change some of the projects appear to have.

Finally, it was with a degree of scepticism that I began reading this book. My expectations were of an uninspiring piece of literature which merely illustrates the terrible lot of young people leaving care, ignoring any positives or possibilities. I am delighted to be proved wrong.

Dustine Evans *former care leaver and postgraduate at the University of Durham.*

REVIEWS

Anne Power and Rebecca Tunstall
Dangerous Disorder: Riots and Violent Disturbances in Thirteen Areas of Britain, 1991-92
Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1997
ISBN 1 899987 49 5
£11.95

Bob Coles

In 1995, Power and Tunstall published *Swimming against the tide*, research undertaken with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on twenty unpopular council estates. This told the stark facts of social polarisation which took place during the 1980s. Lone parent families with young children, or households with no adult member in work became spatially concentrated on estates served by poorly performing schools with high rates of truancy and exclusions. On many of the estates, before the riots, the youth service has been cut by councils under severe financial pressure under 'poll tax capping' and abandoned by the police who seemed to regard residents as sub-citizens. This produced a tightening spiral of disadvantage and social exclusion. This was the result of housing, education and youth policies which resulted in the poorest and the most vulnerable being clustered on the same unpopular estates with the worst patterns of provision. Just under one in three residents on these estates were under the age of sixteen and on nine of them more than half the population was under the age of twenty-four. Unfortunately few policy makers regarded these children and young people as 'residents', far less citizens or stakeholders.

Between 1991 and 1995, at least 28 areas experienced serious outbreaks of violence and disorder resulting in serious damage to property costing millions of pounds. *Dangerous Disorder* is a study of 13 of these, and is an attempt to try to discern some pattern in the ways in which 'riots' developed. The authors are able to compare the estates on which disorder did occur with the twenty estates that had similar sorts of socio-economic backgrounds. Some of the findings go against the received wisdom about riots from the experience of the US. The estates effected were not multi-ethnic but predominantly white working class estates with ten of the thirteen having over 94% of the residents who were white. Nor were the estates dominated by high rise and deck access blocks often associated with high rates of crime. Only three had any high-rise blocks more than five stories high. Most of them were predominately traditional cottage-style houses with gardens. Two of them, following the pattern of the 1980s,

had sold more than 50% of the properties to sitting tenants. Thatcher's property owning democracy provided no shield against violent disorder. Most were not London based or inner-city estates but on the outskirts of cities in what Campbell describes as 'on the end of cities and the edge of class.'

Campbell, in her analysis of the riots in *Goliath*, presented them as predominantly 'gender wars', women and mothers trying desperately to re-build and sustain communities against young men and there is some resonance with this theme in *Dangerous Disorders*. It is true, that most of the clashes with the police were with young men. It is also true that young men in the areas affected showed more signs of educational disaffection than young women. Absences from schools on the estates were almost double those for the local authority areas and examination results and absences were much worse among young men than young women. Yet the analysis of the pattern of events outlined by Power and Tunstall is more complicated than simply 'gender wars'.

Other important ingredients they point to include week and spasmodic policing. The riots were, therefore, a highly predicable crescendo of 'rumbling disorder' which had been allowed to continue for some time. This took different forms in the different estates: persistent displays of 'driving tricks' in stolen cars; motor bike displays on waste land; the noisy congregations of young people outside shops; arson attacks on property and stolen cars followed by the stoning of the fire service when they tried to respond. Arson was widespread in most of the areas with some of the most serious against community facilities and services - 'the very bodies from which the most difficult and aggressive young people were often excluded'. There is some suggestion that the police had either lost control or given up on the estate prior to the riots and that the disorder occurred following changes in either police management or police tactics when they finally became determined to try to regain control. Heavy media presence is also reported to be an important factor with some suggestion of copy-cat rioting. Arson is interpreted as a means of creating a 'dramatic effect ...(which) enables intense aggression to be unleashed against buildings rather than people'. Yet it also makes for dramatic television and newspaper copy and sells papers.

Powell and Tunstall report that the riots resulted in between 11 to 200 arrests in each of the areas studied, injuries to an average of 11 policemen and two deaths of residents (young men killed whilst driving stolen vehicles). Many of the young men involved in the riots are described as

able to distance themselves from the damage caused, not just in the riots themselves, but in the criminal activities they engaged in for a long period in the build up to them. As Powell and Tunstall argue, 'In the eyes of society, their behaviour might be ugly, irrational and short term, but from a perspective which sees no exit and no future it may have offered some immediate relief of inexpressible feelings.' The real casualties were those who had been working in community affairs and campaigning for the regeneration of the estates. The reputations created by the riots persist even now and there are real worries that this may have a lasting impact upon the employment prospect of, especially young male residents. Having done research over the past year on ten social housing estates as part of another JRF project, it is worth noting that estate workers and residents remain extremely annoyed by the persistent stereotyping by the media which seem unable to mention the name of estates without prefacing it by the phrase 'riot torn'.

Yet, as Power and Tunstall demonstrate, in other ways the estates were not 'punished' by either government or local authorities. Rather much has been done for them since the riots and many of them are at the forefront of new initiatives 'to foster co-operation and co-ordination at a community level'. The late 1990s have become the era of 'partnership' and multi-agency approaches to meeting complex social and economic needs. Local authorities, the police and the private and voluntary sectors now have to show evidence of co-operation to gain access to huge amounts of money being spent on estate and economic regeneration. Power and Tunstall estimate that in the three areas in which it was possible to estimate the cost of the riots between £3-8 million of destruction occurred in a matter of days. It will take much more time and a lot more money to construct more lasting solutions. The Crime and Disorder Bill has produced headlines which suggest draconian new powers will be used against young people who are rumoured to be an even more vicious new generation of potential young rioters. Yet on the estates themselves there is now less crime, fewer disturbances, less vandalism, more money, and renewed optimism that social exclusion can be reversed.

Power and Tunstall have provided a powerful description of what happens when social policies go badly wrong. In their final chapter, they provide a policy agenda for local services, housing officers, the police, the courts, and those working with young people, children and their parents. But as they demonstrate, it only needs failure with a few to reap catastrophe for

many. It is to be hoped that professional groups with vested interests and difficult choices can be bold enough, and humble enough, to learn the lessons of past mistakes.

***Bob Coles** is senior lecturer in social policy at the University of York. He is completing a project for JRF on Multi-agency approaches to meeting the needs of young people on social housing estates.*

Howard Williamson
Youth & Policy: Contexts and Consequences
Ashgate Publishing Ltd
ISBN 1 85972 677 1
£35.00 (hbk)

Brian Belton

Williamson has produced an interesting account of his experience as a youth worker/researcher. He uses lecture material, case studies and personal accounts to illustrate his understanding of the position of a group of young offenders in 'Milltown' over two decades, from 1975.

The book is partly a longitudinal picture of the lives of this group and others, as well as a record of Williamson's responses as a worker/researcher to their situation. This material is interspersed with sections devoted to a critique of social policy and issues arising out of the same. This analysis demonstrates how young people, like those found in 'Milltown', who Williamson calls *Status Zer0 Youth*, are marginalised. For him, this *underclass*, that he feels is rarely consulted about its needs or aspirations, has been created by the impact of social policy and the effect of governmental strategies, that serve only to consolidate poverty, low morale and alienation.

This represents the hermeneutic nature of Williamson's work, illustrating how the positive effects of state attempts to ameliorate the marginalisation of young people, through various efforts to encourage social participation; Youth Training Schemes, Youth Opportunities Programmes etc. have been limited. As such, the book situates the reader in terms of the nature of youth work practice and the effect of social policy on those young

people who find themselves on the margins of society. This highlights the victim status often assigned to young people (persons in need of help) through policy assumptions. This amounts to a deficit perspective of the individuals, groups and the communities of which they are a part. Williamson sees social interventions aimed at alleviating this perceived inadequacy as a foundation of continued disadvantage.

This rings bells for the practitioner weaned on the narrative of 'problem youth', that emphasises the negative experiences of young people and ignores the potential of unique individuals and the value of their cultural and class backgrounds. What the book further illustrates is the colonial nature of much of the intervention into the lives of young people (although Williamson fails to make the direct connection himself) that disempowers through overt and covert interference. The outcome is what Fanon (1963) has seen as a colonial mentality, wherein the colonised become the passive 'client' group of the colonisers.

Williamson exposes how much of the social rhetoric guiding the practice of welfare, youth work and educational initiatives in Britain amounts to little more than a series of 'normalisation' strategies. This of course can be easily interpreted by the reader as part of the complex of social control.

The significance of this book is its reflective content, recording how the worker/researcher and client have reacted under the influence of the tactical intrusion of government over twenty years. It does not provide any concrete recommendations for future practice. This is a weakness in the work. However, Williamson must be given credit for offering an account of the lived reality of excluded young people, that are often known by policy makers through little more than hearsay .

Williamson sees some value in *advice, information and support,* (pp 180-181) as central facets of youth work, however he recognises that the *unconditional commitment* (p 181) of the youth worker is often more important to young people. This gives the reader hope that Williamson might tender a radical critique of the traditional assumption of deficiency at the starting point for practice (reflecting the trajectory of policy) a view that sees young people as essentially being in a state of 'lack'. This apriorism imbues the strategies and policies of intervention that Williamson vilifies. However, his insistence that young people have a seeming generic need for *support* (ibid.) disappoints. Like the standpoints he critiques, Williamson does not sufficiently consider the need that young people,

like all people, may have for mutuality, interdependence and a chance to add to the life of society by their own contributions.

Williamson frustrates his audience. One gets the feeling that he wants to move away from strategies, policies and practice premised on notions of deficit, but in effect, by ending up back at square one, gives the impression that he is himself unable to move beyond the same social constructs that limit the development of a humane response to the needs of youth and community in our society. The book is bereft of an alternative to what has become the lore of professional intervention; someone doing something for, to or with others, to achieve often covert professional aims, through, more or less, surreptitious means.

Maybe it is expecting too much of ourselves, who are 'products of the system' to locate 'ways of being' outside of our experience. But looking at societies that existed before colonial intervention may prove helpful. For example, the sense of *Ubuntu*, is alluring. This is a Xhosa and Zulu notion meaning commitment to community; a sense that ones' connectedness is bound to the connectedness of others. Such ideas have given rise to post colonial strategies, such as those implicated in *Ujamaa - Mutual Respect and Understanding*, as proposed by Hulius Nyerere (1968). One senses that this is where Williamson would like to go when he writes about *respecting the relative level of autonomy secured by young people* (pp 180) and youth workers doing their *very best* (p 181). In the last analysis though he misses an opportunity to reassess the nature and direction of intervention into the lives of young people, seeing a need for professionals to nurture participation (p 177) (this presumes people cannot do this for themselves, à la the colonial relationship) rather than like Yolanda King understanding that:

> *We, all of us, are participants in the creation of the present and the future. Whether we like it or not...either way we go - through silence or through raised voices...through art that activates, elevates, motivates or that which produces - slumber.... Whether we commit ourselves to what can be, to passively accept what is - either way we go - WE ARE PARTICIPANTS.*

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Yolanda King - March 1998 - 30th Birthday of the Anna Scher Theatre.

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Brian Belton *YMCA George Williams College, London.*

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Barbara Lloyd and Kevin Lucas
Smoking In Adolescence
Routledge
ISBN 0 415 17859 2 (hbk)
ISBN 0 415 17860 6 (pbk)
£14.99
pp215

Melanie Eve

This is a study of smoking amongst secondary school young people combining two pieces of research by Lloyd and Lucas (1996) and Holland et al (1996). It is dominated by a medicalised language familiar to health professionals which makes much of the text impenetrable unless resolute. However much of the text deals with social theory from psycho-social disciplines with many sources familiar to those with an education or psychology background. Rigorous structure helps to hold the study together as it covers the complex ground of smoking beliefs and behaviours.

The methodologies are convoluted but clear, combining two studies that both have elements of quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative information from focus groups and family interview transcriptions are combined using NUD*IST technology to systematically code and analyse categories. The study presented is also rich in young people's own expressions around smoking and non-smoking.

It presents clear and authoritative conclusions that challenge many of the myths around adolescent smokers built upon adult views. The study vigorously addresses common concerns regarding the increase in young women smokers. Whilst it is common for boys and girls to take up smoking at the onset of puberty, the qualitative and quantitative data uncovers the meaning prescribed by a significant number of pre-pubescent (13-14 years) female smokers. Smoking cigarettes becomes a badge of maturity, visibly compensating for their lack of physical development.

A firmly presented finding is that 'poor family relationships predict teenage smoking behaviour' (p 58). The family influence having greatest impact is the amount of conflict and disharmony in the home, regardless of family composition. Step families and pre-divorce couples are identified as providing the background most likely to contribute to continual rows and ongoing problems. Factors such as style of parenting are also influential, with an authoritarian approach likely to lead to smoking uptake by the

child. Permissive parenting was criticised by the young people interviewed where parents encouraged their smoking at just 12 years of age. Young people requested the tolerant and patient response, associated with a negotiated style of parenting. Parental modelling and sibling modelling have a lesser role to play than often assumed. A greater predictor of the uptake of smoking amongst white young people is a best friend who smokes, [a study by Headen et al (1991) indicating that this is not an influential factor for black young people].

A useful finding for health promotion is the significant influence of school policy and culture on the young people in its community regardless of their social class backgrounds and individual characteristics. In addition, school programmes of health education are most influential on the behaviour of the fluid category 'occasional smoker'.

The research which follows the experiences and changing smoking status of young people from years 7 to 11 has important implications for the school curriculum. Their mutable needs and mixed characteristics indicate the relevance of a developmental spiral curriculum that maintains the valuable smoking education in primary school leading to; general concepts of self esteem for years 7-8 [age 11-13], problem-solving and stress management for years 8-9 [age 13-15] with examples centring on the issue of a best friend who smokes, moving onto the pupil's own experiences and perceptions being given challenging expression in years 10-11 (age 15-16).

The authors' school based smoking prevention programme is based expertly on the evidence provided by regular and occasional smokers in schools. There is an omission in their recommendations on the role and place of smoking cessation. This harm reduction approach would make a contribution to the culture of the school community and be an appropriate response to the numbers of teenage smokers who experience periods of wanting to stop.

Adult reasons for smoking to reduce stress and maintain a slim appearance are not transferable to young people, who have their own reasons to smoke. These were frequently identified as trying to look 'hard' or 'popular'. The research reveals that young people who smoke regularly are seen and see themselves as, fun loving and rebellious. Contrastingly committed non-smokers are happy to be viewed as sensible, academic and conforming. This mixed audience for smoking prevention messages indicates the need

for a less confrontational topic specific approach. The curriculum suggested to prevent smoking uptake is responsive to the social and developmental needs of adolescents based on these longitudinal studies.

The research partially addresses the strong influence of individual character as a factor. The observations of how young people coped with perceived stress lead the authors to conclude that personality factors, such as neuroticism also play a part in influencing regular smokers. Smokers are more likely to experience anxieties and adopt cathartic expressions of stress than non-smokers. Conversely non-smokers perceive less stress in their lives and are more likely to tackle the causes of problems than solely giving vent to their distress.

Gaps in this comprehensive text relate to the influence of tobacco advertising and individual psychology at depth, hence the lack of any reference to Prochaska and Di Clementi. This text book is recommended to anyone undertaking academic research, with a responsibility for health education or smoking policy development.

Melanie Eve *is a Health Promotion Specialist in Youth Health Work at the North Durham Health Promotion Unit.*

Janet Shucksmith and Leo B. Hendry
Health Issues and Adolescents: Growing up, Speaking out.
Routledge
ISBN 0 415 16848 1 (hbk)
ISBN 0 415 16849 X (pbk)
£12.99
pp 165

Melanie Eve

Never judge a book by its cover - especially this one. The picture of a pierced and tattooed 'youth' injecting himself has nothing to do with this well-conceived research study. Readers with an informed sensitivity to youth culture should not be deterred from the well-balanced findings in this wholly academic work.

This book is an attempt by Shucksmith and Hendry to give voice to young people's experiences without the health agenda being dominated

by adult concerns. It is written to inform a wide range of professionals and researchers working with young people, including those with an interest in health promotion, youth work, teachers and everyone involved in policy development affecting young people.

Their research objectives are:

- *to explore adolescent health issues and health promotion needs without a pre-defined adult agenda*
- *to understand the place of behaviours which may have health implications within the context of adolescent lifestyles*
- *further to investigate linkages between youth culture and health-related behaviours*
- *critically to assess the role of 'adultist' definitions in the shaping of adolescent health problems; and to reflect on how this process impacts on the effectiveness of health promotion. (p 2).*

The introductory chapter sets the scene by identifying a shift in adult interests in young people from those at the margins of socially acceptable behaviours to a focus on the common experiences of 15 year olds growing up. It also visits the growing relevance of consultation through Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the draft Scottish Agenda for Children.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter on methodology and would recommend it to anyone looking for a succinct quotation on the negative aspects of tick-box questionnaires, such as;

> *If we see the level of involvement of young people in the expression and interpretation of ideas about their own health as a continuum rather than as a black and white issue, then at the most extreme ends we have either the quantitative survey with closed tick-box categories designed by adults with no reference to young people's own use of language, saliences and beliefs, at the other end, the grounded qualitative interview or ethnographic study carried out and interpreted by young people themselves. Examples of the former are two a penny; examples of the latter somewhat harder to find (p 14).*

The researchers sought to escape adult perceptions by using qualitative methodologies to elicit young people's opinions and experiences. Issues surrounding the interviewing of children are thoroughly addressed by

recognising the imbalance of power, children's 'public' and 'private' accounts and the child's lack of metacognitive development.

The study's design essentially fell into three parts:

- *a desk study reviewing previous work and analysing existing survey data to examine adolescent health issues as now defined by adults*
- *a preliminary study using ten group discussions to establish an initial agenda of young people's concerns*
- *a major study based around approximately sixty individual qualitative interviews to explore different saliences and priorities (p 17).*

The literature review is used to inform a discussion at the start of each chapter before introducing and addressing the young people's contributions.

Extensive, imaginative and flexible piloting of group and individual interviews reveal the amount of work undertaken to ensure the quality of this study. Transcription of the data and discussions within the fieldwork team identified the themes for five chapters. These look at;

- *body image, appearance and health*
- *the impact of localism on health*
- *family influences on health belief*
- *health risk*
- *peer pressure and young people's belief in their own agency.*

A specific problem highlighted by the authors [and one familiar to community based workers], is the disaggregation of large scale surveys into meaningful contextual data to enhance an understanding of local issues. In the chapter on localism the researchers identified the structural determinants which impact on health behaviour, whilst discerning the agency young people have to make choices within a culturally restricted menu. The local culture sets norms according to class, housing, and the built environment. Young people's general behaviour is impacted by the provision of leisure space and 'policing' by other community members. Concluding that the recent health promotion discourse on choosing a healthy lifestyle is 'meaningless in the face of this spatial and social determinism' (p 54).

Several themes emerge from the research which somehow revisit the familiar adult agenda of health concerns for young people. The research

reveals that young people perceive their health needs very differently from adults. Their focus is on the 'here and now' not the longer term; concerns centre on personal appearance and diet in terms of being slim. Their decision making is around drinking, smoking ,drug use, sexual relationships, sexual practices and risk taking.

The findings around gender and sexuality are a sad reflection of reality and how poorly sexual health and gender equality are addressed at home and in school. The book evidences how young women use friendship groups to develop social skills and problem solving approaches. Contrastingly young men exchange little information or support with each other, and are more likely to turn to a girl for this than their parents. Male groups are used to seek physical activity and promote a macho male status through boasting. Girls have access to teenage periodicals as sources of information, whereas the equivalent for boys are pornographic magazines, which can only serve to reinforce macho male attitudes. It is not a surprise to see in this study as in others, that boys are homophobic as part of conforming to their peers: correspondingly girls are likely to be more open minded

An impressive finding is that none of these fifteen year old girls mentioned marriage. It is not on their agenda, and is identified as a decision to be made later on with greater maturity and experience.

Overall the research is qualitatively accomplished. The breadth and depth of references are sound with multiple sources stretching into feminism, politics, community issues, health, sociology, person centred approaches and other parts of European thought. An impressive piece of work with a terrible cover!

Melanie Eve *is a Health promotion Specialist in Youth Health Work at the North Durham Health Promotion Unit.*

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Abby Peterson
Neo-Sectarianism and Rainbow Coalitions: Youth and the Drama of Immigration in Contemporary Sweden.
Ashgate
ISBN 1 85972 700 X
pp 201

Bjorn Andersson

Sweden was once known as a country with relatively open borders. It was possible for refugees and other immigrants to come here and find a place to stay. The official policy was to give a refuge to mistreated and unhappy people, who, for various reasons, had to leave their homeland. Another part of this immigration policy was the creation of an ambitious programme to integrate the 'new Swedes' and to create a multicultural society.

Now, of course there is a lot to be said about this Swedish 'immigrant-friendly' policy. However, what has happened during the last thirty years is that Sweden has been transformed into a country where a large proportion of the population has experiences from and connections with other countries and different cultures. Approximately one-eigth (1.2 million people) of the population are first or second generation immigrants.

This has resulted in several reactions. One is a change in the Swedish immigration policy. Today there are larger restrictions on who is to be let into the country. The authorities have also started a campaign to search out immigrants who have been accepted as refugees on false papers or who gave misleading information. This has led to a series of cases where individuals and families, some of whom lived in Sweden for years, have been sent back to what is defined as their 'home-countries'.

The Swedish integration policy, 'the multi-cultural society', has also proved to function poorly. In several research reports and investigations it has been shown that immigrants in general face great difficulties trying to integrate in Swedish society. Many immigrants live in highly segregated, low-status areas and un-employment and bad health are much more frequent among immigrants, in comparison to the Swedish population.

An opposition against this more restrictive attitude from the authorities has emerged. Organisations as well as individuals have formed support groups for immigrants threatened by expulsion. These groups help to hide people away from the police and work, often using the media, against the immigrant authorities to have decisions changed. Some of these cases have attracted much public attention and the effort can be defined as a kind of solidarity work within the civil society.

However, quite different forces have also been started off. There have been attacks on refugee centres as well as on immigrant's homes and on individuals. The participants in these actions are often a mixture between unorganised, local groups with immigrant-hostile and/or racist opinions, and organised activists, often associated to the neo-nazi movement.

Young people are often taking a central part in the solidarity actions as well as in the racist attacks. They participate on an informal, spontaneous level and often form the core of the new social movements. To young people the often heard phrase that 'we live in an global, international world' is true in at least two aspects: symbolically and cultural as well as in a concrete context in the neighbourhood and school. To youth, race and ethnicity are important questions since they are so closely connected with identity and finding a place in society.

This very complex situation, just outlined here, is the starting-point for an interesting book by Abby Peterson *Neo-Sectarianism and Rainbow Coalitions* . The focus of her study is the antiracist movement and she has collected empirical data through participant observations of e.g. meetings and demonstrations and through interviews with mainly young activists.

Peterson is interested in how to understand and conceptualise new social movements like the antiracist movement, where young people take such an active part. Youth is here not seen as passive recipients, just internalising existing social structures, but as part-takers in an ongoing process where power, ethics and civilian rights are at stake. In this perspective it is possible to view young people as participants in the creation of (post) modern society. They are, however, not lumped together as a homogenous group with no internal tension. Seeing youth as a political category means acknowledging how different ideologies and life-styles result in power-structures that divide young people into different interest-groups, sometimes in conflict with one another.

Peterson applies a basically constructionist and dramatistic approach and an often repeated phrase in the text is 'the drama of immigration'. The anti-racist actors in this drama believe they represent ideas and values that are morally superior to those of their counter-part, the racists. The anti-racists think it is necessary to stand up and fight for their beliefs here and now. The racist ideas and actions must not stand unchallenged. Especially some groups in the anti-racist movement see the streets as important spaces where the battle must be fought and won. This creates what Peterson names 'the explosive sociality of the confrontation', which

for the participants leads to strong and emotional experiences of really belonging together. However, by some groups the non-confrontational strategy of 'rainbow coalitions' is much more preferred. This involves demonstrations and manifestations gathering members from a wide range of organisations and groups.

Peterson discusses, in detail, how these new movements should be understood. She rejects the idea of 'neo-tribalism' because tribes are something one is born into and they are based on very close relations, both in an existential and a physical sense. Instead Peterson suggests the term 'neo-sects' as more appropriate. Sects build on voluntary membership and do not imply physical closeness. Peterson's argumentation here is based on an interesting reading of vital parts of the sociological tradition.

This book can be recommended for those interested in how migration re-shapes social structures in the Swedish welfare state and puts ethnicity and racism on the agenda. It is also a book about young people, new social movements and the social conditions under which collective identity and action is constructed in contemporary western society.

Bjorn Andersson *is a researcher and teacher at the Department of Social Work, Goteborg University, Sweden.*

Sue Howard (ed.)
Wired-Up: Young People and the Electronic Media
UCL Press
ISBN 1-85728-805-X
£13.95 (pbk)
pp180

Andy Bennett

In many respects *Wired-Up* is a timely addition to contemporary research on media and society. Well organised and clearly presented in a highly accessible, jargon-free style, *Wired-Up* deals with a subject which is still largely ignored - young people's uses of the electronic media in the course of their everyday lives. Although much has been written on the issue of media audiences, little of this focuses directly on young people. Similarly, while the issue of young people and the media is a regular topic in the popular press, much of this coverage is negative in tone focusing, for example, on the perceived corrupting influence of violence

on TV or the addictive quality of computer games. *Wired-Up* represents a welcome break from such negative accounts. Drawing upon high quality empirical data, each of the nine studies featured in the book construct an alternative picture of the electronic media as a valuable resource for young people which plays a major role in their individual and social development from childhood to early adult life.

Geoff Lealand's study 'Where do snails watch television?' is a fascinating insight into the television viewing habits of pre-school children. Contesting the widely held view that pre-school children watch TV programmes in a passive and undiscriminating fashion, Lealand's research illustrates that pre-school TV viewers actually display a range of viewing habits depending upon what is on TV at a particular time. Lealand also challenges the view that TV has a detrimental effect on the developmental progress of pre-school children, arguing instead that by discussing their perceptions of TV images with their parents, children's awareness of the world around them is enhanced. Bill Green et al's 'Teaching the Nintendo generation' gets to grips with one of the most topical talking points of children's involvement with the electronic media, the computer game. Green et al. take issue with the moral guardian speak often found in popular journalism concerning the negative effects of computer games on the personal and intellectual development of young people. Instead, they argue, contemporary youth's avid interest in computer games is indicative of their general sense of ease with all aspects of modern computer technology not only as a leisure pursuit but also as a way of working and learning.

Mark Laidler's study 'Zapping Freddy Krueger' addresses the issue of horror films on TV and their effects on younger viewers. Laidler makes the interesting point that the viewing patterns and expectations of children in relation to horror films are different to those of adults. According to Laidler, adults' responses to horror films are guided by their knowledge of the characteristics clichés of the horror genre. Children, argues Laidler, have no such narrative knowledge to draw on but rather experience particular scenes and images which illicit particular responses. Laidler further contends that children's responses to such scenes and images are not dominated by shock and fear but also involve feelings of pleasure and delight. Laidler concludes by suggesting that while parents should still supervise children's viewing of horror films they should also carefully consider their own criteria for determining what their children should and should not be allowed to watch on TV. Laidler's findings are supported by Linda Sheldon in her

study 'Children and Television' which provides valuable data on the variations in what parents consider harmful viewing for their children and what children themselves consider to be harmful. Sheldon also identifies interesting gender variations between children's viewing habits with girls being apparently more likely to exhibit self-censorship

The notion of TV as a developmental resource for children is also paramount in Sue Howard's study 'Unbalanced minds?' which uses Piaget's concept of 'cognitive schemes' and Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' as a means of exploring how children's experience of TV viewing facilitates both personal and social development. Howard suggests that in concentrating on TV images children first make sense of such images by using cognitive schemes but subsequently modify these schemes through conversations with friends. In this way, argues Howard, young children '[build] on each other's ideas in order to accommodate discrepant television experiences', thus developing their communication and other interactive skills (p.73). The mood changes somewhat with Nola Alloway and Pam Gilbert's study 'Video Gaming Culture' which is, for my mind, the weak link in the narrative thread of *Wired-Up*. The study centres around the decidedly essentialist argument that video gaming culture is an activity via which boys and young men learn how to 'do masculinity'. Problematically, however, the many supporting interview extracts are dominated by male video game players talking about the 'maleness' of the activity. Given the nature of the study I felt that it would have been useful to include girls' opinions on video gaming culture and their reasons for not participating.

More in keeping with the general tone of *Wired-Up* is Gerry Bloustien's study 'It's different to a mirror cos it talks to you', a well formulated exploration of how teenage girls use hand held video cameras to discover aspects of their personalities, their characteristic traits and their interactions with friends and peers. Bloustien's research counts as a valuable addition to the recent work on 'active audience's' by writers such as Morley, Ang, Lull and Fiske. The same is true of Patricia Gillard et al.'s study 'The friendly phone' which, in its examination of teenagers' uses of the telephone, contributes important data to another vastly under-researched aspect of the electronic media's role in the everyday lives of young people. Gillard et al.'s work not only illustrates the centrality of the telephone to the culture of youth - as a means of sharing information, maintaining important networks of friends and so on - but also the innovations in telephone technology made by some young people to suit

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their individual needs. The final study in *Wired-Up*, Sue Turnbull's 'Dear Anne Summers: "Microfeminism" and media representations of women', contributes an important 'users eye view' to the current research on the increasingly pluralistic images of femininity featured in the visual media. Given the shifting nature of both female and male representation in the media, there is a clear need for much more research in this area.

In summary, *Wired-Up* is a well balanced and extremely valuable collection of studies which, as the new millennium approaches, signals an important new stage in the development of media research.

Andy Bennett *is Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Kent.*

Straight Talking
(Practical group work ideas for helping
young people to address issues concerning crime)
National Youth Agency
ISBN 0 86155 184 2
£16.95

Julie Ballantyne

This is a pack which sets out to offer practical ideas and suggestions for activities to be used in a group work setting by workers who are attempting to address issues around offending behaviour. At this level the pack works very well and offers workers a way of dealing with such issues. The pack is well thought out and the exercises are presented in a way which enables a worker to progress through a whole range of issues around 'offending'. The pack is easy to use and set out in a logical sequence, thereby allowing workers, who may have some limited knowledge and experience, an opportunity to address issues around crime and young people.

The pack is split into nine separate sections with each section looking at certain factors which may, or may not influence a young person's behaviour in terms of leading into offending behaviour and patterns. Each section can be used as a 'stand alone' exercise or as part of a longer on-going group work programme. The input of the worker, as in any group work process, is crucial to the level of learning achieved by young people and although many of the exercises will have value in their own right, it will

be the ability of the worker to draw young people out and encourage them to disclose and share their knowledge, experiences and feelings which will ultimately determine the success of the programme. Depending on where young people are situated, in terms of their offending pattern, will also pay some part in determining the relevance of certain exercises, as indeed will the make-up of the group. Some of the exercises I found, required a certain level of disclosure which young people didn't feel comfortable with in that particular setting and for this reason I would suggest that each exercise needs to be carefully planned in terms of the 'appropriateness' of the group, the environment, skills of the worker and where the young people are at.

The first two sections address the issues outlined above and look at how to create the 'appropriate' environment and group with section 3 offering some practical ideas for encouraging the group to share feelings and experiences. The following sections then go on to look at attitudes to crime, influence of friends on offending, consequences of offending, victims of crime, anger and self-control and keeping out of trouble.

Each of the sections has a range of exercises which may be used to highlight a particular issue around offending behaviour. Within each section, I think the suggested exercises are flexible enough to be adapted to pretty much any group of young people you may come across. Which is one of the main strengths I found in using the pack - its appeal across a range of young people in a variety of settings. Many of the exercises were fun and the group enjoyed doing them, others were more demanding in terms of the input from young people - it was useful to have a selection of exercises so that you could choose one which you thought was more appropriate to the group you were working with. The range of exercises covers questionnaires, role-plays, cartoon drawing, card games and personal statements.

The pack includes a set of exercise cards and hand-outs which are easily photocopiable. The groups I worked with also found the language easy to understand and understood what was expected from them which made life as a facilitator much easier!

In conclusion, I found the pack practical and useful in terms of presenting ideas for dealing with offending behaviour. It was good to have a range of activities which could be used with a range of groups. The pack is straightforward and easy to use and combines a different number of strategies for working with young people in a group work setting. The

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pack is presented well and is completely self contained, although as the designers state, it is intended to be used as part of a whole range of other activities which would be necessary in order to maintain the group.

Julie Ballantyne *Bexley Youth Service.*

Barrie Gunter and Adrian Furnham
Children as Consumers: A Psychological Analysis of the Young People's Market
Routledge
ISBN 0 415 18534 3 (hbk)
ISBN 0 415 18535 1 (pbk)
£50.00 (hbk)
£15.99 (pbk)
pp 216

Suzanne Hood

In recent years the British press has devoted considerable column space to the possible adverse affects of the media on children - on their emotional well-being, their moral development and their behaviour and actions. In particular our attention has been focussed on the dangers which may be linked with children's video viewing and with their use of television as a central leisure activity. Are some children who witness violence in these media emotionally damaged by such experiences? Might others even go on to enact that violence in their own lives. Such questions lead to others - particularly for policy-makers. Should children be protected from these potentially harmful influences? If so - to what degree, by what measures and by whom? Central to any debate about these issues are ideas about children as inherently vulnerable, as less experienced and competent than adults and therefore as in need of adult protection.

Ideas about children's inherent vulnerability have also informed adult concerns about a specific area of the media - the use of advertising. Are children particularly susceptible to the persuasive efforts of advertisers because of their relative lack of emotional and intellectual maturity? Do the attempts of advertisers to influence children possibly link with increased levels of family conflict as children make more and more requests for items that they have seen advertised?

What lies behind this recent pre-occupation with the media and its effects on children? Arguably, two discrete but related factors play a part: the globalization of the mass media and the growth in the child market. In the world of the 1990s there are greater numbers of children who are acting as consumers and these children have greater spending power than ever before. It is this changing area of children's lives which provides the substantive material for Barrie Gunter's and Adrian Furnham's recent book.

The authors take on the ambitious task of collating, reviewing and critiquing the very large amount of data (both national and international) which investigates the young person's market from a psychological perspective. The task - though ambitious - is - on the whole - achieved. The exploration of data from the studies is contextualised in a useful discussion of the demographic and economic characteristics of the expanding young people's market. Through their review of studies within social and cognitive psychology, Gunter and Furnham provide an exploration of key factors influencing the consumer socialization of children (eg parents, peers, social class, mass media and the economy) and they offer a thorough and critical appraisal of studies on children's understanding of advertising and its possible influences and effects. There is an interesting debate about the most appropriate research methods for gathering data about children's consumer attitudes and behaviour; and a concluding chapter which raises some key questions about regulations and controls over marketing and advertising. Core themes which run throughout the book and which inform the concluding comments include: the central role of parents as influences on children's consuming behaviour; the importance of achieving a balance between protection of children and unhelpful controls; and the key place of consumer education within any protective measures that are taken on behalf of children.

Gunter and Furnham make many references to the criticism which has been directed at cognitive development models of consumer socialization. Their comprehensive review includes discussion of more up-to-date models which are based on seeing learning as a cognitive-psychological process of adjustment to environment rather than a stage-wise process. They are - I think rightly - critical of studies which lean too heavily on notions of age-related stage and which effectively define children's competencies within the limits of these stages. I write this review, however, with a sociological rather than a psychological bias; and from this

standpoint there are some interesting underlying theoretical tensions in the book. The authors recognise that there is a delicate balance between protection and control and that sometimes too much protection is unhelpful, but they do not work from the premise that children are a minority social group for whom some features of protection may be *experienced* as controlling and oppressive in the *here and now.* Whilst they appear to value more recent research which attempts to explore children's attitudes and beliefs (rather than simply to quantify their knowledge) they do not give full recognition to the possibilities of doing research *with* and *for* children rather than *on* them. It appears that Gunter and Furnham are in many ways bound by and yet critical of their own theoretical assumptions which are rooted in developmental psychology; to research children is viewed as difficult primarily because of their relative immaturity - yet age-related notions of competence and understanding are to a great degree challenged and questioned. Ultimately, all this raises some interesting questions for thinking about children as consumers: 'are we concerned here with the quality of children's lives in the time present or are we more concerned with preparation for adulthood?' and 'whose interests may be met through protective welfarism - those of the children themselves, or those of the adults who seek to protect them?'

Nevertheless, the book will undoubtedly be useful - as is claimed - to students of psychology, sociology, business and media studies as well as to those who work in marketing or advertising. Perhaps because it is so thorough and comprehensive it suffers occasionally from some repeated reference to studies. It may be better read with a focus on specific chapters of interest to the reader rather than throughout.

Suzanne Hood *is a researcher at the Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.*

Phil Scraton (ed)
Childhood In Crisis
UCL Press, 1997
ISBN 1 85728 789 4 (pbk)
pp 224

Bob Franklin

Like all good books, *Childhood In Crisis* has a tale to tell. This tale of moral panics, media scapegoats, misled publics and misguided policy

solutions, has already been widely told: but it is no less significant for that! The readily identifiable villains of this modern morality play are the news media and politicians. The *media* are judged to be guilty because their reporting of children and families has misrepresented childhood and replaced the 'innocent angels' of a previous social construct with the devils and 'she-devils' of contemporary media accounts (p 78). For their part, *politicians* are culpable for the ways in which they have responded to the pressures of media and public opinion by enacting ever more restrictive and punitive policies for children and young people.

The loudly trumpeted media claim of childhood in 'crisis' has been articulated in dramatic language: the portrayals of childhood have been overwhelmingly negative. Children 'on the streets' are allegedly 'drug users, runaways, joy riders and persistent young offenders'. At school they have become 'bullies, truants and disruptive pupils'; in their 'lone parent' families they lack 'appropriate discipline and control'. The politicians' responses to these claims have been untypically consensual, uniting ethical socialists as well as good old fashioned Tory Victorian moralists, in a concerted attack on children and childhood. Encapsulated in shallow soundbites, the policy response was initiated by Thatcher's call for a return to 'Victorian values' followed by Major's plea to go 'back to basics' which has recently been superseded by New Labour's wish for a 'No excuses' culture. The trigger for this press attack on children was the unprecedented coverage of the Bulger trial which generalised its vicious condemnation of two 10 year old boys into a broader allegation about the inherently evil nature of children and childhood. The media claims struck a note with the public; the 1990s has 'been the decade which marks the end of childhood innocence'.

The book details the crisis in two parts. Part one explores the social construction of childhood since the 18th century, emphasising the relationship between distinctive theories of childhood, social change and social policy. Recent media reporting of children is also reviewed with an emphasis on the significance of media as 'powerful definers'. Part two identifies the 'principal sites' of the debates arising from the crisis and targets the family, sexuality, schools, youth justice and mental health for analysis. An overall objective is to measure the extent to which children's rights have been advanced not merely via formal mechanisms such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but in 'the lived experiences of children and young people' in 'idealised' families which tend to 'mask power relations based on age and gender'.

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Each of the book's eight chapters offers an excellent review of the debates and literature relevant to its particular subject focus. Chapters are also clearly written and, where appropriate littered with illustrative exemplars of media coverage; a lengthy bibliography is helpful in guiding readers to related literature in the field. Consequently, both new readers as well as those who are more familiar with the literature will find a good deal which is valuable in these discussions. Chapter one, for example, guides the reader through the often complex literature discussing childhood and illustrates how children have been persistently marginalised and excluded in capitalist societies. It also reveals neatly how the differential rights of adults and children rest less on rational philosophical precepts and justifications than on mere power and vested interest.

Different readers will enjoy some chapters more than others reflecting their particular concerns and interests. Consequently, I found chapter 2, which examined media portrayals of children - especially their involvement in crime - particularly valuable. These portrayals are invariably unattractive and hostile, but what Davies and Bourhill reveal is the extent to which *children* replaced *teenagers* as the focus of crime reports during the 1980s and 1990s; criminals became younger in the eyes of the media as Britain succumbed to 'toddlers in prams' and a wave of 'Kiddie crime'. As early as 1982, Mrs Thatcher identified a 'Rampage of Tiny Terrors', 'Mini-Mobs' and a 'Mini-Mafia' (Journalists appear to love alliteration) which were posing a threat to law and order. The chapter also documents well those occasions when children have been represented in the media as 'victims' with a perhaps inevitable focus on press reporting of Cleveland and other highly publicised child protection cases. The chapter concludes with an appraisal of press reports of the Bulger case and catalogues the effectiveness of media in melding a moral consensus of voices against children which denounced children as 'evil', proved influential on public opinion and ultimately created a policy environment hostile to children and unsympathetic to proposals seeking to enhance children's rights to participation. Amid a moral panic with children cast as folk devils, the anecdotal observations of idiosyncratic individuals were too frequently cited as evidence which substantiated newspapers' claims. Novelist Beryl Bainbridge, for example, on a trip to Liverpool noted how children's 'countenance was so devoid of innocence that I was frightened. They were old beyond their years and undeniably corrupt'. This 'opinion' was promptly reported in the Daily Mail (20 February 1993).

This is a well documented book which combines media and social policy concerns and highlights their interconnections. It tells an important tale of social injustice with a radical voice. It raises important issues, presents well documented debates and is persuasive in many of its conclusions. But the book is better on description than prescription. It is stronger when it is analysing those factors which marginalise and exclude children than it is when attempting to identify strategies and policies for their inclusion and participation in decision making. In truth, this criticism could (and should) be levelled at much of the literature which analyses the circumstances of children. But at times, the reader is left with the impression of children as passive social agents overwhelmed not merely by their power relationship with adults but by the whole juggernaut of history. There is little discussion of those policies and practices dedicated to increasing children's participation; especially where that practice is driven by children and young people themselves. A consideration of groups such as Article 12 or the young peoples' news agency *Children's Express* (particularly relevant in this context) which attempts to place stories expressing children's perspectives in mainstream news media, would provide a welcome addition to this book. These observations connect directly to a second concern. The discussion of rights - heralded in the early pages as a persistent theme informing discussion throughout the book - remains implicit rather than explicit. Apart from a brief discussion of the Children Act (pp 71-74), it is left to the editor to make good this 'child neglect'. In a valedictory section, Phil Scraton (pp 178-187) discusses the desirability of a 'positive rights agenda' with the potential to create the conditions necessary for the full and active participation of children and young people. Such an agenda offers the crucial and politically desirable conclusion to this tale about *Childhood in Crisis*. But for cynical politicians willing to offer populist policies for electoral gain, as well as news media seeking to promote an authoritarian moral agenda, any prospect for increasing the participation of children and young people, undoubtedly provides the sting in this particular tale.

Bob Franklin *works in the Department of Sociological Studies at Sheffield University.*

REVIEWS

Allison James, Chris Jenks and Alan Prout
Theorizing Childhood
Polity Press
ISBN 0 7456 1564 3 (hbk)
ISBN 0 7456 1565 1 (pbk)
£45.00 (hbk)
£13.95 (pbk)
pp 247

Steph Lawler

Recent academic attention to 'childhood' as a social category means it is at last getting the attention that some of us, at least, feel it deserves. At the same time, however, it is sometimes difficult to discern the impact of this growing literature on mainstream sociology and (especially) psychology, where investigations into children and childhood frequently assume as 'given' the category they should be seeking to explain. As Chris Jenks notes in an earlier work:

> *It is as if the basic ontological questions, 'What is a child?' and 'How is the child possible as such?' were, so to speak, answered in advance of the theorizing and then summarily dismissed (Jenks, 1996:4).*

Into this area of a growing but perhaps still relatively marginal literature on childhood. *Theorizing Childhood* comes as a welcome addition. Wide-ranging and clearly carefully written, the book explores childhood as a *social* category, in contrast to the conventional model of the 'naturally developing child' typified in developmental psychology and (in imitation) in 'socialization' theories within sociology, but found across a range of sites, from policy discussions to media representations.

Drawing on their own and other's theoretical and empirical material, the authors address childhood's social and symbolic significance, as well as the ways in which 'real' children actually live and are positioned within the social world. Rather than (as in the conventional model) envisaging childhood solely as a state of 'becoming' (an adult), they consider childhood as a state of 'being' (a child). The authors identify four approaches to theorizing childhood which, as they argue, break with the conventional model of the 'naturally developing child'. Each of these approaches envisages a particular model of childhood, identified here as the social structural child, the minority group child, the socially constructed child, and the tribal child. The social structural child is a model in which childhood is seen as an enduring and relatively stable (though

changing) category within any society. The minority group child, again, relies on a model of childhood as an enduring category, but emphasises the marginality and exploitation of children in a world geared to adults. The socially constructed child envisages childhood as a category brought into being by social rules and socially-generated knowledges; although 'real' children live this childhood, no information of childhood is either natural or inevitable. Finally, the model of the tribal child emphasises children's own social worlds and cultures (or subcultures).

Working through a series of substantive areas - the significance of time and of space, work and play, the diversities of different kinds of 'childhoods', the body - James, Jenks and Prout use these analytic models to theorize childhood across its many formations. The book also includes a chapter on 'researching childhood' which explores many of the methodological opportunities and pitfalls involved in doing research on or with children.

What is especially refreshing about this book is the ways in which it not only explores the ways in which sociological theorizing might enable us to reconceptualize childhood, but also reverses this movement, so that thinking about children and childhood is used to inflect ways of thinking about society. To envisage children as social actors, rather than as becoming-adults, and to place them at centre-stage, can enable new ways of thinking about the social world. For example, as the authors point out, definitions of 'work' generally exclude the kinds of work which children do at school: yet 'what children do at school conforms to almost any definition of work which extends beyond paid employment. Certainly it is not at all unusual for children themselves to see it as work' (p 119). Focusing on what children do at school, then, might alter broader understandings of what counts as 'work'. Similarly, though from a rather different angle, the book addresses what childhood symbolizes for (adult) social concerns. Children frequently embody the hopes, fears, and aspirations of adults, as well as inflecting concepts of identity and personhood. As the authors argue:

> *[T]he child emerges a mediating figure, but also a symbol, particularly in relation to social identity and those of risk and welfare. Children have become a source of our concerns about the nature of identity in a rapidly changing world (p 205).*

In this context, questioning what childhood *means* can provide valuable insights into these very processes of social identity, risk and welfare.

REVIEWS

Theorizing Childhood is an important and informative work which I think will have a significant impact. It provides a number of things: a review of the significant literature on childhood; an innovative and engaging analytic framework; and a theoretical push towards analysing children and childhood, not (solely) as potential adults but as social actors. Above all, it thoroughly *explores* the social category 'childhood', embedding it firmly within its social and historical context to produce a work which will be valuable to practitioners, theorists and students in this area, and indeed, to anyone interested in how the binary divide between children and adults works as one of the central organizing principles of the social world.

***Steph Lawler** is a lecturer in Sociology at the University of Durham.*

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Jenks, C. (1996) *Childhood.* London: Routledge.

Thomas P. Gullotta, Gerald R. Adams and Raymond Montemayer
Delinquent Violent Youth - Theory and Interventions
Sage, 1998
ISBN 0 7619 1335 1
pp 320

Steve Rogowski

This book come in the wake of the Arkansas and Oregon shootings in the USA and as such it is timely. It is part of an annual series designed to analyse and critique new research and literature in the field of adolescent development. As the blurb on the cover states, criminal behaviour among young people is troubling to Americans (and by this it seems to mean the USA and possibly Canada!) and here a group of academics address the problem from perspectives and research offered by each of their disciplines ranging from psychology and psychiatry to sociology and law. A wide range of issues are covered and I found the book a useful read.

There is a literary and historical overview of crime among rural and urban youth followed by, for example: theoretical and social policy thinking that shaped responses to troubled and troublesome young people; literature reviews of how families, peers, schools and the community influence delinquency; the role substances play in delinquent behaviour; the influence of TV on violent behaviour in childhood and adolescence; the

nature and treatment of violent behaviour in adolescents; a developmental perspective of youth gangs; effective community-based approaches for treating young offenders; effective intervention for incarcerated youth; ending with a chapter on the promotion of juvenile rightency which refers to positive social behaviours being the goal of socialisation, not merely the absence of antisocial behaviours.

Chapter one notes that as concern about violent crime among young people increased, responses have been to treat them as adults, thereby reverting to earlier more tougher approaches. Another trend is to put increased responsibility on parents for their children's behaviour, something that we are currently witnessing in the UK. The progressive changes of the last two hundred years, of dealing with young offenders as separately from adults for example, can be seen therefore as rather tenuous.

Chapter two provides a good account of the development of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention in the US over the last two hundred years. It is worth noting for example that in 1967 the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice recognised that individual psychopathology did not lead to crime but rather it was the structure of society that was at fault. However, thus view as we all know proved short lived and now neoclassicalism dominates whereby individuals are responsible for their own behaviour thus leading to desserts based sanctions being the response to crime, in effect harsher penalties. In fact, there has been a continuous cycle of either punishment or rehabilitation welfare dominating responses to youth crime throughout the development of juvenile justice, a similar comment applying, of course, to the situation in the UK.

Seydlitz and Jenkins' chapter looks at the cause of delinquency noting that 'one of the more interesting trends in understanding criminology is to focus on the neighbourhood and societal level rather than just the individual level'. Thus, for example, it is 'necessary to address poverty and unemployment and racism instead of cutting welfare and incarcerating African Americans'. All this might be stating the obvious but is well worth emphasising in the current political, economic and ideological climate.

As for youth gangs, something which does not as yet seem a major problem in the UK, the chapter concerned looks at the activity of such gangs including the social role they perform, use of firearms, drugs and criminal activity in general. Overall the argument is that a pervasive sense of hopelessness about the future in the prosocial world drives many young

people to seek the power and opportunity that gang membership offers. A young person with little attachment to school, unlikely access to higher education and few opportunities to enter the legal labour market and little opportunity to be socio-economically mobile tends to gang membership which often continues into adulthood. In short, for many if not most, economic, political and social forces compel gang membership and these forces need addressing.

Stanton and Mayer provide a concise review of community-based approaches for dealing with young offenders. They rightly argue that incarcerating young offenders does not work and that recent research in contrast to the 'nothing works' thesis of the 1970s, shows that community-based approaches 'have more potential for effecting long-term change in difficult to treat youth'. Such approaches have several advantages: young people are the products of communities in which they live and deserve to have the community care for and be responsible for them; incarcerated young people simply learn strategies for being more skilled criminals; community-based approaches are far cheaper and, I would argue more humane. The review then looks at diversionary programmes, probation, cognitive-behavioural interventions, social system interventions (eg. peer groupwork, restitution and mediation) and multi-systemic family therapy. It is noted that there are methodological problems in much of the empirical literature on such interventions but still argues that 'community-based strategies to treat juvenile offenders make most sense'. Simply removing young people to punish them or protect others does not take into account the developmental needs of adolescence or wider societal issues. Instead the argument is for a 'move away from the punishment model of controlling criminality to concentration on developing, implementing and evaluating comprehensive social programmes that seek to build communities that support the adaptive and prosocial development of children'. This is all well and good but arguably will only happen within the context of a more fair, just and equal society, something which currently seems further away than ever.

Indeed one criticism of this book is the absence of any reference to radical critical criminology. Put crudely in societies where so many young people are alienated and live brutalised lives, one should not be surprised that on occasions some snap under pressure and commit violence against others like themselves or even their families. But perhaps I digress.

In concluding then, this book is well worth a read. Although meant for the US market, and UK literature and research is conspicuous by its virtual absence, it has a lot to say to all those interested in youth crime and ways of dealing with it.

Steve Rogowski *is a social worker (children and families) with a local authority in NW England and a PhD student at Manchester Metropolitan University.*

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For an article:
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