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CONTENTS

Youth & Policy is devoted to the critical study of youth affairs and youth policy. The National Youth Agency provides information and support for all those concerned with the informal, personal and social education of young people.

EDUCATIONAL GROUPWORK AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP:
Towards a theoretical framework

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The Labour Government's emphasis on Lifelong Learning, Social Inclusion and Active Citizenship presents both possibilities and challenges to youth workers. Commentators in Scotland have been quick to discuss how workers can respond to this situation. Youth work has been considered, for example, in terms of democratic renewal (Tett, 2000), civic participation (McCulloch, 2000), contemporary youth issues (Milburn, 2000), putting feminist theory into practice (Kiely and Curran, 2000), and action research with marginalised young people (Wood and Forrest, 2000). This article seeks to develop the discussion on the basis of two observations: firstly that such responses often involve work with small groups, and secondly that the work is underpinned by a critical approach to practice. It is important to state at the outset that critical practice is not an event, a final or ultimate moment of radical work, but a process of working towards a preferred future. It is therefore within reach of all youth workers who seek to engage young people in a collective learning experience. In this conception, the purpose of the work moves beyond personal development and consciousness-raising to action for social change.

This way of working with small groups attempts to be educational in the Freirian (1972) sense of education for liberation as opposed to domestication. The point is for citizens to identify oppressive aspects of the social order with a view to creating more just, equitable and democratic conditions. Whilst this kind of language can seem rather far-fetched and over-politicised, the same sentiments may be detected today in the mission statements so popular in community education, youth and community and other services. The term 'educational groupwork' therefore refers to work with small groups which has broad emancipatory intent at its core. Whilst this notion of educational groupwork is relevant to all three of the Government's policy areas, its utility is considered here with particular reference to active citizenship. Though clearly set within a Scottish context, the ground covered is relevant to readers across the UK and perhaps beyond.

In Scotland, active citizenship has been highlighted in a discussion paper, 'Building an Active Democracy' (Community Learning Scotland, 2001). The document raises a number of issues. It states that there are examples of good practice to draw upon but that these need to be documented more diligently and systematically if they

are to be made more widely available. Practitioners are also said to need help in terms of staff development and guidance and reference is made to the likely impact of the current review of initial qualifying training in Scotland (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 2000). It also notes that, 'A growing body of research on community education and active citizenship is emerging in Scotland. As yet much of it is descriptive rather than analytical and more of the latter is required' (Community Learning Scotland, 2001:28). This article responds to this requirement by offering an analysis of educational groupwork in abstract and theoretical terms.

In anticipating a readership beyond the cadre of youth work professionals, the article opens with a discussion of youth work's purposes, conditions and tasks. The discussion, which draws heavily upon a previous formulation (see Bamber, 2000:10-12), serves two purposes. Firstly it locates educational groupwork at the end of a 'ladder of opportunity' which may begin with relatively undemanding and enjoyable leisure activities, but ends by involving young people in high level analysis of current social issues and engagement in social change activity. Secondly it provides a background against which the current challenge to youth work practice can be sketched. The way that educational groupwork meets the challenge is then illustrated through one short case study. Promoting the practice illustrated here is both a practical and a theoretical task. The hope is that the theoretical analysis offered will encourage others to consider their own experience more carefully, or to engage in a dialogue about their ideas and sources. The piece concludes with a justification for the value, place and usefulness of such theorising.

Although the meaning of active citizenship is not the main focus for discussion, a few words of explanation are necessary. A broad view of citizenship is adopted in an attempt to acknowledge the ambiguous, contested and contingent nature of the concept . Its meaning is always dependent on material, cultural and political conditions but in recognising this fact educators may help to redefine its meaning with different groups. It is also useful to make the link between citizenship and rights and to distinguish between rights that are ascribed and those that are asserted. In much of the contemporary discourse, there is a sense that rights are ascribed through the contractual acceptance of responsibility. In effect they are also earned and the achievement of rights has often resulted from the demanding of rights by groups who were denied them. The role of dissent may be underplayed when the concentration is on consensual and contractual citizenship. In embracing the value of dissent this article considers the role of educational groupwork in the promotion of critical citizenship.

The Conditions, Tasks and Purposes of Youth Work

Youth work is a contested field of activity in the sense that there are different and competing views as to its fundamental purposes and nature (Murphy, 1999). The scope of the debate, however, is well charted. Perhaps the most intellectually cogent statement of its terms was made some time ago by Butters and Newell (1978) when they traced three major approaches to the work in terms of: character-building, the social education repertoire and self-emancipation. Whilst the character-building approach may be portrayed as reactionary, it is neither useful nor necessary to reject the emphasis on moral and personal development associated with it. Similarly, although the self-emancipatory approach can be linked with radical intent, suggesting that it should be the favoured youth work approach says more about the authors' own ideological and theoretical convictions than any clear consensus in youth work or to the felt needs of many young people themselves. A different way of thinking about it, as Williamson (1995:12) has stated, is to say that,

> ...There is a developmental process in all youth work practice, starting with a focus on the individual, evolving into group formation, consolidation and growth, and perhaps culminating in the group effecting change for itself in one way or another.

Indeed there may well be no such end point without the formative, personal development stage. However, a crucial question concerns the extent to which this beginning opens up the possibility of the later phase. This is a more inclusive and holistic approach, which valorises the contributions made by the wide range of organisations that make up the field of youth work today. Describing this process helps to clarify the distinctive conditions, tasks and purposes of the work.

Conditions

Youth work needs to be flexible to fit with the varied circumstances and requirements of young people. It must be responsive to felt need or run the risk of seeming irrelevant to the concerns and wishes of the young people themselves. It should also be imaginative and attractive if it is to successfully compete for attention amidst the high tech, instant gratifiers, of today. Workers must demonstrate their long-term commitment to young people, some of whom are disillusioned with society and some of whom have been rejected and marginalised by society. If it is not to be seen as another agency of the state seeking to martial and control young people, however benevolent the intention, young people need to feel that it is, in some important sense, theirs. To achieve this, the work needs to be genuinely participative

in taking heed of and acting upon young people's wishes and concerns. It also means that the engagement of young people should be voluntary. In the end they should be able to take it or leave it. Coercion, in any form, cannot be part of mainstream youth work. Youth workers then can only carry limited forms of authority. If the engagement and participation of young people cannot be assured, neither can the ultimate outcomes of the work. Though it is possible to state the broad goals and likely learning, the actual outcome can never be guaranteed. What young people learn and take from this engagement is, in some important sense, unpredictable. The positive side to this is that learning often exceeds the boundaries of any particular curriculum. These conditions set the parameters for the distinctive tasks of youth work.

Tasks

A fundamental task for youth workers is to ensure that programmes and activities are enjoyable if they are to be attractive. Alternatively, those in adverse circumstances are not likely to engage unless they can see concrete and immediate gains in terms of alleviating their difficulties. Another task is to make provision developmental since young people come with a range of previous experience, needs and abilities. The task here is to provide a 'ladder of opportunity', starting with enjoyable leisure pursuits and ending by engaging young people in demanding educational and social change activities. This end of the 'ladder' is the territory of educational groupwork as it is discussed in this article.

Whilst leisure and activity based provision can be met by part-time and sessional workers in the typical one or two night per week youth club or group, the engagement in more demanding educational work requires professional commitment. This is because of the need for intense contact with young people over an extended period, requiring careful planning, preparation of materials and organisation of structured experiences, and high levels of skill in working, usually with small groups. It requires knowledge of social structures and policy as much as a deep understanding of educational theory and methodology. A central task of work at all levels, however, is to connect the interests and felt needs of young people with a broad curriculum which enables an ever deepening inquiry into aspects of themselves within the social order. To these tasks the increasing requirement to work in cross-disciplinary settings, can also be added.

Purpose

The full extent of the educational purpose of youth work is revealed in the developmental process outlined under tasks. The curriculum arises out of youth work's

commitment to certain fundamental values such as justice, equality and democracy and the engagement with young people, in particular social circumstances, to undertake a joint inquiry into aspects of the social order which support or negate the realisation of such values. This is where youth work has prefigured the new policy environment of tackling social exclusion, encouraging lifelong learning and promoting active citizenship. Yet just when its time has come, as Williamson (1998) has warned, there is a danger of over-emphasising youth work as a means of delivering 'capable' young people into the worlds of work and training, and other such current social agendas concerning housing, drugs or health education. Youth workers can contribute to the work of other agencies in cross-disciplinary settings, since there are certain aspects of the methodology and process, which are transferable. What may be described as mainstream youth work, however, has its own distinctive purpose, which is to engage with young people in situations and on terms over which they have some control. This is why voluntary association and the informal approach are so fundamental and cannot be separated from mainstream youth work.

This account suggests that youth work is an informal, educational process ultimately concerned with deepening young peoples' understanding of the social order and of their capacity to be critical and active within it. It ought to be well suited, therefore, to the Government's Lifelong Learning, Social Inclusion and Active Citizenship agenda. This assertion is now considered in three stages. Firstly the challenge to youth work is illustrated with particular reference to the Scottish policy context. Secondly, an example of educational groupwork is given to show one way in which the challenge can be met. Thirdly, a theoretical framework is elaborated to describe the nature of the learning and teaching processes involved in this type of groupwork.

The Challenge to Youth Work

On Monday, June 19th 2000, a unique event took place in Scotland. In nine separate conferences, over 1,000 young people took part in a Youth Summit. Ministers from the Scottish Executive attended the main conference in Motherwell to hear the views of young people,and MSPs attended their local events. The conferences were linked together by video conferencing and by a Scottish Executive web-site facility. Prior to this event, hundreds of young people engaged in Scotland's first on-line consultation to help inform the different conferences. More young people gave their views through an E-Conference on a wide variety of issues, such as drugs, alcohol, smoking, Europe, bullying and other issues of importance to them.

Only the cynical would deny that the size of this event testifies to a desire on the part of politicians in Scotland to encourage and to hear the views of young people. On the face of it, therefore, this is a Scottish Executive initiative that is fully in tune with the UK Government's three main policy directives of Lifelong Learning, Social Inclusion and Active citizenship. It would also appear to be running in parallel to other Government programmes aimed at recruiting young people into the work force, or to stay on in education. Importantly, it suggests a view of young people as citizens rather than the narrower constructions of potential worker or student. Such a view would appear to be gaining ground in Scotland.

At the time of writing, The Scottish Consultative Council for the Curriculum (3-18) has commissioned Education for Citizenship in Scotland (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2000) a consultation document intended to provide, '...the basis for a coherent national statement on education for citizenship'. In parallel, Community Learning Scotland has issued Building an Active Democracy, a discussion paper on the role of community education in supporting active citizenship. These developments are consistent with wider initiatives such as The Commission on Local Government and the Scottish Parliament, The Report of the Renewing Democracy Working Group, and the introduction of Best Value Regime and Community Planning, designed to ensure that government at all levels becomes more responsive and democratically accountable. In An Agenda For Action (Strategy Action Team, 1999), for example, we find that:

> ...*The Scottish Executive should develop and consult on new ways of involving a wider cross-section of young people in political debates and structures, with a particular emphasis on involving the most excluded.*

The challenge to involve people in new ways is reflected in particular policy areas such as health issues. A Scottish Executive News Release (SE 3037/2000) tells us that on 27th November 2000, Malcolm Chisholm, the Deputy Minister for Health and Community Care, met with young people in Glasgow as he launched the resource pack for 'Walk the Talk'. He is reported to have said,

> *The 'Walk The Talk' initiative is committed to helping young people grow in maturity and self confidence, by giving them easy access to knowledge and good health education and involving them in the design, delivery and management of young people's services...In September Susan Deacon announced that £1 million would be made available from the Health Improvement Fund to support the development of young people's services.*

The next phase is over to you, the service users and professionals (author's emphasis). *The work will start today in finding out what young people would find useful and helpful in their lives.*

A note of caution needs to be sounded, however. As Jeffs (1998), has argued previously, the situation in the UK is as yet ambiguous; that these developments are by no means definitively progressive and their outcomes may yet prove to be less than beneficial in terms of the creation of a more just society. Yet there is now the possibility to argue for progress on the basis of policy, some of which appears to concern the renewal of democracy. Opportunities are also challenges and if 'the next phase is over to you, the service users and professionals', to what extent are young people and youth workers up to it? In 'Promoting Learning: Developing Communities'(COSLA, 1998), it was categorically stated that,

> *Community educators have a key role to play in promoting political and civic education and it is clear that, when linked to real life issues and real opportunities to influence policy and decision making, a community education approach can be a highly effective way of widening interest and active participation.*

In spite of such fine words, however, there are some grounds for pessimism here. On the basis of research concerning detached youth work, Furlong et al (1997) have referred to the 'methodological conservatism' of youth work practice, where changes in youth work have failed to keep pace with those in the lives of young people. More specifically, according to 'Building an Active Democracy' (Community Learning Scotland, 2001:26-27) an extensive training needs analysis of managers and community based practitioners revealed that a significant proportion of staff were unsure as to their capacity to perform well in relation to the new active citizenship agenda. This lack of clarity is by no means confined to workers in Scotland. The recent report to the Gordon Cook Foundation (Rowe, 1999: 60), about citizenship and the youth service in England, stated:

> *We have identified a very broad-based acknowledgement of a gap between the aspirations of many workers and the quality of work in this area. Many factors are blamed for this, including lack of commitment to it, lack of skill, lack of full time staff working face to face with young people, lack of training, lack of resources and growing managerial pressures to increase, forcing centres to become more populist in their provision.*

In the same vein, the major report 'Extending Entitlement, Supporting Young People in Wales'(Policy Unit, National Assembly of Wales, 2000), is replete with

recommendations about working with young people in more focused, educational and participatory ways. At the very least the general drift of this document may be taken as a directive to youth services to improve in these areas. Yet examples of good practice with respect to the promotion of active citizenship can be found. One that is illustrative of educational groupwork is provided here to show how the policy challenge is being met in some places.

Meeting the Challenge

As Box 1 shows, Greater Pilton in the North of Edinburgh has significant levels of deprivation when compared against most socio-economic indicators of poverty.

Box 1 - Some Characteristics of North Edinburgh

- a population of 15,500
- only 34% of households with access to a car
- nearly one quarter of households have no bank or building society account
- over 40% of households across the area receive housing benefit
- one of the highest official unemployment rates in Edinburgh at 22%
- 60% unemployment in the 19-24 age bracket
- of those in work a substantial number are in low paid, part-time jobs
- women are twice as likely to be low wage earners than men
- in employment categories, only 5% are managers and 4% professionals
- around 25% of households are single person households
- at 17%, a high proportion of single parent households
- at 53%, local authority housing is the dominant form of tenure
- only 12% of residents stayed on at school after the age of 16
- 46% of residents have no qualifications

(Source: Halcrow Fox, 1999)

In 1995 a group of youth workers began meeting to discuss common issues faced by local agencies and workers. They wanted to develop a common vision, which would be assisted by collaboration and sharing available resources. In 1996 a residential conference began a process of consultation with local young people. Young people were involved during the planning stages and about 40 attended the conference. The programme highlighted local issues, and aimed to explore ways that young people could exercise more influence in their community and inform the direction of local services. One outcome was a draft young people's charter, which set out clear statements based on the needs and perceptions of the young people themselves. A smaller group then formed to develop the charter towards a formal launch in the community. Local youth workers met on a weekly basis with the group and the group worked intensively over a period of 15 months. Activities during this time

included raising funds, two residential events, and producing a video. Group members honed their interpersonal, communication and team-working skills, and learned to debate issues in a more systematic way. They also developed their ability to plan and organise, and to present their ideas to others. Crucially, they learned much about the workings of the local state and the exercise of power in local communities. The completed charter was presented by the group at a seminar in April 1998 and unveiled by a local councillor in front of an audience of youth workers.

After the conference the workers continued to meet regularly and the Youth Work Action Group was established in 1999. Since then the group has arranged seminars and conferences to encourage critical reflection on current youth work practice. One outcome was an agenda for change on the basis of commonly agreed principles of practice, which were:

- *The promotion of good practice*
- *Developing critical practice*
- *Accessibility*
- *Involvement*
- *Exploration of alternative methods and techniques*

The main point from this illustration is not that something extra-ordinary has happened. This tale is repeated across Scotland and the UK. In some senses, what is now being accomplished with the recent establishment of the Scottish Youth Parliament, is a larger version of events like this one. 'Building An Active Democracy' (Community Learning Scotland, 2001: 28) suggests that such work could happen more frequently and to greater effect if workers:

- *were better trained*
- *could measure what they do more effectively*
- *could draw from a wide range of practice examples*
- *could better understand the underpinning principles and processes of the work*

The discussion document points to a number of developments. The current review of Community Education training (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 2000) is set to agree the professional competencies required for work in this area. It is claimed that the new Learning, Evaluation and Planning framework (Community Learning Scotland, 2001: 28) will enable, '...community educators to measure active citizenship learning outcomes in community settings more effectively.' There is also said to be a growing body of relevant research which may come to inform practice although, '...much of it is descriptive rather than analytical and (my

emphasis) *more of the latter is required* (Ibid: 28). In the spirit of this last comment, which resonates with Williamson's (1995:2) lament concerning the lack of youth work theory, it is timely to raise questions about and to discuss the theoretical ideas and influences which underpin practice. The discussion here now goes on to elaborate a more abstract and theoretical analysis of educational groupwork. The point of doing so is then justified in the final section on the value and role of theoretical frameworks.

Educational Groupwork -An Analytical Framework

Educational groupwork has close similarities to Anyon's (1994:129-130) notion of 'socially useful theory'. In this view, theoretical understandings are not primarily derived from reference to other theories but from the dialogue between values, vision or goals and current activities. Such understandings do not attempt to provide the whole 'answer' or explanation for a situation. Nor are they *ad hoc* and only applicable to one locale or one situation with no relevance for anyone else. They seek to connect local activity to wider societal constraints in such a way that people, and those trying to work in this way, identify the direct action to be taken. The primary goal of this activity goes beyond the refinement of concepts to successful action. In short, socially useful theory, and thus educational groupwork, attempts to:

- *make the connection between local activity and societal constraints.*
- *ensure that what is proposed is actually capable of enactment and identifies direct actions to be taken.*
- *embody the commitment to certain values in the way that things are done.*
- *incorporate the analysis of what happens as a result of action taken into the theorising process.*

To develop socially useful theory, workers and young people need to become what Carr and Kemmis (1986) call 'critical social scientists'. It should be noted that their work draws heavily on the work of Jurgen Habermas who has been described by Pusey (1987:9) as,'...perhaps the most important sociologist since MaxWeber.' In the reworking given here (see Table 1) the three-stage nature of the process starts with the articulation of propositions, and moves through the development of knowledge to taking action. Each stage involves particular activities and intended outcomes. The achievement of these outcomes depends on the establishment within the group of certain permissive conditions including norms and patterns of communication. The process involves minor critical movements within the stages and major movements between them. The movements are characterised by signifi-cant shifts in attitudes and behaviour which enable individuals and the group to function more rationally and co-operatively. Once again much of what follows draws upon a previous formulation (see Bamber and Murphy, 1999: 236-238).

Table 1. Educational Groupwork (after Carr and Kemmis: 1986)

	Activity	Minor Critical Movement	Intended Outcomes	Minor Critical Movement	Conditions
Articulating Propositions	Making statements about social reality so as to distinguish between generative and degenerative themes	*From point scoring to exploring ideas*	Knowledge Constitutive Interests: Positivist - 'authoritative' and universal Interpretive - particular and local Emancipatory - liberatory intent	*From put downs to exploring emotional commitments*	Freedom of Discourse: Eliciting voices Supporting argument Sustaining conversations Respecting emotion - protecting rationality
Major Critical Movement	*From competitive assertion to collaborative inquiry*				
Developing Knowledge	Structured educational process aimed at developing knowledge about the propositions, embracing: experiential, didactic, reflective, elements	*Progressive clarification of personal position in relation to issues*	Realisation of position and significance for participant re: areas of certainty or uncertainty, awareness of difference, of 'place' in society, shared meanings, grounds for solidarity beyond the group	*Progressive revelation of relationship between private troubles and public issues*	Commitment to unconstrained communication. Countering inappropriate forms of persuasion and coercion, allows dialectical exploration of points of view
Major Critical Movement	*From collaborative inquiry to the desire for collective action*				
Taking Action	Propositions redefined. Problem solving approach. The conduct of the struggle: strategies, tactics, roles, resources	*Clarifies what can be done*	Prudential decision-making by assessing risk in confronting power. Avoiding being defined 'in' or 'out'.	*Clarifies what will be done*	Achievement of dialogue promotes practical discourse and decision-making. Free commitment to action. Results of action renew learning.

The articulation of propositions involves group members in making 'generative' statements in the Freirian (1972) sense of opening up a theme which is significant to the participants, but which also reveals much about relations of power in society. These can be contrasted with de-generative statements or 'premature ultimates', which are 'statements uttered with such finality and conviction that the possibility of counter-arguments is severely reduced' (Brookfield, 1987: 46). The intended outcome is to uncover what Habermas (in Carr and Kemmis, 1986:134) describes as the 'knowledge constitutive interests' of the participants. The aim is to clarify the nature of discussion by distinguishing between 'technical', 'practical' and 'emancipatory' statements. The first of these involves instrumental, 'scientific' knowledge concerning control over natural objects and processes. Debate about these claims may centre on establishing and questioning 'facts', the credibility of the source of the claims and the expertise and status of the acknowledged authorities associated with a particular view. The second derives from the self-interpretations of actors in social situations, and discussion here may centre on clarifying and debating meanings and understandings being brought to bear by those involved. The third refers to the attempt to understand reality in terms of the potential for liberatory activity. Debate here may concern, for example, the best way to help those who are in some way being disadvantaged or marginalised. In terms of conditions, the fullest possible exploration of the issues requires all voices to be heard; helping people to formulate their arguments; and sustaining conversations. People need to explore the way that they feel as well as think about issues, whilst rationality is protected through recourse to the use of evidence and the requirement to be logical.

Two minor critical movements must be achieved in this first stage. One allows for the genuine exploration of ideas, as distinct from the desire to score intellectual 'points', and the other allows for the exploration of underlying emotional commitments. Both are necessary if the group is to make the major critical shift from competitive assertion to collaborative inquiry, which lays the foundation for stage two.

The development of knowledge offers new insights and knowledge especially in relation to the wider organisational, social or political context. Workers would bring into play a structured educational process to enable the participants to learn with and from each other. It would embrace experiential, didactic, and reflective moments as appropriate. The intention is for participants to articulate and realise the significance of their position about issues. Degrees of certainty or uncertainty in relation to what they claim to know and think would become clearer, as would the awareness of areas of conflict, disagreement and consensus. The significance of difference amongst participants, sexual or racial, for example, and of their individual and collective 'place' in society,would also be revealed. It would tease out the

extent of shared meanings, the potential for group solidarity around issues and, beyond this, the possibility of solidarity with others in the wider society. The conditions pertaining to this stage necessitate a commitment to unconstrained communication in which inappropriate forms of persuasion, such as brow-beating, and coercion by others claiming a 'superior 'understanding, would be challenged in a way which enables a constructive exploration of points of view. This would seek to use conflict and disagreement as a basis for discussion as opposed to seeking an enforced resolution or phoney consensus.

Awareness of group dynamics is essential. Tuckmann's (in Brown, 1992:101-110) characterisation of group development in terms of forming, storming, norming and performing, illustrates how different kinds of interventions are required by the worker at the different phases in the life course of the group. Once again two minor critical movements can be identified; one which entails the progressive clarification of personal positions in relation to issues, and the other entailing the progressive revelation of the relationship between 'private troubles and public issues '(Mills, 1959). The major critical movement resulting from the second stage would be from collaborative inquiry to the desire for collective action, which lays the foundation for stage three.

Taking action involves planning for and taking achievable action on the basis of the group's deliberations. In this stage the original propositions would have been redefined as a result of the learning process. New understandings of the 'problem' would have been engendered and regarded in such a way that the group comes to see what it might begin to do about this 'problem'. Here the worker would enable the group to work through a systematic problem-solving approach with the aim being clarified, relevant objectives set, responsibilities identified, resources allocated and monitoring and evaluation systems put in place. This would seek to detail the conduct of the struggle to be undertaken. The intention is that the decision making involves a realistic assessment of risk in the actions envisaged. Whilst people can in theory learn from any situation, ones which expose people to catastrophic failure, ridicule or embarrassment are likely to lead to less rather than more engagement in the development process. Where the proposed action requires the group to challenge power and authoity, it is important, as Mathiesen (1980:224) argues, to avoid being 'defined in' or 'defined out' by those holding the power. It means that issues need to be taken up in such a way that it is difficult to demonise or stereotype the activists.

To support the group's decisions, it is a condition that all participants need to be involved in the practical discourse and give their free commitment to the actions to be taken. The results of the action feeds back to the beginning of the process when new statements will be made about the nature of social reality as the group

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considers what it now knows about the world as a consequence of its thoughts and actions. Within this third stage a further two minor critical movements can be identified, one which clarifies what could be done, and the other which establishes what will be done.

It is hoped that the above theoretical framework, although highly abstract and without pretending to be either comprehensive or authoritative, serves to explain at least something of the nature of educational groupwork. In terms of the Greater Pilton group, for example, the three major activities involved in educational groupwork can be clearly identified:

Articulating Propositions

Group members honed their interpersonal, communication and team-working skills, and learned to debate issues in a more systematic way.

Developing Knowledge

Local youth workers met on weekly basis with the group and the group worked intensively over a period of 15 months. Activities during this time included raising funds, two residential events, and producing a video. Crucially they learned much about the workings of the local state and the exercise of power in local communities.

Taking Action

One outcome was a draft young people's charter, which set out clear statements based on the needs and perceptions of the young people themselves. A smaller group then formed to develop the charter towards a formal launch in the community. The completed charter was presented by the group at a seminar in April 1998 and unveiled by a local councillor in front of an audience of youth workers.

The Pilton example also illustrates the point that there can be no critical practice without critical workers. Their story can be told because the workers took the trouble to reflect on their work and to write it up (see Youth Work Action Group, 2000). But what, in the end, is the value of developing and utilising theoretical frameworks? The discussion now concludes with a brief consideration of this question.

The Value of a Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks have a number of useful functions. Youth workers could use the one elaborated here as a template or idealised model against which to analyse their practice and ideas. In doing so they may:

- *make their current understandings and perspectives explicit*
- *identify inconsistencies or incoherence in their ideas or practice*
- *identify stages of a process*
- *inform and change practice*
- *recognise new opportunities for practice*
- *bring new ideas to bear*
- *critically examine their work*
- *be conscious of the link between purpose and practice*
- *assess outcomes against intentions*
- *change and extend the framework itself*

More generally, an important use of theory is to explain purposes and methods to others. These latter might include professionals in allied fields such as health, social work or housing, or in community education itself such as adult educators and community workers. It may therefore help to reveal the commonalities in various approaches. Sanderson (1999), in writing about adult education, citizenship and democratic renewal, for example, draws extensively on the same Habermasian analysis that is outlined in this article. Making the nature of educational groupwork explicit reveals connections to other established frameworks and this can help to authenticate and legitimate practice. The version of collective learning presented here, for instance, draws much from Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, which is widely understood and appreciated across a range of professional activity. It also connects with the theory and practice of Action Learning (Revans,1982), which emphasises the power of the group to drive learning which is action-centred. It differs from both of these in its overt concern with social justice issues and its commitment to the values and principles espoused, for example, by feminist commentators on group work such as Butler and Wintram (1991). For these reasons educational groupwork also fits well with other formulations, such as Mullender and Ward's (1991) 'Self-directed Groupwork', and the kind of work with small groups promoted by the Centre for Social Action (see Youth Agenda - A Good Practice guide to Working With Young People on Their Home Ground, 2000) based at De Montfort University, Leicester (http://www.dmu.ac.uk/~dmucsa).

Conclusion

This article has sought to contribute towards establishing a coherent and usable analytical framework to assist youth workers throughout the UK, and perhaps beyond, in developing educational groupwork. The final point is to suggest that the kind of work envisaged here would represent at the micro level, sites of democratic activity in which young people attempt to address issues of social justice in a rational

manner. As such they seek to influence social situations and in so doing make a contribution to the achievement of social justice at the macro level. In the end, therefore, it is about the development of critical citizenship. This form of activity would sit alongside the consultative, focus group, type notion of youth participation that features strongly up and down the country. It may support but is not wedded to the renewed interest in the 'quasi political decision-making process' (McCulloch, 2000: 38), exemplified by youth councils or the development of the Youth Parliament in Scotland. Such a version of educational groupwork may strike a chord with those seeking to breathe new life into the democratic process. It may also form the basis of one credible response to the challenges and possibilities inherent in the Labour Government's emphasis on Lifelong Learning, Social Inclusion and Active Citizenship

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17

YOUTH WORK AND BIOMEDICINE:
An exploratory study

SARAH BANKS, PAUL BURLISON AND TOM SHAKESPEARE

Should I take prozac?
Is cloning right?
Do we want designer babies?
Is it right to experiment on human embryos?
Should I be tested for inherited diseases?
Do the police have a right to ask for a DNA sample?

Do issues like these come up in youth work? Are they important for young people? Is there scope to develop work on these issues further? These are some of the questions raised in a small exploratory study commissioned by the Wellcome Trust and carried out by the Community and Youth Work Studies Unit at the University of Durham and PEALS (Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences Research Institute) at Newcastle (Banks, Burlison and Shakespeare 2001). This article discusses some of the findings of the study, which aimed to explore the feasibility of engaging youth work services, youth workers and young people (13 to 19 years) in discussions about the social and ethical implications of current advances in biomedicine, specifically genetics and neuroscience.

The study focussed on youth work taking place within the Youth Service in the UK. The term 'Youth Service' refers to a broad range of statutory and voluntary agencies, organisations and groups that work informally with an educational purpose with young people. This includes local authority services and a wide range of voluntary, community and church groups, who may or may not be affiliated to larger national organisations such as the Scout Association or the Young Women's Christian Association.

When first asked to bid for the research, we were rather wary. We did not think that there was much activity focussing on 'genetics and neuroscience' in youth work, nor did we think that youth workers would immediately recognise these as important topics. As Burke (2001; 28) commented in an article he wrote about the research project:

> *Now it could be that there are conversations about the ethics of creating designer babies going on right now in the back of youth project minibuses all over the country. But at first sight there is little formal evidence of this debate or of materials to help youth workers raise these very complex issues.*

Such matters might seem far removed from the pressing issues of the moment in youth work, such as crime prevention, teenage pregnancy or the new Connexions Service. There would also be the problem of language - how to ask questions about 'genetics' and 'neuroscience' that would be comprehensible and relevant enough to youth workers and young people to encourage them to answer questionnaires or engage in a group discussion.

Yet developments in biomedicine are constantly in the news - ranging from announcements of new treatments for diseases based on detailed genetic information, to debates about the ethics of embryo research or human cloning. So we judged there would be some level of awareness of the issues, if not the science behind them. These are important issues for society as a whole, and young people are part of that society. The research brief, although challenging, seemed worth pursuing.

Before we discuss our approach and findings, we will briefly outline some of the developments in genetics and neuroscience and the ethical issues they raise.

Developments in genetics and neuroscience and their social and ethical implications
In February 2001 the completion of the Human Genome Project (mapping of the human genetic make-up) was announced and hailed as a milestone in science and in the human species understanding of itself (Coghlan, 2001). In the decade to come, we can expect more understanding of the complex relations between genes, and between genes and environment. At the same time, advances in brain imaging, in pharmacology, and in cognitive sciences are revealing how the brain works, and attempting to identify the various elements that contribute to psychiatric illness as well as everyday behavioural processes and personality features (Carter, 1998). These scientific advances may have major benefits for individual health and reduce the cost to society of physical and psychological illness. But this new knowledge raises important ethical and social questions.

Genetics offers the potential of understanding disease processes, and developing gene therapies, drugs or suggestions for behaviour change to avoid disease. It also offers the chance to avoid the birth of individuals affected by serious genetic conditions. Genetics provides more and more information, and associated dilemmas about how information should be used (British Medical Association, 1998). For example, there is the question of whether people want to know about their predispositions to certain diseases, especially when there are no treatments to help avoid such diseases, or when behaviour change is difficult. There are important issues about who gets access to someone's genetic information (Human Genetics Commission, 2000). For example, do relatives have a right to know? How can employers and insurers be

prevented from discriminating unfairly? Should the police be able to take and hold genetic information for crime control and detection purposes? There are considerable dilemmas over selective termination of pregnancy. How much information should be disclosed about the genetic make-up of a foetus? Which genetic or developmental abnormalities are 'serious enough' to make termination of pregnancy desirable or advisable? Should 'consumer choice' be the key criterion, or are there important ethical limits to choice?

Genetics also offers the potential for cures and therapies, and here concerns centre on unintended consequences and risks of new techniques. Patients have died in gene therapy trials. There are particular fears about germline gene therapy (involving reproductive cells), and risks to future generations. The political economy of genetics is also a controversial area. Pharmaco-genetics (targeting drugs according to an individual's genetic make-up) offers exciting possibilities, but also requires immense sample collections and data processing before applications can be developed, as well as raising questions about the financing of drug development and delivery. There are questions over protection of intellectual property versus the public good of scientific development, particularly over the desirability or otherwise of patents on genetic information.

In the area of neuroscience, new understandings are offering potential for alleviating the effects of conditions such as stroke, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. Again, there are ethical and social questions about access to those drugs that have been developed, and how effective they are. As genetics and neuroscience combine to understand psychiatric problems such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorders, there are hopes of more effective drug therapies. The new generation of psycho-pharmaceuticals seems to be more beneficial in treating the debilitating effects of depression, for example. However, there are fears that knowledge about the brain will enable manipulation of individuals (Nuffield Council on Bioethics, 1998).

The development of neuroscience and behavioural genetics is also providing knowledge about normal variation in areas such as intelligence and musical ability, as well as claims about the biological bases of social phenomena such as anti-social behaviour and alcoholism (Nuffield Council on Bioethics, 2001). There are potential benefits in early intervention to avoid individual or social problems, as well as the possibility of educational or therapeutic routes to enhanced performances. But here there are doubts about the extent to which these highly complex processes will be able to be understood or controlled and whether it is desirable to medicalise these phenomena. While cures and therapies for clear-cut diseases or pathologies are largely uncontroversial, interventions which are designed to change 'normal'

behaviours, or to enhance average abilities raise major questions about what is desirable in any individual, as well as what is desirable in society as a whole. Such interventions, which might be both expensive and only available privately, also raise questions about social justice and equality.

Relevance to youth work

Reflection on the issues described above suggests that, although not likely to be top of the youth work agenda, they are not irrelevant to young people and hence to youth workers. Firstly, some young people may have had, or will have in the future, first or second hand experience of certain developments in biomedicine. For example, they might have experience of genetic testing for an inherited disease in their own family; being asked by the police for a DNA sample in connection with a crime; or taking a drug like Ritalin to control behaviour. These issues could be brought up in youth work in the same way as any other important event or dilemma for a young person like suspected pregnancy, bullying or choosing a career.

Secondly, youth work has always had a role in the 'moral education' of young people - helping them to clarify their values and to participate in decision-making in their local communities and society. Young (1999; 120) describes youth work as a form of 'moral philosophising', enabling young people to 'explore their own values', 'deliberate on the principles of their own moral judgements' and 'make reasoned choices that can be sustained through committed action'. Although not all youth work theorists or practitioners would agree with this view, it is nevertheless an important strand in youth work. This links with the concept of 'values education', which again is not universally accepted, but is being promoted within youth work and within education more generally by organisations like the Centre for Alleviating Social Problems through Values Education (CAVE) and the Gordon Cook Foundation. Lewes (1996; 16) offers this definition of values education, following the Gordon Cook Foundation:

> An activity in which young people are assisted by appropriately qualified adults in schools, homes, clubs and religious and other youth organisations, to make explicit those values underlying their own attitudes; to assess the effectiveness of these values for their own and others' long term well-being and to reflect on and acquire other values which are more effective for their short term and long term well-being.

Clearly within this kind of work with young people, consideration of questions about the rights and wrongs of cloning, animal experimentation or embryo research could be a basis for discussion just as effectively as any other issues such as abortion, the age of consent or the rights of asylum seekers.

Thirdly, it is important that young people, as young citizens of today and adult citizens of tomorrow, are able to put their views across on such matters. Citizenship has a long tradition in youth work (Davies, 1999; 53). Recently this has been stimulated by central government concern to promote active citizenship. Work on the theme of young people, youth work and citizenship is growing, as evidenced by a range of publications from conceptual overviews and discussions (Geddes, 2000; Hall, 1999; Rowe, 1999; White, 2001) to various resource packs, training materials and methods that have been developed for doing this kind of work (Downie, 1998; Scottish Community Education Council, 1999). The growth of local youth councils or other consultative and participative mechanisms at local level, and initiatives such as the UK Youth Parliament nationally are increasing the scope for young people to develop their considered views on important policy issues and communicate these to politicians and the public. If these are to be more than token consultative mechanisms, then it is important that young people are well-informed and supported by youth work services and projects. Whilst the curriculum in schools covers some of the basic science issues, coverage of the related social and ethical implications is less well addressed. Indeed, recent research funded by the Wellcome Trust on bioethics education in schools (Finegold, 2000) suggests that science teachers do not feel particularly competent in this area. Youth work, therefore, provides another more relaxed and informal arena for promoting discussion on these topics with young people.

Our approach to the study

This study was approached as a small piece of exploratory social research, designed to gain a rapid overview of what is currently happening in youth work in relation to genetics and neuroscience, and to gain a preliminary sense of the responsiveness of youth workers, youth work organisations and the young people they work with to developing practice in this area. The research comprised the following:

1. **Brief literature review** - the main focus of the literature review was on informal educational work with young people on the social and ethical implications of developments in genetics and neurosciences. However, because there is very little literature directly in this field, the study extended into the field of science education and looked at relevant literature relating to formal educational settings that may be of use in the youth work field. A list of relevant resources can be obtained from the authors.

2. **Mapping of current activities**

   a) *A questionnaire designed for youth workers* was sent out in mailings of the main youth work organisations and as an insert in Young People Now

magazine. This method of distribution was chosen in order to reach as wide a constituency as possible and did not target individuals or agencies in order to obtain a representative sample. Therefore the findings cannot be generalised to the youth work population as a whole, but should be regarded as indicative of areas for further study. Although we knew the return rate for questionnaires (particularly about an issue with which youth workers are not directly engaging at present) was not likely to be very high, given the time available, we judged this would be the best method to attempt to do a 'mapping'. Approximately 13,000 questionnaires were distributed, many in overlapping mailings. 131 replies were received, and it must be borne in mind that those choosing to reply may have been more engaged by the issues. 39% of those respondents who identified the agency to which they belonged were from the statutory sector and 61% from the voluntary sector. The responses came from a wide range of organisations, including a Connexions Service, Young Farmers' Club, Youth Enquiry Services, local statutory youth centres, church groups, a Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual project, a Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied project, Young Firefighters, Air Cadets, a black youth group, and so on. The questionnaire included questions not just relating to genetics and neuroscience, but also whether any science-based work is done at all, work on moral choices and citizenship more generally. Questions were asked about respondents' views on the potential for further work in this area and support needs. The term 'the workings of the mind' was used instead of neuroscience, as this was thought to be more accessible to youth workers.

b) *A questionnaire designed for managers in youth services and youth organisations,* along similar lines to that for the youth workers, was sent out through the mailing lists of the national youth agencies. 428 questionnaires were sent out and 58 were returned (72% from the statutory sector and 28% from the voluntary sector). The responses of managers were broadly similar to those of youth workers, so will not be discussed in detail in this article.

c) *A questionnaire was circulated to colleges and universities* (approximately 40) providing professional training courses for youth workers, in order to ascertain current coverage of the social and ethical implications of developments in biomedical research and views on the potential for developing this in the curriculum. 13 questionnaires were returned.

3. **Focus group discussions** - in order to gain deeper insight into youth workers' and young people's levels of knowledge and interest in this area of work, we organised two events at Life Interactive World (the Science Centre in Newcastle)

during which we held eight focus group meetings involving 14 youth workers and 46 young people. These involved asking the youth workers and young people separately about their current levels of knowledge and interest in issues relating to genetics and neuroscience, visiting three of the exhibits covering DNA, moral choices and the workings of the brain and then discussing how important and relevant such issues are for youth work. The participants were recruited through sending invitations to a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector youth organisations in North East England. Details of the participants are given in the Appendix.

In order to raise awareness about the research and the issues, it was agreed with the editor of the magazine *Young People Now* to include an article in the April 2001 edition that would highlight the research project, raise some short questions at the end and invite people to fill in and return the questionnaire enclosed with the magazine (Burke 2001). We also worked with the National Youth Agency to put material on *youthinformation.com* (an information toolkit on the internet) to provide information for young people and youth workers on 'genes and brains'. This included a downloadable questionnaire for young people for use in youth work sessions, and a copy of the youth workers' questionnaire.

Literature in the field

A brief review of the literature revealed little directly covering youth work and biomedicine or science. The magazine *Young People Now*, which is aimed at youth workers and young people, has included several articles on relevant topics, for example Ghouri (1995) on prozac as part of youth culture, and White (1999) on issues around GM foods. However, only one piece could be construed as being directly about youth work on these issues (Nimmo, 1997). This latter article gives a report of the Science Festival Media Project held during the Edinburgh International Science Festival in Spring 1997. The Media Project enabled young people from all over Scotland to come together to report on the festival, providing opportunities for them to interview personalities and review events.

There is some literature on other kinds of informal educational work with young people on science issues - particularly relating to science clubs, science centres and science festivals. The British Association for the Advancement of Science runs out of school science clubs, and these also happen in other countries. Subotnik (1995) reports an interview with Oleg Davydenko, a geneticist in Belarus who runs a club for adolescents interested in genetics. There has also been some debate about the value for money of science centres and how effective they are at communicating with the public, a large proportion of which comprises young people (see Bradburne,

1998; Crockett, 1997; Persson, 2000). The literature on the public understanding of science sometimes makes reference to young people. Daley (2000) describes the development of Public Science Day (begun in 1989 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science), and other informal initiatives to advance Public Understanding of Science and Technology, which have children as the main focus. In Britain the annual Science Festival, organised by the British Association has this kind of remit.

However, the main literature on science, and more specifically genetics and neuroscience and young people is in the context of schools-based work, rather than informal education activities.

Youth workers, genetics and 'the workings of the mind'

Evidence from the questionnaires and focus group discussions suggests that issues related to genetics and the workings of the mind do not arise frequently in youth work settings, but they do occur 'sometimes' as Table 1 shows.

Table 1: Frequency with which issues related to genetics and workings of the mind come up in youth work (responses from 131 youth workers)

(Do issues linked to genetics come up? (e.g. cloning, testing for genetic disorders). Do issues linked to the workings of the mind ever come up? (e.g. causes and treatments of mental ill health; use of drugs like ritalin or prozac))

	A lot	Often	Sometimes	Never	No response
Genetics	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	62 (47%)	67 (51%)	1 (1%)
Workings of the mind	10 (8%)	24 (18%)	63 (48%)	33 (25%)	1 (1%)

Genetics

Table 1 presents the results from the questionnaire to youth workers, which show that only one person indicated genetics issues come up 'often' in their work, and there was a roughly equal split between those who said 'never' and those who said 'sometimes'. Comments from the 54 respondents who gave additional information indicate that genetic issues are usually raised by the young people themselves, often after they have seen a report in the media. Seven respondents specifically mentioned follow-up discussions from newspaper or TV reports. The common areas identified include: cloning, genetic disorders, GM foods, disability issues, and animal experimentation. Occasionally, it seems, questions are raised by young people because of a direct personal connection to an issue:

> We have talked about genetic disorders particularly when relevant to an individual. We would encourage discussions, and seek to provide any info. if required.

(Tenant Support Worker - voluntary sector)

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Genetic modification of plants - discuss. We live in a rural area.
(Youth and Community Worker - statutory sector)

When discussing news at drop-in/life skills course - inheriting disease. I've spoken one-to-one re Huntingdon's disease and the fears of testing for disease with one young woman.
(Young Persons' Adviser - voluntary sector)

In response to a question giving options about how the issues have been covered in youth work, 'casual conversation initiated by young people' was the most common response (58 respondents, 44%), followed by planned activities (31, 24%), visits to science centres/museums/exhibitions (6, 5%) and other methods (4, 3%) which included: school, conference and sermon.

Workings of the mind

For 34 respondents (26%) issues relating to the workings of the mind come up 'a lot' or 'often'; and for 63 (48%), 'sometimes'. 86 respondents provided additional comments, and overwhelmingly these concerned issues of mental ill health and associated medication (71 mentioned mental health or drugs-related issues). This might have been anticipated, as the questionnaire clarified the meaning of the question with this very example, but it also reflects the fact that mental health issues are an important component of youth work activity. However, whilst drugs like Prozac and Ritalin were specifically noted (they were given as examples in the questionnaire), there was little mention of the broader concept of 'lifestyle drugs', and the 'chemicalisation of being and thinking' - relating to happiness, memory, body shape, dance, and sexual performance.

The comments of some of those who felt the issues come up 'a lot' include:

Many of the young people are taking drugs for depression. Some suffer from mental health problems.
(Tenant Support Worker - voluntary sector)

Some of my work is with young people who have depression, anxiety problems, aggressive behaviour. On the whole I listen and offer appropriate support.
(Youth Worker - statutory sector)

Mental illness - offer counselling/referral - provide support/information.
(Youth Worker - statutory sector)

Particularly concerns over self-medicating for mental health. Also issues of legality related to these medicines; drug use and emotional health and chemical personality.
(Drugs Education Youth Worker - stat. sector)

On this question, unlike most of the others, there was a difference in the responses from the statutory and voluntary sector workers. 32% of voluntary sector workers said that these issues 'never' crop up, whereas this was the case for only 10% of statutory sector workers. For 42% of the male respondents these issues also never came up, compared with a figure of 15% for females.

Unlike the previous genetics question, it seems these 'workings of the mind' issues are not driven so much by media-prompted curiosity on the part of the young people, rather, they form an already established frame of concern and ready source of questions. They also reflect a commitment by many youth work agencies to cover issues such as mental health and drug use in a planned way, as well as being visible components in the advice/counselling work undertaken by some youth workers - as illustrated by responses to the next question about how the issues have been covered. The list is as follows (some respondents ticked more than one box): casual conversation, 85 (65%); planned activity, 52 (40%); visit to science centre, museum or exhibition, 3 (2%); other, 15 (11%). Half of the activities listed under 'other' are embraced by counselling. The remainder refer to such things as posters, training, and peer-led education.

Importance of the issues

During the focus group discussions, when youth workers were asked whether the issues raised during the day were thought to be significant for young people, the consensus was 'yes'. Some of the comments included:

> It's such a big part in society. There is the greater understanding of genetics and DNA and as the years go by, the understanding will get greater, and there'll be greater implications on all of society, so I think the whole range of issues are important to talk to young people about.

> To a certain extent, it's quite dangerous that the next generation could grow up quite ignorant to what's happening.

> It's important, as youth workers have to put things into context. We are likely to come across deprivation and we have to tell young people about making choices and making the most of opportunities.

Yet it was also acknowledged that it may not be a priority:

> It's not a priority. It's about life itself, but life is made up of lots of things. There are more pressing issues.

The kinds of issues youth workers felt were important and could be raised in a youth work context included:

- *Designer babies;*
- *GM foods;*
- *DNA;*
- *Invasion of privacy issues;*
- *Mental health;*
- *Cloning;*
- *Embryo experimentation;*
- *Genetics in general;*
- *The 'bigger picture', that is: questions about values, who controls information, what sort of society do we want;*

Young people, genetics and 'the workings of the mind'

The 46 young people who attended the focus group discussions also filled in a questionnaire at the start of the events about their views. Although these participants could not be said to be representative of all young people, their answers are indicative of some of the concerns for young people. The first question asked whether questions like the ones at the beginning of this article had ever come up for them. 59% said 'yes'. More interesting, perhaps, are the supplementary comments from 16 young people about what issues these were. In the main, they focused around issues associated with genetics rather than neuroscience: cloning, designer babies, genetic modification and DNA sampling.

Table 2: Whether young people had heard of/worried about certain issues (N=46)

Have you ever heard of...?	YES No.	YES %	Have you ever worried about...?	YES No.	YES %
Dolly the sheep	32	70	Dolly the sheep	6	13
DNA testing by the police	35	76	DNA testing by the police	6	13
Cloning	43	93	Cloning	19	41
Prozac	31	67	Prozac	13	28
Research on human embryos	29	63	Research on human embryos	16	35
Testing for genetic diseases	39	85	Testing for genetic diseases	10	22
Designer babies	40	87	Designer babies	22	48

Young people were next asked whether they had heard of or worried about the list of topics or issues shown in Table 2. The results indicate a relatively high level of awareness but a lower level of concern. These young people, at least, appear interested in the issues but not overly fearful. More had heard of cloning and fewer

about research on human embryos than any of the other issues. That said, research on human embryos was one of the areas identified as being of most concern, along with designer babies and cloning. When asked whether they thought it was important that young people knew about some of these issues, a large majority (87%) said 'yes'. This time, 35 of our 46 focus group participants supplied further comments. One third of these directly reflect a view that these issues will have significance in the *future:*

- *Because it will affect us when we are older. We also may choose to work in these fields.*
- *It might come up later in life.*
- *Because we are the new generation and probably will develop these further in the future, and we might have to deal with one of these.*
- *It helps me understand for the future.*

The remainder would appear to have a sense of the issues as having *current* relevance:

- *It's important for young people to know what's going on.*
- *So that they can gain a factual understanding, not speculate, then have a clear opinion for themselves.*
- *It's important because you need to know about different things about the body so if anything went wrong you would understand what's wrong.*
- *You have to know what's going on around you.*

Some respondents appear to view the issue from a *citizenship* perspective, as these two comments indicate:

- *Young people are as equal as adults in modern society, or that is what is hoped, and so should be made aware of what is happening in the world around them.*
- *Because it is important to involve young people to say what they think.*

The discussions in the focus groups revealed that generally the sources of information about these issues came from school or the media, although some young people mentioned their personal experiences, such as:

- *My cousin has an inherited disease.*
- *My sister was on Prozac after her husband died.*

Prior to visiting the exhibits, the younger participants (13-15 years) found it more difficult to discuss the issues and they were generally more accepting and less questioning of bio-scientific advances. After the young people had visited the

exhibits, several of the groups then engaged quite readily in debate about some of the issues raised, although it was the older young people (16-19) who expressed stronger views:

- *I think it's wrong to clone humans or choose characteristics of babies. Loads of experiments go wrong.*
- *It's just vanity anyway - it shouldn't be allowed.*
- *I think it's OK as long as it has been researched properly - I trust scientists to do research. They have to do experiments.*
- *But you might get loads of people exactly the same.*

When asked about the importance of these issues for young people at the end of the day, the consensus was that they were important, confirming the views expressed in the questionnaires at the start of the day. Some of the comments were as follows:

- *These are definitely important issues - you need to know about them before you can make your own choices.*
- *We need to sort our thinking about it earlier. You're more open-minded when you're young.*
- *It will affect your future, for example with testing in pregnancy.*
- *Adults make the policy but it affects young people, so we need to know. We have to live with the consequences.*

Scope for further work on genetics and the workings of the mind in youth work

Youth workers, managers and young people all thought there was scope to do further work on these issues. The responses from the youth workers and managers are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Whether there is scope to do more work on genetics and the workings of the mind

(Youth workers, N=131; Managers, N=58)

	Definitely	Possibly	No	No reply
Youth workers	60 (46%)	64 (49%)	7 (5%)	0 (0%)
Managers	16 (28%)	40 (69%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)

Whilst the overwhelming majority of youth workers and managers felt there was scope to develop work in this area, the percentage of managers who felt this scope to be 'definite' was less (28% compared with 46% of the youth workers). This probably reflects managers' greater awareness of competing priorities at an organizational level. If we do a statutory/voluntary sector breakdown of results for this

question, only 19% of managers in the voluntary sector were 'definite', compared to 32% of statutory managers. This may reflect the diversity of the voluntary sector, within which there are some specialist organisations which have their own very specific aims, as illustrated by the one respondent who answered 'No' to this question:

We do not have enough qualified instructors for the activities within our current training syllabus.
(Sea Cadets - voluntary sector)

When asked how they might approach doing work in these areas, the questionnaire responses, summarised in Table 4, show incorporating it into existing work on health education and personal choices as the most popular.

Table 4: Approaches to doing work in these areas

(Youth workers, N=131; Managers, N=58)

(If you did work in these areas, would you...?)

	Youth workers No. (%)	Managers No. (%)
Incorporate into existing work on health education, personal choices	89 (68%)	47 (81%)
Hold one or two issue-based sessions on these topics	77 (59%)	39 (67%)
Visit science centres, exhibitions or plays covering these topics	49 (37%)	19 (32%)
Do a project with young people over several months	55 (42%)	34 (57%)
Involve young people in consultation on important issues	81 (62%)	42 (72%)
Other	10 (8%)	3 (5%)

The possibilities listed under the 'other' category include:

- *Discussion sheets with starter questions.*
- *Produce information to raise awareness by young people for young people.*
- *Use IT and the internet to research these issues.*
- *Work with all my members - support those wanting to do more.*
- *Peer education following initial training.*
- *If young people are interested, develop their interest further, e.g. sit on committee.*
- *Encourage individual/group research into issues then article in Youth magazine.*
- *Train staff.*
- *Peer counselling.*

Almost 80% of the young people who participated in the focus groups said they thought some of the topics could be covered in the youth group to which they belonged. When the young people attending the focus group events were asked in their questionnaire how they thought the issues could be covered, visits to science

centres/exhibitions/plays (54%) and group discussions on health education or personal choices (50%) were the most popular. Other ways of covering the issues were mentioned as: 'research groups/tasks'; 'get young peoples' ideas'; 'keep it interesting'.

Table 5: Young people's views on how issues could be covered in youth groups (N=46)

	No.	%
In individual conversations with youth workers.	6	13
In group discussions on health education or personal choices.	23	50
Special sessions on these topics.	20	43
Visit science centres, exhibitions or plays covering these topics.	25	54
Do a special project with a youth worker over several months.	15	33
Get involved with consultation on important issues.	11	24
Other	3	7

It is interesting that these young people identified visits to science centres, exhibitions or plays as the most popular choice of method of working on the issues. In the youth workers' and managers' responses to their questionnaires, visits, exhibitions, and drama was much less popular than some of the other options. This suggests that some further work with both youth workers and young people about what they get out of such visits could be useful.

In the youth workers' focus groups, further discussion took place about how they might work on the issues and what resources might be useful. It was felt that issues quite often come up (particularly around mental health) informally in the course of their work. Workers might then choose to take them further, or not, depending on the context and how comfortable a particular group is with debate. The ways of introducing work in this area mentioned were as follows:

- *Informal discussion responding to issues raised by young people;*
- *Using resource packs with discussion points to help young people to think about moral issues;*
- *Use of art and drama, to get way from the awkwardness of discussion;*
- *Contribution to a young people's conference on citizenship;*
- *Workshops with young people participating.*

Youth workers' further reflections on how they could introduce topics included:

I think it's just the sort of thing that could be integrated with any session that's going on ... If there's something that they're thinking about, that you're thinking about for the past couple of days, they're going to mention it, they're going to want to know what other people's thinking is ...

It's not about starting a session with a subject, but yes, when so and so comes in, and they're talking about ... or they make some sexist comment about ... you know, they bring all their understandings, and so I suppose as youth workers, the idea is to continue the discussion, and genetics would probably be in there, because it's about ... again, it's about life. So it's part of your normal work ...

It's like any subject, it just blends in. You know, they all seem to mingle in the end, when you start talking.

Regarding what support or resources might be needed, the following were mentioned:

- *Resource packs;*
- *An organisation to provide resources, speakers and information for youth workers and young people;*
- *Projects working together, networking, sharing ideas, rather than just being passive recipients of information;*
- *A shorter, but more in depth version of a video like 'Making Choices' [a video shown at Life Interactive World covering nature/nurture, designer babies, GM foods and DNA testing].*

Barriers to further work

The youth workers in the focus groups were asked about potential difficulties or drawbacks in trying to work in this area. These seemed to divide into three broad categories:

1. Lack of information and confidence. This included the following:

- *Lack of workers' understanding - 'it's no good trying to have a discussion with somebody when they know more than you. You're poorly informed'.*
- *It can be intimidating - if you do not have the knowledge and therefore confidence to talk about the issues.*
- *Lack of up to date information.*

2. Getting the issues on the agenda:

- *The issues have to be young people's agenda - 'just 'cos we're all fired up about it, doesn't mean they have to be as well'. There was a concern that: 'young people wouldn't see the relevance. We'd all need information before a discussion'.*
- *These issues are not on the 'youth work agenda' - it is easier to bring up alcohol, drugs, teenage pregnancy.*

3. The challenge of handling personal and sensitive issues:

- *Religious feelings, cultural issues, feeling guilty - one participant commented; 'there's no room for God or faith in this'; another commented about how questions of identity might be raised by genetics; 'Who am I? And how am I related to my parents?'*

- *Difficulties in handling personal issues - as one person said: 'These are distressing issues' - presumably thinking about inherited diseases, abortion or mental ill health.*

- *Issues relating to 'abnormality' - the whole question of what is 'normal' is huge and links to how we regard disability.*

Of these barriers, it seemed as if the first was one of the biggest stumbling blocks for the participants, as comments such as the following demonstrate:

- *I don't know very much about the subject, and I feel really clumsy when I talk about it ...*

- *... my knowledge is very poor I would say, really. And I thought 'Oh, I can't possibly comment on these things, I know nothing.*

- *You've [the facilitator] got the techniques to draw out the knowledge and tell people that they know more than they think. I don't know where I'd get that information from to discuss these issues with a youth group. I'd want information from someone who I know - someone local. I don't want to feel like I'm stupid if I ask questions.*

It seemed to be lack of information about science that might prevent youth workers from taking further an issue raised by young people from the media, school or personal experience. When asked to describe their scientific knowledge, the majority of the larger group of youth workers responding to the questionnaire (64%) replied 'average', with a significant number saying 'not very good' or 'poor' (28%) and only 8% replying 'good'.

The science content of the professional education and training programmes for youth and community work is also relatively low. Of the 13 lecturers/tutors from higher education training agencies who replied to our questionnaire, 11 said the 'science knowledge content' of their curriculum was 'none' or 'very little'. The answers to more detailed questions about genetics and neuroscience topics clearly show that their curricula have a very low level of scientific content, and indeed, there is no concept of there being a 'scientific knowledge base' as such for youth and community work education and training programmes. The curriculum is clearly rooted in the social sciences, with a strong emphasis on preparing students

for professional practice. In the view of most of the respondents from higher education, their curriculum does not prepare workers well to address the social and ethical issues arising from current advances in biomedical research such as genetics and neuroscience. Given the short amount of time available to train students, this is not a priority area for coverage. Most programmes teach some aspects of 'human growth and behaviour', which would usually include aspects of the nature/nurture debate, discussions of 'race', 'IQ' and ability, for example. But this is generally taught from a social psychological perspective, not biological.

This relates to the youth workers' comments about the issues not being on the 'youth work agenda' - hence the lack of training, resources, literature and general support which would be necessary to increase workers' feelings of confidence to raise and discuss the issues. As one worker commented towards the end of one of the focus groups:

> I think it's got me thinking a bit more now, my brain's starting to work a bit more now, because I'm thinking things like issues regarding drugs, alcohol, teenage pregnancy, etc. It is easy to bring those issues up, because there is resources available. It is on certain curriculums, that the government wants us to tackle, those things, 'cos they're the things that are perceived as problems that young people are part of, and they want to get rid of. This issue of genetics is something that isn't really up on the agenda for youth workers to pursue as actively as we're encouraged to pursue other agendas ...

Whilst participants identified the personal and sensitive nature of the issues as a barrier to work in this area, this again probably stems from feelings of lacking information. For youth workers traditionally do work in areas of great sensitivity and personal challenge for young people - on issues such as racism, disability, sex education or the use of drugs, as their responses to the questionnaires and focus group discussions indicate. They are also accustomed to working on moral choices or values education in general, which the questionnaire responses indicate arise a lot or often for 58% of respondents and sometimes for 39%. The issues covered listed by respondents include: sex, sexuality, abortion, drugs, relationships and the age of consent, amongst others.

Conclusions

In our surveys of youth workers and managers, we found little evidence of planned, discrete pieces of work initiated by youth workers explicitly labelled as relating to science, biomedicine, genetics or neuroscience. However, issues relating to young people's mental health, use of drugs, cloning, inherited diseases and animal testing, for example, were reported as arising in the conversations youth workers

have with young people, linked to their personal experiences or reports on topical issues in the media. Some youth workers reported issues coming up during planned activities, although judging from the discussions in the focus groups, the activities (games, group discussions, visits) would not have been designed to raise these particular issues.

The literature review and the responses to the questionnaire and focus group discussions demonstrate that these issues are not a top priority in youth work. Nevertheless, the majority of our respondents indicated that they thought there was scope for developing work in this area, and that they would be either very likely or quite likely to introduce awareness raising and discussion into their youth work sessions, if support was available. They recognised that the issues were important for young people, and indeed, the young people in our focus groups showed that they were able to engage with some of the issues, and regarded them as important. Taking account of the fact that our respondents were a self-selecting group, and so may have been more likely to see potential in this area than youth workers in general, nevertheless we would conclude that 'biomedical issues' has the potential to be placed on the youth work agenda, albeit as one of many other items.

The capability of youth workers at present is not very high in terms of their levels of scientific knowledge, which our respondents assessed generally as 'poor' or 'average'. However, some recognised that it was not necessary to have extensive scientific knowledge in order to debate these issues. Nevertheless, many expressed feelings of lack of competence and confidence either to initiate discussions or activities with young people on these issues, or to follow up the issues raised by young people themselves. Their skills and confidence in debating ethical issues generally with young people are, however, quite high, as evidenced in the focus group discussions. Responses from the agencies that train youth and community workers in Higher Education confirm that there is no recognised scientific knowledge base to the training, and biomedical issues come up incidentally, if at all.

Regarding the capacity of the Youth Service to work on these issues, we judge that this will vary between different agencies, depending on their priorities, and the interest of individual workers. The questionnaire responses indicate that many groups/projects already do work that is issue-based and covers moral choices or citizenship themes. So the possibility of incorporating debate on social and ethical issues arising from biomedical developments is there - to add to the topics already covered within work on sex education, drugs or young people's experience of the Health Service, for example. Our judgement would be that those youth groups that do not work to a pre-defined set of central/local government or organisational targets

or outputs, such as church youth groups, may have more scope to develop work in this area. It may also fit with their expressed interests in 'values education'. Nevertheless, given the importance of these issues for all young people, there is scope for the Youth Service as a whole (including the statutory sector) to extend its resources and training materials to include topics relating to biomedicine. This would be of value to youth workers responding to individual young people's queries and problems (in the context of youth counselling and advisory work, including the new Connexions advisers) as well as those doing group work to help young people understand contemporary issues, express a view and contribute as young citizens. Youth workers, with their considerable experience and expertise in informal education, supporting young people in handling difficult choices, questioning their own and societal values and participating in decision-making, are ideally placed to play a role in tackling biomedical issues, in the same way as they do on other matters of current concern on the themes of health, environmental or global education.

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Appendix : List of participants at focus group events at Life Interactive World

1st event, Wednesday 14th March, 2001

Organisation	No. of workers		No. of young people		Age range
	Female	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	
Northumbria Coalition Against Crime	1	1		3	17-19
Newcastle YMCA Student Project, Newcastle College	1	1	6		17-19
Community Campus, Middlesbrough	2		2	4	15-19
Walbottle Campus, Newcastle (School)	1		6		17-19
Parkhouse Project, Wallsend	1		2	2	17-19

2nd event, Saturday 24th March 2001

Organisation	Number of workers		Number of young people		Age range
	Female	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	
National Trust Inner City Project, Newcastle.	1		3	2	15-21
East Durham Groundwork Trust.	2		3	1	13-15
Dunston Community Centre, Gateshead.	1			4	14-15
Gateshead Borough Youth Organisations Council		1	2	3	15-18
Blyth Central Methodist Church Sunday School.		1	3		14

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RECENT CHANGES IN UK EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY:
A step in the right direction?

SUE MAGUIRE

The education and training needs of young people continues to be a key issue within government policy. An integral part of this agenda is to expand learning opportunities for all young people in order to improve economic competitiveness and success at two levels. First, the desire is to meet the need for a stronger vocational education and training system which enables individuals to develop the skills they need to be employable while at the same time creating a workforce with the necessary skills to enhance the UK's economy. Second, despite overall increases in the rates of participation in post-compulsory education, research evidence has highlighted the influence of social class differences on levels of participation and attainment rates. Young people from lower socio-economic groups appear to be much less likely than other young people to remain in full-time education after the age of 16 (Newburn, 1999). Recent policy initiatives have been designed to overcome recognised barriers to participation in learning and in so doing, to transform education into a tool to tackle social exclusion and economic disadvantage.

This article will relate research findings from a study on employers' demands for young people to recent policy developments. It will examine the extent to which the drive to increase participation rates in post-16 education has impacted on the structure of opportunities which continue to exist for young people within local labour markets. It will also explore the value in selection and recruitment strategies that employers place on the qualifications that young people obtain in post-16 education.

Government Policy

While previous governments exhibited an ambition to increase participation in learning among young people, in particular in relation to expanding post-16 education, the aims of New Labour have focused on a much broader policy agenda. Following the consultation which emanated from the Green Paper entitled 'The Learning Age', the publication of the White Paper 'Learning to Succeed' in June 1999, outlined a restructuring of the post-16 education and training system at both local and national level (Unemployment Unit, 1999:8). From April 2001, one national organisation, the National Learning and Skills Council (LSC), became responsible for all post-16 education and training (except universities and school sixth forms). This is supported at a local level by 47 Learning and Skills Councils

(LSCs), which have replaced Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and are responsible for identifying local needs and managing local delivery of education and training (DfEE, 1999a: 20).

The White Paper 'Learning to Succeed' (DfEE, 1999a) represented government's first attempt to integrate the management of education and training provision at a local level. It established national education and training targets to address the anticipated need for a better-educated and trained workforce. Employers have the greatest representation on the LSCs, in an attempt to enable representatives from local industry to have a majority voice in making education and training relevant to the needs of the labour market.

While 'Learning to Succeed' set about tackling the anomalies and inefficiency which were perceived to exist in the management and delivery of the education and training system, the Skills Task Force (STF) was established. The Task Force was set up to provide advice on the present and anticipated nature, extent and pattern of skill needs and shortages and to assist in the development of a National Skills Agenda. The STF Final Report (NSTF, 2000) emphasised the need for a stronger vocational education and training system to fill the skills gap in relation to intermediate and associate professional vocational skills which it identified as the area in which the UK lags behind its European competitors.

The Skills Task Force recommended that the education system should ensure that young people receive 'a sound foundation (of skills and knowledge) which equips them properly for working life and widens opportunities for further learning and economic mobility' (NSTF, 2000: 34). While the Task Force recognised the need for more young people to achieve high level qualifications, it indicated that schools should consider the needs of young people who are not destined to go to university. It suggested that schools should develop links with local employers and introduce vocational studies for young people for one or two days each week during the final two years of compulsory schooling (NSTF, 2000).

To facilitate the development of intermediate skills among young people, the Second Report by the National Skills Task Force (NSTF, 1999) had proposed that the Modern Apprenticeship programme should offer the opportunity for young people to start training either at Foundation Level 2 (ie. NVQ level 2 or equivalent) or at Level 3 (ie. NVQ level 3 or equivalent) (NSTF, 1999). That report also called for the introduction of a new foundation degree in order to raise the status of the vocational route (NSTF, 1999).

Following the recommendations made by the National Skills Task Force in its Final Report, the DfES announced the introduction of Foundation (Level2) as well as

Advanced (Level 3) Modern Apprenticeships. National Traineeships are now incorporated under the umbrella of the Modern Apprenticeship programme which it is hoped will both enhance the profile of the vocational route and help to displace concerns about the multiplicity or 'jungle' of qualifications and routes available to young people (NSTF, 2000). These became operational from January 2001.

The third strand of government policy for 'youth' focuses on the drive to avoid and tackle social exclusion among young people. The creation of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) in 1998, signified the government's commitment to identifying and addressing the needs of communities which, through social and economic disadvantage, have become marginalised from mainstream society. Tackling the social exclusion experienced by young people was the subject of the SEU report, 'Bridging the Gap' produced in 1999 (SEU, 1999).

The SEU report, which coincided with the publication of the DfEE White Paper 'Learning to Succeed' (DfEE, 1999a) established an Action Plan that included a wide range of reforms designed to address the problems faced by disadvantaged young people. The Action Plan recommended:

- *Greater choice at Key Stage 4 and a Learning Gateway of options at 16;*
- *A new Youth Support Service called the Connexions Service;*
- *The extension of Education Maintenance Allowance Pilot provision to offer financial support to young people from low-income families to encourage their participation in post-16 education. This, in addition to be targeted at disadvantaged groups of young people, such as single mothers, young people who are disabled and young people who are homeless, as well as supporting transport costs for other groups of young people.*

The most far reaching recommendation was the creation of an integrated youth agency called the Connexions Service, which would be responsible for tracking young people, and particularly those not participating in any form of education, employment or training. It called for a 'continuous and seamless' transfer of information between education and training providers, through the youth support service, to ensure that non-participation among young people is minimised (SEU, 1999:100). The Connexions Service was piloted by the DfES in thirteen areas, and phased in on a nation-wide basis from April, 2001. Multi-agency teams, consisting of Personal Advisers (PAs) from agencies which are concerned with the needs of young people such as Careers Services, Social Services, Youth Services and Probation Services, are brought together to offer an integrated support service to young people.

Commitment, Contradictions and Complexities in Policy Making

Recent government policy has been driven firstly, by an ambition to improve attainment levels among young people through the expansion of opportunities in post-16 education and higher education, secondly, to offer pathways into work through government supported training provision and thirdly to ensure that as many young people as possible are 'engaged' in the system. Much of current government thinking is based on the assumption that the country needs a well-qualified and highly skilled workforce. However, each of the three policy strands contain contradictions and betray competing interests in policy-making. Crucially, current government policy may also be failing to take account of the complexities that surround employers' perceived needs for young people. There are questions about whether employers now really need a workforce whose skills will largely be delivered through the education system.

Research and Methodology

The research on which this paper is based considers policy developments in relation to findings from interviews with employers in Leicester and Sunderland conducted between May 1997 and May 1998.

The objective of the research was to examine employers' demands for youth labour through a comparison of contrasting local labour markets. The study re-applied the aims and methodology of a research project carried out in the late 1970s and early 1980s to ascertain how the youth labour market functions today (Ashton et al., 1982), revisiting the two local labour markets used in the original and interviewing a sample of employers in each area.

The choice of labour markets in Leicester and Sunderland provided a contrast between two differing areas, and enabled a sufficient number of interviews (38 in Leicester and 22 in Sunderland) to be carried out with employers to provide a representative sample of firms located in each area. To provide additional contextual information about each local labour market, interviews were also conducted with representatives from local TECs who held responsibility for local labour market intelligence and managing government training provision, representatives from local Careers Services who provided information on the destinations of young people, and Training Providers, who gave an overview of local training provision.

The sample of employers, chosen from a list provided by each local TEC, was stratified to reflect the distribution of employees by industrial sector in the two localities. It included both large and small employers and firms which do not typically recruit young people, in order to identify the reasons why young people are excluded from the workforce. Apart from three firms, face-to-face interviews

were conducted with employers included in the sample. The findings from the research will now be explored in relation to recent developments in 16-19 education and training policies.

Participation rates in post-compulsory education

Between 1989 and 1994, there was a dramatic rise in the proportions of 16 year olds continuing to participate full-time in post-compulsory education, with more gradual but still significant increases for 17 and 18 year olds. Over the same period, there was a steep fall in the number of full-time jobs available to young people. Table 1 demonstrates the changes in post-compulsory education participation rates among 16-18 year olds between 1989 and 1994.

Table 1	Participation Rates in Post-Compulsory Education 1989-1994		
Percentage			
Age	1989	1992	1994
16 year olds	55	70	71.5
17 year olds	39.2	54.1	58.7
18 year olds	20.9	33.1	38.4

Source: Adapted from Participation in Education and Training by 16-18 Year Olds in England: 1988 to 1998 SRF13/1999 (DfEE, 1999b).

Between 1994 and 2000, participation rates among 16 to 18 year olds remained steady, with a slight increase among 16 and 17 year olds in 1999 (Table 1).

Table 2 Participation Rates in Post-Compulsory Education 1994- 2000			
Percentage			
Age	1995	1998	2000
16 year olds	70.4	69.7	71.6
17 year olds	58.4	57.7	58.7
18 year olds	39.4	37.1	36.9

Source: Adapted from Participation in Education and Training by 16-18 Year Olds in England: 1988 to 1998 SRF13/1999 (DfEE, 1999b) and Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16-18 year olds in England: 1999 and 2000 (DfES, 2001).

While there has been a general upturn in post-16 participation rates, the figures disguise differences between males and females, socio-economic groupings and young peoples' prior educational attainment in the proportions of young people who have chosen to remain in education.

The drive to increase participation rates has coincided with an annual increase in the proportions of young people acquiring five GCSE A*-C grades since the late 1980s (Pearce and Hillman, 1998). Over the same period, the proportion of young people with five or more GCSE A*-C grades who choose to remain in post-compulsory

education has remained consistently high, with over 90 per cent staying on at school or going to college. Therefore, while the participation rate among this group has had little room for expansion, the number of young people with higher levels of GSCE attainment has continued to grow.

Dramatic increases in the post-16 education participation rates have occurred among groups of young people with poorer and low GCSE results. Consequently, since 1988, there has been a narrowing in the difference between the participation rates of young people with high and low GCSE attainment rates (Payne, 2000). This, in turn, has coincided with an expansion in the number of young people opting to take courses other than through the traditional 'A' level route in post-16 education. Thus, at the end of 1988, almost 27 per cent of this group were taking GCE A/AS level, nine per cent were taking GCSE courses and 12 per cent were studying for NVQ and other courses (GNVQ was not introduced until 1992). By 1998, over 36 per cent of 16 year olds in post-compulsory education were studying for GCE A/AS Level, 6.7 percent for advanced GNVQ, and 4.8 percent for NVQ 3 and equivalent vocational qualifications. Some 9.5 per cent were studying for intermediate and foundation GNVQ, 3.2 per cent for GCSE, and 9.5 per cent for NVQ at level 1 and 2 and other qualifications (DfEE, 1999b).Significantly, while there was an expansion of nine percentage points in the proportion of young people undertaking GCE 'A' level courses, there was a marked decline of almost six percentage points in the proportion taking GCSE courses between 1988 and 1998. This is partly attributable to the introduction in 1992 of GNVQs, which replaced some existing vocational qualifications awarded by BTEC, RSA and City and Guilds. By 1998, 16.2 per cent of 16 year olds in post compulsory education were following this route (DfEE, 1998b). It has been argued that this replacement of vocational qualifications within the GNVQ framework can explain the higher levels of take-up, rather than a sudden upsurge of enthusiasm among young people for the new full-time vocational qualification (Robinson, 1996; FEDA, 1997).

GNVQs were piloted in 1992, extended nationally in 1993, and now occupy the 'front row', in terms of full-time vocational provision for 16-18 year olds (Yeomans, 1998). The introduction of GNVQs had three objectives. They were intended to replace the raft of vocational qualifications which had cluttered the British qualification system, to sit alongside academic equivalent qualifications at three levels and to offer alternative provision to the growing number of young people who were remaining in education, but for whom 'A' levels may not have been the most suitable option (Hodkinson, 1998).

While the introduction of GNVQs was designed to extend the range of options available to young people moving into post-16 education, research evidence suggests

that the qualifications may be offered to students when their academic achievements deny them access to 'A' level courses and, rather than such students choosing GNVQs, they may be the only option available to them (Hodkinson, 1998). Bates (1998) notes that while GNVQs were designed to 'empower' young people to make broader choices in post-16 provision, a young person's choice is largely determined by the range of options education providers have on offer. Therefore, students may be restricted in their choice of GNVQ modules and in the choices available, depending on the school or college they attend, resulting in their future prospects being inhibited rather than widened. While questions have been raised about the scope of the curriculum available to students who opt for GNVQ course in post-16 education, there is little research evidence which evaluates the currency of GNVQs, in terms of either their labour market value, or as entry qualifications into higher education.

The most recent study of the economic returns of qualifications failed to include GNVQs in its analysis (Dearden et al., 2000). Economic modelling carried out by the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) used data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS), the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) to measure the returns to a range of academic and vocational qualifications obtained by individuals up to 1995. Unlike previous studies, the analysis examined the returns on the range of qualifications which an individual had undertaken, rather than concentrating on the highest qualification obtained. Since GNVQs were only introduced nation-wide in 1993, it may be concluded that there was an insufficient time period to be able to measure the economic returns of the relatively new vocational qualification. However, if we look at GNVQs in relation to their NVQ equivalents, then the findings indicated that lower level NVQs (level 3 and below) and City and Guilds qualifications 'do not yield a significant economic return for men or women' (Dearden et al., 2000: 4). This suggests that unless a young person progresses onto Advanced Level GNVQ or higher level NVQs in post-16 education, the labour market currency of lower level vocational qualification might be minimal.

While participation rates have grown and there has been an expansion in the range of qualifications that have been available to young people in full-time post-16 education, it has been estimated that some 30 per cent of students who start full-time courses drop out and less than half progress from intermediate to advanced level courses (Steedman and Green, 1996). Therefore, increases in participation in post-16 education have not been mirrored by increased retention and qualification rates among young people (Pearce and Hillman, 1998). In addition, there is a dearth of research evidence on the destinations of young people who prematurely leave post-16 education.

Increased participation rates, coupled with enhanced qualification attainment among many young people, would lead to expectations that among some employers, there would be a heightened demand for the increased number of young people with below degree level post-16 education qualifications to meet their future skill needs. Research evidence from the interviews in Leicester and Sunderland suggested that employers' demands for young people were not necessarily being met through increased levels of post-16 participation in education. Firms which had experienced or anticipated a growth in their business activity recognised the need to recruit and train young people to meet future skill needs. The overwhelming majority of firms included in the sample in both Leicester and Sunderland recruited school leavers (16-19 year olds) directly into jobs or training places which were not supported by government funding. Access to employment was therefore more likely to come about through employers recruiting school leavers directly into employment rather than through government supported training provision.

However, in Leicester in particular, a number of firms reported that their plans had been thwarted because of an inability to recruit young people with qualifications (four or more GSCEs), which they blamed on increasing levels of participation among young people in full-time post-16 education. Despite the increased numbers of young people who have obtained five GCSE A*-C grades, most were inaccessible to employers because they chose to remain in education.

Demand from employers for young people to possess post-16 vocational qualifications, most notably NVQs and GNVQs, was limited, although there was a greater knowledge of, and demand for NVQs than there was for GNVQs. Thus, despite the downturn in the number of young people opting for NVQs in post-16 education, and the relative expansion of GNVQ courses over the same period, employers were more familiar with, and to some extent continued to demand, NVQs as entry qualifications. It should also be emphasised that, where NVQS or GNVQs were specified as entry qualifications, they were regarded by employers as being 'helpful' rather than 'essential'. Thus, it continues to be the case that other attributes or qualifications are required by young jobseekers and the labour market currency of qualifications such as GNVQs was found to be small.

The findings suggest that firms would have increased the number of young people that they employed, had they been able to recruit them. The lack of availability of young people had led some companies to split full-time jobs into part-time positions, in order to attract a different age group of applicants, most notably women returners.

There was a strong belief among many respondents in the sample that the expectations of young people have been increased to an unrealistic extent by the drive to

encourage ever-greater numbers of young people to remain in post-compulsory education. Some employers believed that young people were being encouraged to stay on at school without considering the work-based training route and were, in effect, failing to consider the full range of options open to them. As a result, some companies were struggling to fill vacancies and training places that they had traditionally targeted at 16/17 year-old school leavers while some employers failed to attach additional value to the post-compulsory education gained by many 17 and 18 year olds and would only consider them for the same level of entry into employment as they would have done if they had left school at 16. There was some evidence that those employers who recruited young people, preferred to recruit 16 year olds, because they were both cheaper to employ and were considered to be 'easier to mould' into a working environment than 17 and 18 year olds who had experienced post-compulsory education. This was particularly the case among employers recruiting young people into traditional apprenticeship occupations in sectors such as engineering and construction.

Work-based training and employment among 16-18 year olds

While full-time participation rates in education among 16 to18 year olds have risen in recent years, there has been a corresponding decrease in the percentages of young people entering Government Supported Training (GST) and employment with training. An examination of the destination data of 16 to 18 year olds over the last ten years indicates that government commitment to the expansion of full-time post-16 education has been at the expense of the work-based route. That is, the number of young people entering work-based training fell, as participation rates in post-compulsory education were rising.

Despite efforts to install a credible work-based training route for young people wishing to enter the labour market between the ages of 16 and 18, evidence suggests that current government supported training programmes are failing to attract and retain significant numbers of employers and young people. An evaluation of the development and implementation phase of National Traineeships (which has now been replaced by Foundation Modern Apprenticeships), reported a relatively slow take-up among employers (Everett et al., 1999). Among 16 year olds, the percentage of school leavers who enter GST fell from 22 per cent in 1989 to 8.1 per cent in 2000. Over the same period, the proportion of 17-year olds entering GST fell by nearly 50 per cent, from 20.8 per cent in 1989 to 10.8 per cent in 2000. Meanwhile the proportion of 18 year olds entering GST has in fact risen from five per cent in 1989, to 8.7 per cent in 2000, which may be attributed to the eligibility of 18 year olds to apply for the New Deal for Young People, as well as Modern Apprenticeships and National Traineeships. In addition, completion rates have been identified as a

particular problem within Modern Apprenticeships. Government figures released in Autumn 1999 highlighted that less than a third of young people who had left the programme had completed the qualification target of NVQ level 3 (CBI, 2000).

Since the late 1980s, the number of young people in employment with training has steadily declined (Table 3), with the exception of 17 year olds, for whom, since 1994, there has been a slight increase in the proportion entering employment with training.

Table 3   Percentage of 16-18 Year Olds in Employment with Employer Funded Training

Age	1988 (%)	1994 (%)	2000 (%)
16 year olds	3.3	2	2.9
17 year olds	5.4	2.8	4.9
18 year olds	10.8	5.4	8.2

Source: Adapted from Participation in Education and Training by 16-18 Year Olds in England: 1988 to 1998 SRF13/1999 and Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16-18 year olds in England: 1999 and 2000 (DfEE, 1999b; DfES 2001).

The percentage of 16 to 18 year olds who leave school and move into employment without training were until 1999, contained within DfES statistics under the broad heading of young people not in any education or training. These statistics also included young people who are unemployed or unavailable for work and young people whose destination is unknown. Therefore, by using standard statistical data prepared by DfES, it is difficult to define the proportion of this group whose members have left school or college and moved into employment without training. However, data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) from 1998 estimated the proportion of 16 year olds in employment without training to be eight per cent of the total population. The figure remains at eight per cent for all 17 year olds and rises to 12 per cent among 18 year olds (DfEE, 2000).

Government Training Schemes

The introduction of Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) in 1994, was an attempt to improve the quality of training leading to higher than average vocational qualifications for the more able, and as a means of addressing the acknowledged deficiencies of the British workforce in terms of intermediate skills. MAs were designed to build upon the positive aspects of the old-style apprenticeship, revitalising the notion of apprenticeship training, and offering a flexible framework for high-quality training geared towards the needs of individual sectors and contributing to the greater degree of choice available to young people beyond 16.

National Traineeships (NTrs) which replaced the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) in 1998, were themselves replaced by Foundation Modern Apprenticeships in 2001. Foundation Modern Apprenticeships now offer the second tier of government

supported training for school leavers. While the emphasis in the Modern Apprenticeship framework is to offer high quality work-based training to NVQ level 3, the focus of Foundation Modern Apprenticeships is on young people achieving NVQ level 2 qualifications and being offered the opportunity for progression onto a Modern Apprenticeship.

The evaluation of the MA prototypes found that they had been implemented most successfully in industrial sectors which had a tradition and history of offering apprenticeships, an Industrial Training Organisation (ITO) with wide coverage and support within the sector, experience of promoting and accepting NVQs and GNVQs, and strong existing support for apprenticeship training from employers (Everett and Leman, 1995). While MA training has activated more government supported training provision at NVQ level 3, it is difficult to determine whether it has merely replaced the training of young people employers would have undertaken regardless of government support. In addition, despite Modern Apprenticeships being aimed primarily at 16 and 17 year olds, they represent only 40 per cent of entrants to the programme (Everett et al., 1999).

A CBI survey of employers reported that offering MA training to young people had benefited 62 per cent of respondents (CBI, 2000). Recent research from young people undertaking Modern Apprenticeships and employers participating in the scheme has been generally positive (Coleman and Williams, 1998; ERS Ltd, 1998). However, concern has grown about completion rates. By the end of 1999, some 260,000 young people had started an MA. Approximately half were still training, while the remainder were divided between those who had completed their MA and early leavers or non-completers (Winterbotham et al., 2000).

Industrial sectors are using the MA programme in different ways (Winterbotham et al., 2000; IES, 2000). In sectors such as Motor and Electrotechnical, MAs were recruited at a younger age, typically straight from school, and the MA programme had replaced traditional apprenticeship training. In contrast, in sectors such as Retail, Care and Hospitality, Modern Apprentices tended to be older and recruited from the existing workforce. In addition, qualification attainment linked to company training within these sectors is a relatively new phenomenon, since there has been no tradition of apprenticeship training.

Research evidence points to retention problems within MAs , but recruitment difficulties have not been identified as an area of concern. Yet it was apparent that some employers in Leicester found it difficult to attract both the number and the calibre of young people they were looking for to complete Modern Apprenticeships. Problems in recruiting young people were found to be a much bigger area of concern

than retention. The need to offer employed status, coupled with the requirement within a Modern Apprenticeship for the completion of a qualification to NVQ level 3, meant that most employers were looking for good quality applicants, essentially young people with a minimum of 3/4 GCSEs. A recent survey of employers by the CBI reported that 63 per cent of respondents supported the introduction of an entrance requirement for MAs, such as four GCSEs (A-C grade) or the appropriate National Traineeship in order for applicants to cope with the training requirements (CBI, 2000). It may be argued that the introduction of entrance requirements for work-based training programmes would, in fact, heighten competition between employers and education providers for young people with qualifications and exclude, to a greater extent, those young people with lower qualifications or those without qualifications from the range of opportunities that are available.

While firms in Sunderland experienced few general recruitment difficulties, a small number of respondents did report problems retaining young people on Modern Apprenticeship programmes. This was attributed to the length of time it takes to complete a Modern Apprenticeship, with some young people preferring to move on to a better paid job rather than completing their training period.

The study of firms in Leicester and Sunderland endorses other research findings that the MA is regarded as a preparation for progression to junior management and supervisory positions, whereas YT and its successor Foundation Modern Apprenticeships provides basic training (Kodz et al., 2000). There was a clear distinction between the types of firms in Leicester and Sunderland which were involved in MAs and a dichotomy between firms such as those in engineering, transport and construction, which had replaced existing apprenticeship programmes with MAs, and firms in the retail and public sectors which were running apprenticeship training programmes for the first time. However, it was difficult to identify variations between sectors in relation to the way the programme was run, since the numbers that were represented in each sector were small.

Full-time Employment Opportunities

Since the 1980s, the percentage of young people under the age of 18 who have moved from education directly into work with training has declined. Data from the DfES would indicate that a much greater proportion of young people who are entering employment are moving into jobs without training. For example, in 2000, 3 per cent of 16 year olds entered employment with employer funded training, in comparison to 6 per cent of 16 year olds who were in employment without training (DfES, 2001a). However, the proportion of young people entering employment with training increases if the number of young people in GST who have employed status, which includes the majority of young people on MAs and a proportion of

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trainees on Foundation Modern Apprenticeships, is added to the figures. In 2000, a further 8 per cent of 16 year olds went into government supported training. This would indicate that slightly more 16 year olds were entering employment with training, but that just under one-fifth of school leavers went straight into work after Year 11.

Destination data indicates that, despite government policy which is committed to expanding learning opportunities to young people through the expansion of opportunities in post-16 full-time education, and the maintenance of a work-based training route, primarily funded through Modern Apprenticeship, a substantial number of young people continue to leave school or college and move into low skilled work with no training opportunities. Evidence from Leicester and Sunderland suggests that a significant number of the sample of employers recruited small numbers of young people into semi-skilled and unskilled work. Indeed, more employers in the sample recruited young people directly into employment than through GST. In particular, while employers in Leicester reported recruitment difficulties in finding suitable young people to fill MAs and the small number of training opportunities that existed outside GST, there was no reported shortage of candidates to fill lower level jobs which offered little or no training. This could be attributed to the fact that there was a ready supply of young people to fill vacancies, and/or that the range of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs that young people were entering were not exclusively open to school leavers, and therefore employers were also able to draw on older groups of workers to fill vacancies.

Despite policy developments which emphasise the need to produce a well-qualified and highly skilled workforce to meet the demands of the economy, the evidence from the survey of employers in Leicester and Sunderland would suggest that there continues to be a demand from employers for young people to fill routine and unskilled jobs, in particular in the service sector. The need for young people to offer enhanced qualification attainment beyond Year 11 to meet the entry requirements for these jobs is questionable.

There is a notable absence of recent research into employers' demand for young people outside government supported training provision, both in terms of identifying the number and range of job opportunities which are available to young people outside GST, and in detailing employers' demands for entry qualifications. Therefore, substantiating and comparing the findings from the study of employers in Leicester and Sunderland is difficult. Recent government policy has been driven by the belief that early entry into employment for young people is both undesirable for young people and unwanted by employers (NSTF, 2000).

Social Exclusion

The fate of those young people who do not enter education, employment or training after Year 11, and who are known as the NEET group, has captured attention in recent policy-making. This followed destination statistics which pointed to a stubbornly persistent proportion of young people who remain in this group despite policy initiatives and the emergence of research evidence which highlighted the shortcomings in current education and training provision in meeting their needs (SEU, 1999; 2000).

Between 1989 and 1994, increases in participation rates among young people in post compulsory education coincided with a decrease in the proportion of young people who were classified as not in any form of education employment or training (NEET). Since 1994, while the proportion of young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who have participated in full-time education has stabilised, the number of young people in the NEET group has continued to rise, in particular among 16 and 17 year olds, although provisional figures for 2000 suggest a slight fall from seven to six per cent in the NEET group (DfES, 2001).

In order to encourage young people between the ages of 14 and 16 who are at risk of disaffection to remain 'in the system', extended opportunities for school based work experience programmes have been advocated as a means of re-engaging some young people in learning (Ofsted, 1998). However offering young people who may be struggling with mainstream education work experience as a tool to enhance their future employability is nothing new in policy terms.

Huddleston notes:

> It is important to notice the renewed interest in 'employability' and 'work readiness' which has a distinct ring of déjà vu about it, one reminiscent of the compensatory education schemes for disadvantaged pupils during the 1960s and 1970s.
> (Huddleston, 2000: 215)

Preliminary evidence presented by the DfES suggests that some young people benefit from moving into a college or a workplace environment and appreciate the work-related curriculum which has been offered under the New Start initiative (DfEE, 1998). However, very little evidence is available about the response from employers who might increasingly be expected to manage young people who have largely failed to respond to learning within a school environment. Indeed, in a climate where employers see themselves in competition with education providers to recruit 'good quality' young people (which was found in particular among employers in Leicester), it might be argued that local employers may become increasingly reluctant to support extended school-based work experience programmes aimed at young people who are at risk of disaffection.

To overcome financial barriers to learning and to boost participation in post-16 education among the young people who are at risk of disaffection, Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) are currently being piloted in a number of Local Education Authorities (LEAs). Young people from low-income families are paid a weekly allowance of up to £40 per week to remain in full-time education, in addition to receiving attendance and achievement bonuses.

If the scheme is successful, EMAs may be rolled out nationally. The idea of paying young people to remain in education raises a number of important issues in relation to this group of young people. First, while financial barriers are one recognised obstacle to participation in learning, many others remain. For example, research evidence has highlighted that many young people in the NEET group have become disaffected from the education system long before they reach the end of Year 11. Levels of truancy and school exclusions are high among this group and educational attainment levels are low (Pearce and Hillman, 1998). Will paying young people to remain in education be sufficient to overcome entrenched disillusionment with the education system? Second, the availability of EMAs may result in a 'shuffling of the pack' among young people already in the 'system', that is encouraging those young people who may have gone into GST or employment to stay on at school and in so doing to intensify competition between education and training providers and employers. To what extent will it affect the decision-making of young people who are least likely to be supported by formal systems of guidance and support, such as those provided by schools and Careers Services? Evidence from the interviews with employers in Leicester and Sunderland suggests that there was limited awareness and value attached to many post-16 qualifications among many employers. Will participation in post-16 education necessarily be the best way to improve the skills, qualifications and employability of all young people?

While the introduction of the Connexions Service will focus on the integration of young people who are at risk of disaffection and the engagement of young people who have become marginalised from 'the system', with the aim of encouraging them to participate in some form of education, employment or training, some disquiet has been expressed about how the new service will cater for the needs of other groups of young people. Recommendation 14 of the Final National Skills Task Force report points to the need for all young people to receive early careers advice and education in order to provide them with a greater understanding of 'real jobs and their requirements in terms of skill' (NSTF, 2000: 47). The report welcomed the introduction of the new Connexions Service, but it emphasised the need for all young people to receive impartial advice and support, and not only those young people who are socially disadvantaged. The findings from Leicester and Sunderland

indicated that few respondents used the Careers Service, which will form part of the new Connexions Service to recruit young people into employer-led vacancies. This suggests that the Connexions Service will need to strengthen its links with employers in order to enhance the potential of offering an effective placement service to both employers and to young people.

Support for young people should not be confined to the points leading up to decision-making, but be on going, regardless of the direction taken. This is particularly important in relation to the large numbers of young people who are known to drop out of Modern Apprenticeships before they have completed their training, many of whom may be at risk of disaffection and exclusion if they fail to secure an alternative option. There are currently few strategies in place to offer guidance and support to young people once they have followed a route into employment or training. This appears to support an implicit assumption within current policy, that disaffection occurs prior to decision-making at the end of Year 11 and that the risks of social exclusion radically diminish beyond that point.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to assimilate the changes that have occurred in recent years, both in relation to the direction of education and training policy and the ways in which this has impacted on the routes that are available to young people. There has been a 'levelling out' in the numbers of young people remaining in post-compulsory education and a significant increase in the proportion of young people embarking upon new vocational courses, namely GNVQs. This has happened over the same period that there has been a corresponding decrease in the proportion of young people entering employment with training and government supported training provision. In addition, young people who fail to enter any form of post-16 education, employment or training, that is the NEET group, and young people who enter employment without training after leaving compulsory schooling, continue to be a challenge to policy-makers.

The emerging pattern of education and training provision for young people in the UK appears to be one of an education based route for most young people, with a work-based training route running alongside. Within the development of recent government policy, there appears to be little evidence of a desire to correct the contradictions that currently exist in the development of both policies. Indeed, concerns about the levelling out in the proportions of young people who are choosing to participate in post-16 education have led to the introduction of policies which are aimed at further boosting educational participation figures. At the same time, a recent report by the Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee has highlighted the need to expand the number of places available to young people on government

supported training and to clarify the nature of the Modern Apprenticeship programme through the establishment of a National Framework for Apprenticeships (DfES, 2001a).

A key question remains. Are current education and training policies meeting the needs of employers? Evidence from the research conducted with employers in Leicester and Sunderland would suggest that the maintenance of policies which support the expansion of post-compulsory education, at the same time as retaining a work based route into employment and training send out conflicting messages to employers. In addition, the findings raise some questions about the validity of promoting mass post-compulsory education policies as a means of meeting the skill needs of the economy.

Young people have access to the labour market through one of three routes - Modern Apprenticeships (now Advanced Modern Apprenticeships), Youth Training (now Foundation Modern Apprenticeships) or direct employment. The 'structure of opportunities' available to young people varies, depending on the route taken into the labour market. Modern Apprenticeships (now Advanced Modern Apprenticeships), offer higher levels of training and qualifications, access to higher occupational levels, guaranteed employed status to the young person throughout the training period and more opportunities for career progression at the end of the training programme. In addition, these opportunities are exclusively open to young people.

In contrast, the opportunities available under the National Traineeships programme (now Foundation Modern Apprenticeships), while guaranteeing training and quali-fications to NVQ 2 or equivalent, give young people access to a more restricted range of occupations. Since young people were not guaranteed employed status under the terms and conditions of the scheme, the opportunities for progression and career development within the company at the end of the training period are more tenuous.

While the range of job opportunities available to young people who entered the labour market through direct employment is wider than that available with the support of government training, the level of training offered is generally much lower and the opportunity for qualification attainment and career progression much more limited. In addition, young people find themselves in competition with other groups of workers for entry into employment through this route and this segment of the labour market is not exclusively available to young people.

Finally, while the highest levels of training and development are available to young people under the Modern Apprenticeship programme (now Advanced Modern Apprenticeships), employers find it most difficult to recruit young people for these vacancies. For Modern Apprenticeships (now Advanced Modern Apprenticeships),

employers are demanding higher levels of entry qualifications, in comparison to those demanded for other entry points, and, in most cases, will only consider 16 year school leavers. Thus, they find themselves in direct competition with schools and colleges, which seek to retain young people in post-compulsory education, rather than to encourage entry into the labour market through the work based training route.

Despite increased participation in post-16 education and an expansion of qualifications in post-16 education, namely through GNVQs, most employers prefer to recruit 16-year old school leavers and value academic qualifications over and above their vocational equivalents. Some employers are mistrustful of recruiting older school leavers, that is 17 or 18 year olds, believing that they are more difficult to train and, in relation to cost, more expensive to employ. In addition, employers appear not to attach much weight to post-16 qualifications, which may be the result of a lack of understanding of the range of post-16 qualifications that are now available.

The research with employers in Leicester and Sunderland has demonstrated that there is a clear disparity between employers' demands for young people and young peoples' achievements and accessibility from the education system. While policy has been driven by the belief that the country needs a better-qualified and well-trained workforce to improve economic competitiveness, the findings from this piece of research challenge whether this can be achieved primarily through mass participation of young people in post-compulsory education.

In addition to evaluating the demand for skills at a national level, there is a need for a greater understanding of employers' demands for young people at a local labour market level and of the variations that may exist between local labour markets. Furthermore, the introduction of a raft of new educational qualifications to attract young people to remain in education, needs to be evaluated alongside employers' demands for these qualifications and employers' needs for large proportions of young people to remain in post-compulsory education.

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NEGOTIATING SPACE IN THE RISKY COMMUNITY

PAUL CRAWSHAW

This paper aims to explore how young people who participated in a three year action research project experience and understand space, place and risk within their own locality. Within the accounts presented, risk is often depicted as an organising principle of daily experiences and differing dispositions towards risk come to dictate use of space and place. This is often experienced differently according to gender. The paper will present some accounts given by young men in order to demonstrate the importance of locality in their lives and how this is often subjectively experienced, based upon calculations concerning risk, danger and safety. It will be argued that an understanding of the subjective nature in which young people, in particular young men, come to negotiate access to space and identification with places is crucial for decision-makers and those working directly with young people who might otherwise seek to impose their own definitions and understandings upon them. The relevance of this for youth work practice will be discussed. It will be argued that detached youth work is a potential policy solution to addressing the importance of space and place in young people's lives.

Background

The research on which this paper draws took place in a small industrial town in the North East of England that will be referred to here as Townville. Townville is a locality that in many ways comes to typify late modern industrial societies. With a proud tradition of steel manufacturing it is an area of strong community bonds, but with the decline of such industries in recent decades it has experienced significant economic and social problems. At the time the research was being conducted the overall rate of unemployment was almost four times the national average (16.4%) and those in employment were more likely to be in part time, temporary, unskilled jobs. In addition, over half (57%) of Townvilles's population (6840) did not have a car, compared with a national figure of 32.4%, and in 1996 13.5% of the population were single parent families compared with 3.8%. The population is largely white but there is a small minority ethnic community of mainly South East Asian families (6.2%). Housing policy has promoted depopulation of the area and this has led to an increasing number of empty properties and the creation of large areas of open space where unused housing stock has been cleared. The town has suffered from a lack of investment from local commerce and this has resulted in the closure of the majority of shops in the main commercial area with few facilities being left for local residents apart from a bank, public houses, social clubs and newsagents/convenience stores. This is particularly relevant for young people.

As this paper explores, the existence of such barriers can prove significant to the lives of young people which are often tied to localities for a variety of reasons such as lack of money and transport, but also by associations with particular areas and social groups, which can make venturing into what may seem to the objective observer to be very similar neighbouring areas 'taboo'. The lives of young people are often played out within very specific and limited spaces that are integral to their identities and sense of belonging to specific groups, and transgression of local boundaries can become a significant act. This has implications for the targeting of youth work provision. The paper will argue that centre based provision, by its very nature, is unable to be responsive to the subtleties of young people's spatial identifications. It proposes that area targeted detached youth work is a potential solution to providing services for disadvantaged and often hard to reach groups.

Methods

The research on which this paper draws was conducted as part of a three year Single Regeneration Budget funded research project entitled Action Risk. Action Risk was designed to work with young people in Townville to explore their understandings of risk and danger. As a project premised upon action research its key aim was to help young people address and begin to manage their exposure to 'risk' and 'risk taking' activities. The project consisted of two key phases of research. The first used a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods in order to construct a 'risk' profile in consultation with young people. The second consisted of a series of in depth qualitative case studies conducted with specific groups. These were informed by the profile developed in the initial phase of the project and included work with young men in a variety of settings, establishing a girls group at the local Women's Centre, work with young mothers and involving young people in the redesign of their own community. This paper presents some discussion of the work with young men. The data was collected over a period of one year, using a variety of methods including focus groups conducted as part of informal work with young men in a local youth club and in-depth interviews conducted at a local training provider and the two local secondary schools.

Cultural Geographies, Space and Place

Theorists within the fields of sociology, human geography and cultural studies have increasingly highlighted the importance of 'cultural geographies' in understanding the differential access to, and use of, space made by groups within communities according to such factors as sexuality, age, gender, disability and race (Aitchison, 1998, Binnie, 1995, Crang, 1998, Skelton and Valentine, 1997). *Cultural geographies* refer to constructions of space and place which are premised upon individuals' own subjective perceptions and understandings of that place, rather than upon the

physical nature of the area itself. This can seem a somewhat abstract notion but can be summarised neatly as Pile (1996) does to suggest that within urban landscapes people live out their daily lives within a mental map of their locality rather than within the physical locality itself. Crang (1998) defines the term cultural geography in a succinct and yet also unavoidably ambiguous way

> *Cultural geography looks at the way different processes come together in particular places and how these places develop meaning for people. Sometimes we may be looking at processes of a global scale, at other times we might be interested in the micro-geography of houses, the intimate and personal scale of things that form people's everyday world (1998: 3)*

For the purposes of this paper the term *cultural geographies* is used to refer to the way spaces and places are given meanings by young men. Within discussions concerning cultural geography and people's understanding and use of space and place, space refers to an area that is measurable and definable, whereas place refers to something that is given definite characteristics by people or groups. As Rose (1993) perhaps more succinctly states: 'space is something to be accessed and can be defined as open to scientifically rational measurements of location, whereas *'place'* is something created and open to human interpretation and significance' (Rose, 1993: 1). As she goes on to state: 'to be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have and to know your place' (Rose, 1993: 1).

Thus when 'space' is given significant meanings by an individual or group it becomes a 'place'. Cultural geography therefore allows us to recognise that space has *meaning*. To understand the significance that young people attach to places we therefore need to understand their individual and group subjectivities. Subjectivity refers to how individuals draw upon their own understandings and experiences in order to position themselves in relation to certain discourses or dominant ideas and norms e.g. masculine subjectivites refer to different ways of being masculine available to men within certain discourses such as within the school, the workplace or in public spaces (see Pattman et al, 1998). The way young people involved in the research experience and interpret their access to space is highly subjective, as is their understanding of risk, and is often incongruous with how adults might perceive certain places and spaces. For example, for young men, their locality is often understood as divided into two halves, marked by the very real boundary of a main road, but given significance by subjective understandings of the nature of the 'other' area which they are not part of, and which therefore becomes inherently dangerous for them. This 'other' area is understood to harbour 'risky' groups which present a potential threat to them: As one young man stated:

Over where we are it's not too bad, over the other side it's full of smack heads [drug users] (aged 16-19).

Another noted:

Because there's loads of smack heads [drug users], I feel uncomfortable walking round by myself (16-19).

This understanding of, and access to, space and place is portrayed as being experienced differently by young men and young women. The study of gender and space is not new. What has been called *'Spatialised feminism'* (Aitchison, 1998) has over the past two decades demonstrated how access to space is often differentially experienced by men and women, with women often being confined to the private and men more apparent within the public sphere. This is often due to such factors as women's fear of male violence in public spaces (Connell, 1987).

Such information is relevant to decision-makers and planners concerned with the regeneration of areas as their understanding of where, for example, facilities can be placed and how and by whom they will be used, may be invalidated by subjective knowledges and assumptions about an area. As mentioned earlier, young men identify only specific areas of Townville as safe and therefore accessible for a variety of reasons. Some areas of Townville are presented as being imbibed with risk and danger and therefore inaccessible to young people who are not, or do not want to be, part of such groups. As one young man noted:

There's nothing to do over our side but isn't as much like bad all pinching and everything as over that side.... but it's worse over there, but we've got nowt to do but it's not as worse as over there (14-15).

With a lack of access to economic resources young people are also likely to be restricted in terms of geographical mobility and this is significant in an area like Townville which provides few opportunities for leisure. This was described by young men as a factor in influencing both how and where they spend their leisure time. As one group of young men noted:

Interviewer: Do you do much in your spare time?
Not really no, like we just sometimes like just hang about that's all we do, that's all we can do.

Not much of a life.

Not much, there's like nothing to do at all (aged 14-15).

An appreciation of the subjective nature of space, and how this is often differentially constructed by young people is thus crucial for the planning of effective youth work practice.

Spatiality and Youth Work

An awareness of the importance of space and locality to young people is not new to youth work. Youth Workers have long recognised that young people, particularly those belonging to less advantaged socio-economic groups, tend to live out their lives within limited geographical areas often linked by the location of the home of their family of origin and the proximity of their school. What findings such as those presented here suggest is that, within their own localities, young people's access to spaces can often be restricted by a number of factors related to age, ethnicity, peer group and also differing dispositions towards risk. These come to map out specific areas which young people understand as safe and accessible and some which are understood as risky and dangerous. This research suggests that young men will sometimes enter risky or dangerous spaces or engage in risky practices, but that they will do so with the knowledge that they are risky. This is significant in terms of identity construction (see Mitchell et al, 2001). As one group of young men noted:

Oh you put yourself in them you know what I mean it's like say one day was a rainy night or something you see a big building..just go and have a smoke and that, the police come and that

Most teenage lads go through taking old boilers out of houses don't they?

It's dangerous cause you could get yourself into trouble (aged 15-17).

The peer group is often cited as a resource for managing risk and danger and as something that makes young men feel safe, despite the risks apparent in their locality. As one young man suggests:

Well yeah, I'm not really out after 10 like, but if I am out I'm all right because I've got my mates with me (aged 16-19).

Another noted:

We feel safe, we know everybody, know what I mean? (aged 15-17).

A localised detached youth work service which meets young people on their own terms and appreciates their understandings and interpretations of localities is vital if workers are to capture this subjectivity and provide services which are appropriate to young people. Although valuable as places which provide somewhere for young people to go and participate in activities, and which can have positive outcomes in terms of pleasure and social education (Robertson, 2001), centre based work often fails to capture such complexity. The best facilities available will not necessarily get young people to cross boundaries constructed by peer groups and communities. Locally sensitive detached youth work provision has the potential

to work with young people in a participatory fashion to embrace their subjective understandings and target services appropriately. Detached workers are in an unrivalled position to access such information and good work should build on such an evidence base and become 'action centred social research' (Wathan, 1989:39). Tackling problems at an 'area level' can often fail to encapsulate this subjectivity. Area based regeneration or youth work strategies which target whole wards or towns often assume homogenous populations and unified communities with the same interests and needs. However, this is not necessarily appropriate, as even within relatively small populations there is considerable diversity.

Risk Theory

This paper attempts to explore empirically how young people experience risk with reference to space and place within their own community. Recent debates in sociological, anthropological and cultural theory have highlighted the importance of 'risk' as a salient feature of contemporary societies. In the work of Ulrich Beck (1992) and Anthony Giddens (1991) risk has been identified as a key determinant and organiser of social relations. This is a consequence of changes in both technology and knowledge which have led to greater control of all areas of the social, but which as a result of globalisation and the increasingly transnational dangers presented by such technological developments as nuclear power, are also capable of creating 'global' risks. The result of this is ever growing uncertainty and ultimately a movement towards what Beck describes as the 'risk society'; within which risk becomes the key organiser of social relations over other more traditional divides such as class, ethnicity or gender. A process of detraditionalisation is said to have taken place as a result of changes in production and increasing globalisation, which has weakened traditional ties linked to work, families and communities and ultimately led to increased uncertainty or 'ontological insecurity' (Giddens, 1991: 84). Beck and Giddens argue that this has resulted in a process of individualisation whereby people feel more and more responsible for their own lives as a result of the weakening of such traditional bonds and markers of identity. Such a process leads to greater insecurity and the need to manage risk on an individual basis. This has significantly affected the lives of young people. As Furlong and Cartmel (1997:1) suggest: 'young people today have to negotiate a set of risks which were largely unknown to their parents.'

However, as Furlong and Cartmel note, it is important to recognise that although young people live within an increasingly timeless and globalised world, local places and spaces remain a crucial medium and mediator of lived risk experiences (Green et al, 2000). Furlong and Cartmel suggest this leads to an epistemological fallacy whereby risks are experienced and addressed individually rather than collectively even though they may result from wider socio-economic pressures beyond the

individual (p.114). It therefore becomes important to understand how risk is constructed 'locally' within the everyday experiences of young people.

The anthropological work of Mary Douglas (1992) offers a valuable analysis of how risk is constructed within communities in relation to broader cultural norms and values. Douglas suggests that risk is not absolute and cannot necessarily be measured objectively. She argues that although some risks are 'real', what is *understood* as a risk is specific to any particular community and is mediated by social and political processes (p. 29). We must therefore understand risk as a relative concept. Conceptions of risk and danger cannot be 'objectively' understood, because they are always contingent upon broader cultural understandings. This is of particular relevance to the analysis presented here. Such a conception of risk allows it to be explored as a result of the social, economic and cultural context of the lives of young people contingent upon such factors as gender, ethnicity and locality. The lives of young people involved are often described as imbibed with exposure to risk and danger, and this influences their understandings of what is considered to be a 'risk'. The following section will present 'everyday' accounts of risk discussed by young people and attempt to illustrate how these are linked to their own situated discourses of space, place and risk which often exist outside of objective and adult understandings.

Young People, Risk and the use of Space

One of the key outcomes of the risk profile constructed in the initial phase of the Action Risk project was the importance of space and place in the everyday lives of young people living in Townville. Young people identified spaces within Townville as being risky and suggested that this required management by being in the company of friends, avoiding certain parts of the town and staying in after dark. Risk is thus presented as an organising principle of daily experiences as young people suggest they encounter and need to manage risk on a daily basis. For young men in our sample the stereotypical view of heroic risk seekers and takers (Plant and Plant, 1993) courting danger is often contradicted as they give accounts of their lives being more directed by the necessity to employ risk management strategies. For young women, similar accounts are given, but which depict fear of different kinds of risk within their lives, many of which are focused upon dangerous places and spaces. These places in themselves are not necessarily inherently dangerous (although some such as old houses are) but are populated by individuals and groups whom both young men and young women feel represent either a direct physical risk to themselves or present the danger of being drawn into risk activities. In one respect risk is seen to be embodied by certain groups of young people and this is felt to be almost contagious by association. As one focus group of young men noted:

> *Yes, the older people attract younger kids like to steal a car. When the police come the older lads run off and they're fast and the little ones get caught (aged 12-13.)*

Again locality is seen as important in determining young people's exposure to risk. As one young man suggests

> *I know that it's the, it's not affecting me 'cause I'm not really living in this area, if I did live in this area it might affect me, say if I lived near someone who takes hard drugs and they knew me I might have ended up going on it myself just to experiment or something like that (aged 20).*

For young people who participated in this research, public space in the form of the street is a key arena for acting out their daily routines and leisure experiences. A lack of facilities and opportunities for leisure often leads to young people occupying the street as a meeting place. The street however can also become a site of conflict. Adults can perceive young people as threatening, and young people themselves can feel threatened by the presence of certain groups. This can result in increased surveillance from both the wider community and the police. This is not unusual. As Skelton and Valentine (1997) note, public space for young people is often characterised by exclusion and surveillance. The street is traditionally envisaged as a space which presents more risk for women (Connell, 1987), although recent research indicates that young men are most at danger of attack in the public arena and young women in the private (Shepherd, 1990) In line with this, young men also express that they perceive the street as a site imbibed with intimidation and risk for themselves. These conflicts bring with them contradictions as adults express a fear of gatherings of young people on the street, yet young people themselves also feel unsafe and seek to manage this through staying in groups.

What the findings reiterate is that young people's perceptions and understandings of what constitutes a risk and risky behaviour is situated within their own discourses which are often determined by both gender and relations to the peer group. Young people's understanding of risk is complex and this can be due to the normalisation of exposure to, and participation in, risky practices which is a key aspect of life for those involved in this research. For these young people risk is encountered and managed on a daily basis and they often suggest that risk and danger have become normalised. Consequently they construct risk hierarchies which are often different to adult perceptions.

Rhodes (1997) illustrates this with reference to intravenous drug users, a social group whose daily lives are often understood as imbibed with exposure to risk and

danger. Rhodes argues that this leads to a normalisation of risk. A quote from one of Rhodes' respondents discussing overdose risks illustrates this:

> *Death is like a normal thing, like an everyday thing. If you take heroin you can be dead at any moment and it's not very frightening- you live with that. So it doesn't frighten you much like it would a normal person...It was normal that even best friends died. (p. 11)*

Although less extreme for most, young people in our research often described how the experiences of, exposure to and understandings of risk had similarly become organised for them within their own socially specific discourses For young men exposure to violence, drug use, and danger from other young people both from inside and outside their area were seen as common and something which they must address, on a daily basis. Such experiences were often not coded as risky by young people. Rather they were interpreted as common place and mundane, with engaging in risky practices even being suggested as a strategy for survival. Thus what may be judged by adults to be a 'risky' activity such as fighting, may be understood as a normal practice. As one young man stated:

> *If you can't at least throw a few fists here, then there's no point in you staying (aged 15).*

Dominant constructions of 'tough' masculinity are often significant within such discourses of risk and risk taking:

> *In Townville the lads always think you have to be hard and like you have to fight all the time (aged 15)*

In a similar way to Rhodes' (1997) drug users, young people often identified hierarchies of risk. For example smoking, drinking and using cannabis were seen as acceptable, but using 'harder' substances was not. One young man said:

> *I smoke the tack [cannabis] that's it, that's all I do, there's nowt really wrong with that, you know that's sorted that, all that does is like it chills you out...smack [heroin] is a hell of a lot and it's not the same at all I believe (16-19).*

Some young men suggested that there were some risks that couldn't be avoided and they were often very fatalistic about these. Exposure to risk and danger was presented as an inevitable part of their daily experiences and something which they must find strategies to manage. The peer group was the most commonly cited resource used for risk management. One group of young men noted with reference to safety on the streets:

*I don't think much of the area. You have to walk around in crowds cause
there is that many druggies walking around (aged 15-17).*

Young people's own subjective interpretations of areas within their locality are
projected in the accounts given and illustrate how they come to map their use of
spaces and places in terms of risk and danger. Risk is presented as an organising
principle of daily experiences and their understanding, experience and management
of risk within their own locality comes to determine relations to both the peer
groups and the community. In this way young people construct their own localities
which include insiders, outsiders and rules of entry. As Massey (1997) argues this
serves the purpose for us as individuals and groups of constructing an ordered
geographical imagination through which to frame our worlds (p.126). The high
degree of exposure to risk experienced by young people involved in the research
can be understood as the outcome of structural changes and the resulting 'exclusion'
which has come to be understood as characteristic of such disadvantaged communities
as Townville (see MacDonald, 1997).

Risk, Exclusion and Unpopular Spaces

Urban space is never neutral, being the outcome of a complex political process of
construction involving the state, the economy, the individual and communities.
Social and cultural geographers have argued that economic capital is an important
part of this process and that therefore class is always a significant determinant of
the location of populations within urban landscapes. The urban landscape thus
becomes a site of power struggles, with the inevitable consequence being that the
poor end up in undesirable and unpopular places (Sibley, 1995). Sibley suggests
that exclusion can be understood in geographical terms, with inequalities in access
to resources leading to the positioning of the poor in areas with the least facilities,
poorest environments and that are likely to be socially stigmatised. What our
research suggests is that such spaces become imbibed with risk and danger for
young people as a result of exclusion. In *Risk Society* (1992) Beck argues that risks
are distributed inversely in proportion to the distribution of wealth, ie. it is those
with the least wealth who are exposed to the greatest number of risks. Such risks
take diverse forms and range from the hazards posed by environmental pollution
(something highlighted by young people in Townville) to a lack of financial security
and the risks of homelessness and job insecurity (see Rugg, 1999). Risks related to
access to, and use of, space and more specifically the inability to access safe spaces,
are experienced in a similar way, as access to space is determined by economic
capital. For young people in our sample, economic marginalisation and their
already marginal status as young people serve to severely limit their access to
space and seems to construct the street as the only real resource available for them

to live out their daily experiences. As the findings presented above highlight, this requires them to engage in a complex process of risk negotiation and management. The spaces of the poor are characterised by risk in a variety of ways such as poor housing, poor environment, high volumes of traffic, poor lighting and a lack of facilities (Sibley, 1995). Neo-liberal housing policies have further exacerbated the construction of marginal or excluded spaces through allowing those with the necessary economic capital to move out, often exacerbating the concentration of social problems in areas. As the young people noted, the concentration of certain social groups such as drugs users in their area can lead to increased risk for them:

All the smackheads [drug users] they just walk around asking people for money and it scares them off (15-17).

Douglas (1992) illustrates how the boundaries of communities are constructed with reference to subjective understandings of risk and danger. The communities of young people are similarly constructed. Their exposure to risk as a result of their status as young people and the environment in which they find themselves leads to the construction of practices which are designed to manage these. Some of these can be construed as risky in themselves. As Douglas argues the cultural project to form the city is not just an academic game but a desperate struggle (1992: 104). This is always a collective project built upon notions of normal and abnormal, acceptable and unacceptable, insiders and outsiders and inevitably inclusion and exclusion. Young people have marginal status in the city scape and often find themselves excluded from sites of consumption which have become the key arenas of public space within late modern consumer cultures (see Shields, 1992). Young people often find themselves living out their lives in marginal and excluded spaces which can result in a high degree of exposure to risk. However, they are not necessarily passive participants in this process. As some of the findings presented above suggest, active engagement in risky activities can be a means of identity construction within the peer group (see Mitchell et al, 2001). The peer group protects young people against risk, yet can often be viewed by others as risky. For example young people give accounts of moving around in groups leading to unwanted attention from the police.

They're pulling you up every time they see you. Even if you are just walking down the side of the road not doing anything, just having a laugh with your friends they pull you up and you start getting sick of it do you know what I mean. (aged 16-19)

The communities of young people therefore not only expose them to risk, but can also be used to protect them against it. As a result young people are often actively engaged in constructing their own discourses of risk. This is in line with Douglas'

(1992) anthropological discussions, which suggests that communities define their own boundaries of risk and danger, and that these are inevitably subjective and not necessarily congruent with external definitions. Thus although young people's behaviour in terms of gathering in groups might be construed as dangerous by 'adult' control cultures, for them it is understood as a resource to manage risk. Young people recognised their marginal and excluded status and acknowledged that if they lived in a more affluent area they would be less exposed to risk. These findings suggest that young people construct their own 'geographies of risk' which are linked to their own understandings of safe and unsafe areas, practices and groups. These are inevitably subjectively constructed through their own discourses and negotiated with reference to the peer group and community.

Discussion

The research presented here suggests that social and cultural constructions of space and place are significant to the daily lived experiences of young people. For young people the street is the site of much of their social interaction with peers and others and becomes significant symbolic space often understood in terms of insiders, outsiders and rules of entry. This has been well documented by youth research over the past three decades (see for example Hall and Jefferson, 1976). When considered in the context of recent work relating to risk, communities and exclusion (see Beck 1992, Douglas, 1992, Sibley, 1995) our findings illustrate how, for young people, risk becomes an organising principle of their daily experiences due to their occupation of 'risky' space and the complex negotiations of risk and danger this involves.

Despite the documentation of the importance of the street for young people by youth researchers, youth work has still tended to focus its main efforts into the provision of centre based work. Outreach and detached work has typically been seen as an 'add on' rather than a significant method of working with young people in its own right, despite some recognition of its potential for understanding their everyday lives within their own localities (Wathan, 1989). By meeting with young people in their own spaces and on their own terms however, detached work has the potential, as Pearce (1996) notes, to recognise the importance of spatiality in the lives of young people and find ways of working with them which address their own needs as they identify them, rather than attempting to impose external structures such as limited centre based provision under the supervision of adults.

The lives of young people are complex and are often played out in cultural spaces which are not apparent to adults but are constructed with reference to gender, peer relationships, ethnicity and sexuality and often related to territorial connections with certain areas. As the research presented here goes some way towards demonstrating

what objectively may appear to be a single estate or series of streets can for young people be imbibed with meaning as well as risk and danger. Peer groups often dictate what spaces can be accessed and where there might be danger if a young person's presence is not deemed to be appropriate. In Townville for example the local youth and community centre is based on one side of a main road which divides the estate effectively into two. This road is not merely a significant geographical barrier also an important cultural one. For young people on the other side of the estate, the youth and community centre is not an accessible space as the population of that area is deemed 'risky'. This effectively cuts off a large proportion of the population of young people in Townville from accessing centre based provision. Detached youth work is able to work in such a way as to address this complexity. Through working with young people on the street in their own space it is able to understand the lived experiences of young people in a far more subtle way by meeting them in their own environment and essentially on their own terms. If youth and community work is truly to be a participatory process which works towards the empowerment of young people, their subjective experiences must be understood and used as a starting point for building up relationships rather than something which may be addressed after they have entered into a relationship with workers as members of a youth club. In this way, as noted earlier, detached work has the potential to act as action oriented social research (Wathan, 1989), with workers using their role to begin to understand the lives of young people, embrace their subjective understandings and target work accordingly. As the street and other spaces beyond essentially adult controlled areas such as youth clubs are the key stages for the social actions of young people in communities such as Townville, youth work must acknowledge this through dedicated detached provision which allows young people's subjectivities to be embraced without displacing them to the often artificial environment of the youth centre.

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London: A.& C. Black Ltd. 1932

JEAN SPENCE

When the revised edition of *Working Lads Clubs* was published in 1932 as *Lads Clubs*, a world had passed since it had first appeared in 1908. The catastrophe of the 1914-18 War had seriously disturbed the normal pattern of generational relations, particularly between the pre-war and the war generations of young people, and this had had significant consequences for the meanings invested in the idea of 'youth' in the post war years (Mowatt, 1955). At the same time, some of the rigidities of class and gender roles in the political and social establishment, which were already under pressure in 1914, had finally fractured during the war. By 1932 Europe and America were in the midst of a depression; political volatility and unrest were manifest on the city streets as well as in industry; and increasing numbers were seeking either social change or personal security by participating in mass movements of one type or another. In particular, the burgeoning youth movements of the communist and fascist states of Europe seemed to offer promise to some for a unified and collectivised future, suggesting the power and possibility of harnessing the idealism, energy and naivety of the new post-war generation towards the establishment of ordered, ideologically coherent societies.

In her 1932 Foreword to *Lads Clubs*, Lillian Russell (nee Rigby) widow of Charles Russell, and co-author of the original text, reflected the concerns of the youth work of the time, alluding, with perhaps a little envy, to the success of the continental youth movements, seeking the possibility of a peculiarly English version in the further growth and development of the boys' club and the Scout movements:

> *In spite of all pessimists can say - and there is much to arouse the greatest apprehension - one cannot doubt that we have a better England in the present than we had before we had lads' clubs or should have had without them. But the question is, Is the movement growing quickly enough, is it thorough enough, to meet the new strains to which our young men must be subjected? Is young England becoming saturated with boys' club and Scout ideals of*

citizenship and fitness as quickly as eg., young Italy is being saturated with Fascism, young Russia with Bolshevism, young Germany with the cult of health and the open air? (Russell and Russell, 1932: ix)

The years after the First World War had seen a significant national consolidation of youth work and some discernable shifts in its management, values and philosophies (Spence 2001). Yet it was unlikely that the liberal ideals of 'friendship', of 'citizenship' or even of 'fitness' which were integral to the club and Scouting movements could compete with the grand political narratives and designs of communism or fascism; hardly likely that avowedly a-political voluntary interventions could provide an English version of these continental developments, even if some of the practices used to engage young people were similar. No doubt the growth and consolidation of the boys' club movement following on the creation of the NABC in 1925 encouraged Lillian Russell's optimism, but her query suggests a misreading of the fundamental differences between post war political youth organisations and the English club movement that retained significant continuities with its roots in the pre-war period. She herself recognised these continuities when she acknowledged that though the times might have changed, the 'principles remain the same' (1932: vii). Thus in this Foreword the tension inherent in the 1932 text is already apparent.

Working Lads Clubs is a book of the Edwardian period, written to address the challenges of the time. However, it contained within it discussion and elucidation of some universal principles and values of youth club work and that was its strength. A successfully updated version would have needed to retain the latter whist superseding the former. Lillian Russell's involvement in the production of the original and her admitted disengagement from youth work practice during the 1920s (1932: vii). perhaps meant that however thoroughly she undertook the task of revision, it could never have been possible for her to do so in a way that enabled the text to adjust to the changes in practice and context which had taken place in the intervening years.

Lillian belonged to a pre-war generation of social activists, theoreticians and policy makers. Her husband, Charles, whom she acknowledged as the principle author of *Working Lads Clubs* had originally been active in the Boys' clubs in Manchester, and had taken a principle role in the development of the large and thriving Heyrod Street Club. He had a particular interest in juvenile crime and delinquency, and eventually went on to become Chief Inspector of Reformatory Industrial Schools. His other publications included *Manchester Boys, The Making of a Criminal* and *Young Gaol*

Birds (1905). At the outbreak of the First World War it was Russell who suggested that support for the voluntary youth organisations might be an appropriate preventative method for dealing with juvenile crime. When the Juvenile Organisations Committee was accordingly created in 1916, he was appointed Chair, a position he held until his sudden death in 1917 (Dawes,1975: 106-7; Eager, 1953: 396-7).

Working Lads Clubs had been written when Russell was still practically engaged in the life of Ancoats club. It was an effort to provide a comprehensive text book for the increasing number of club workers, some of whom, lacking both training or adequate reference points for learning how to go about the work, were undoubtedly in need of a source of information and guidance. A large part of the book was an eminently practical exposition of boys' club work based upon empirical research as well as his own experience. It covered in great detail advice and information about such matters as how to set up a club, how to design and manage the building, how to organise games and sports, educational classes, employment bureau, and how to successfully take 300 and more boys to camp. However, Charles Russell was more than just a practical man. He had an enquiring mind and a strong religious faith both of which informed his youth work. As such he was keen to produce a book which was more than a technical guide. The text also sought to expound the philosophical and religious principles which he believed to be intrinsic to club work. Before discussing the range and purposes of activities and the practicalities of method, he therefore embarked upon an exposition of the history, the values and the meaning of the work exploring what he believed to be its component elements and its key features.

It is the discursive aspect of the text which is of most interest to the contemporary reader. The details of organisational practice are primarily of an antiquarian or historical interest. Although the alert reader can gain some excellent hints about organisational efficiency, who now needs practical advice on how many feet and inches should be left between the poles of each of 32 bell tents? (1908:222). However, the discussion of the history, aims, values and issues of club work are both informative and thought provoking and echo down the years to conversations and discussion which even now are unresolved. It is not surprising that Eric F. Piercy, the Secretary of the NABC recognised the continuing value in the 1930s of *Working Lads Clubs* and in the absence of any new work which surpassed the original, prevailed upon Lillian Russell to undertake the task of revision (1932:ix).

It is not easy to discern Lillian Russell's contribution to the original work but alongside being a general helper and informant, it is possible that

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she took primary responsibility for producing those chapters dealing with issues thought to be within the female rather than male sphere. The differences in style suggest that she wrote the chapter on 'The boy and the girl' which, taking its cues from G. Stanley Hall and Lily Montagu (1908:265; 273) encouraged club workers to recognise the reality of the sexuality of young people, to treat sensitively boys' relationships with girls and to foster respect and openness between boys and girls. Apart from an acknowledgement of the inter-war belief in the benefits of association through mixed activities, this chapter was hardly changed for the 1932 edition. Perhaps it was Lillian Rigby who provided Charles Russell with the more reflective aspects of his text, balancing his tendency towards practical information and mechanistic debate. Certainly, some of the additions and alterations in 1932 seek to soften some of the more abrasive aspects of the original and this might be as much to do with the co-author's approach as with the changing times.

The most obvious changes in the updated text relate to shifts in fashion. For instance, references to music halls are not quite gone but they are removed from the chapter heading and become incidental to the text, to be replaced by 'movies' and 'talkies'. Similarly, the new edition was constrained by developments in social policy. For example, the advent of Juvenile Advisory Committees and Labour Exchanges had made redundant the detailed and practical attention which the original manuscript gave to the management of job-finding within the club. However, there were also more subtle changes to be made, nuances of tone which took cognisance of shifting views about the nature of citizenship, the role of the state and the social status and independence of young people. Some of these changes were to be discerned in the developments within youth work itself, not least in the nature of the establishment of a national organisation, in the recognition of the value of young people's participation in club management and in the acknowledgement of the positive virtues of mixed activities in association with girls' clubs.

When *Working Lads Clubs* was produced, club work was very much a localised, urban phenomenon with jealously guarded regional peculiarities and differences. These differences were highlighted in Russell and Rigby's rather subjectively debated comparison of the larger Manchester club with the smaller London model, which betrayed a preference for the former (1908: 31-42). Despite this, Charles Russell was even then keen on the idea of national federation and it is likely that the formation of the NABC eight years after his death was influenced by those who had read his argument for such a development in *Working Lads Clubs*

(1908; 312-19; 1932:viii). The creation of the NABC superseded the arguments about what type of club was best. National organisation encouraged mutual identification and facilitated the expression of principles of similarity rather than of difference, whilst maintaining the independence associated with locality. After 1925, boys' club work, supported and patronised by the aristocracy, for example the Duke of Gloucester was the first President, as well as by the established middle classes, gained a new impetus and became a significant force in the promotion of virtues and values which were both implicit and understood as quintessentially *English* - a virtue held above the differences of region or class and one which implied particular notions of masculinity and manliness as well as of 'citizenship' in general. Thus Lillian Russell significantly reduced the length and importance of the chapter 'Large and Small Clubs' in the new book (1932:24-29). The movement was now much more interested in the generic nature of boys' clubs and universal principles of practice.

The boys' clubs were behind Scouting in the creation of a national movement although they pre-dated Scouting by over a quarter of a century, *Scouting for Boys* was published in the same year as *Working Lads Clubs*, but whilst Russell and Rigby's text was a distillation of the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of the boys' club movement, Baden Powell's book was the outline of a new and largely untried scheme which Charles Russell felt able to dismiss as 'very unpractical on the whole' (1908:236). By 1932 Scouting had grown into a world-wide phenomenon with as many as four million Scouts and Guides in 1929 (Jeal, 1989:513). Here was a movement which built upon an essentialist idea of the characteristics of boyhood and of youth, which corresponded easily with the new generational conditions of the inter-war years. In 1908, Russell and Rigby had outlined in great detail and with a mixture of sympathy and caricature, the traits of the *working* boy, drawing portraits of different types of boy, and categorising them according to character types. They were sensitive not only to class in general but also to the 'strongly-marked class differences' (1908:92) *within* the working classes, and between occupational groups (1908:89-99). Baden Powell's success was partly to move beyond this, to address the characteristics of what he considered the boy *in general* and to attempt to harness those characteristics towards a universal vision of the good citizen. There is little difference between those characteristics of boyhood particularised in *Working Lads Clubs* and those which are universalised in Scouting. However Russell and Rigby were perhaps more imbued with the perspective of the provincial bourgeoisie. In 1908, their future citizens were absolutely class bound and not unnaturally, they were unable to foresee the significance of the

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new discourse of adolescence, despite the acknowledged influence of G. Stanley Hall's seminal work *Adolescence* in their thinking (1908: 138, 265, 283; 1932: 104, 205, 220).

It is hardly surprising that the first casualty of the revision of the original was the loss of the adjective 'Working' from the title and that chapter VI, 'Types of Boys' was omitted completely. When *Working Lads Clubs* was published, most club work was unambiguously aimed at 'working' boys and girls (eg. Stanley, 1890; Urwick, 1904). The organisation of clubs in working class districts had emerged partly as a response to both the apparent freedom from restraint or control of adolescent workers in their leisure time and a desire to provide opportunities for young workers to improve themselves through association with middle class providers, participation in activities and the comradeship of club life. Such work was primarily concerned with 'prevention' and 'opportunity'. It implicitly assumed a sense of optimism about the potential for the social and moral improvement of the working class adolescent, if only appropriate resources and influences could be brought to bear on lives otherwise bereft of the means of improvement.

This was an initiative intent on incorporating and directing working class potential in favour of the values of the wider society. Despite Eager's assertion that *'Working Lads Clubs* was and was meant to be the manual of a social resistance movement' (1953: 355), neither the book nor the movement which it sought to influence were intent upon moving boys 'out of their class', but of improving the stability and co-operation of the the class as a whole. In so doing it not only excluded middle class young people from the frame of reference, but also those groups of young people who were spurned by the respectable working classes themselves - the children of the poorest groups of itinerant and casual labourers. If the boys' club movement was to succeed, it could only provide for those who had the potential to be helped.

> We have already pointed out that the boy who most frequently inspires the young enthusiast with the wish to bring brightness into his life consists of material which can rarely be moulded to better uses by the influence of a club. This is the boy popularly called the 'street -arab' -the boy who does not work, or wish to work, or understand what work is, but is content to hawk flowers or newspapers in the thoroughfares, or hang about the approach to a large railway-station on the look-out for odd jobs, such as carrying a traveller's bag or pushing a hand cart. Partly because he is so conspicuous, he attracts attention and sympathy, and seems at

first sight the very lad to profit by the friendly supervision of a club. Yet no matter how poor and squalid the district in which the club is situated, provided it be in any sense well organised and strictly controlled, it cannot make any permanent appeal to the tastes of a youth of this class. The same causes which have led him to seek his livelihood on the streets will militate against his ever submitting for more than a few days to the discipline and restraint without which no club can be worked. (1908: 90)

Charles Russell's view about the type of boys most able to benefit from clubs was possibly influenced by his preference for the mass provision of the Manchester model. Organising for such large numbers of boys (900 members at Heyrod Street), could not have been achieved without the control and discipline which seemed to be anathema to the sons of the poorest classes. Yet his concern for discipline was also principled. Its purpose was to assert the importance of obeying rules and acknowledging the leadership and superiority of the managers of the club with the aim of 'building up men' (1908:113). As Eager explained, Charles Russell, 'In his views on discipline...was in sympathy with William Smith; he was a cadet at school and joined the East Lancashire Volunteers' (Eager 1953; 356). Like Smith, the founder of the Boys Brigade which Russell supported as Honorary Secretary in Manchester (ibid:357), Russell's approach was militaristic; achieving manhood was to be through the same methods as Britain had secured an empire. The comradeship of the club was as the comradeship of a soldier to his fellows and management or leadership in the club was as an officer to his subordinates.

In *Lads Clubs*, the alterations and additions to the chapter on 'Discipline' are telling in terms of the change of tone. Lillian Russell summarised the new ethos by quoting from the 'Principles and Aims' adopted by the NABC: 'The special quality of club discipline is, in fact, that it is the ordinary discipline of social life. It rests on the sanction of common consent. It is not imposed by authority; it comes from within rather than from without' (1932: 83-84). Here was the discipline of self control required for active citizenship and service to a wider constituency - the community.

*The boy of fourteen or fifteen will not, by seventeen or eighteen, have developed into an unselfish strenuous citizen of the community merely because he prefers the club to the street and attends regularly... The discipline of a good club must definitely **aim** at something beyond, and not judge a good member by the same standard as that by which the prison warder judges a good prisoner, i.e. as a person who obeys and gives no trouble. Unless the club*

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inculcates a progressive, constructive self-discipline, a discipline attuned to higher ends, it is not a club in the first rank. (1932: 73-74)

She did not dispense entirely with the idea of *esprit de corps* but her position has shifted from the idea of 'building up men' (1908:113) to that of enabling boys to 'develop into men' (1932: 74). This shift towards a more liberal conception of discipline suggested a new respect for the capacity of boys to take responsibility and perhaps even to participate in the management of the club through a senior members' committee.

Nevertheless, in spite of her acknowledgement of the new approaches to youth and to citizenship, and her nod in the direction of virtues beyond class, Lillian Russell could not quite overcome the class dimensions intrinsic to the original edition. The very word 'lads' suggests 'working class' but in particular she retained the idea that boys involved in casual labour could not benefit from the opportunities offered by club membership. There was only so much that a club could do; it was not a panacea for all evils and the lack of discipline and freedom enjoyed by boys who looked to the streets for a living. It suggested that they would be unable to submit to the overall discipline required in the establishment of a successful club. In1932 the point made in 1908 was re-iterated:

From the beginning of the club's career, it should be fairly understood what the standard of discipline is going to be. For this reason. The ardent new officer should put from his mind the notion that large numbers of the street-selling type of boy over fourteen years of age will be attracted. Discipline, voluntarily endured, and the street boy are wide as the poles asunder. But it must be determined what kind of boys are to form the preponderating element... the endeavour must be to make and keep the standard of conduct as high as possible without driving away the roughest class at which its influence is aimed. (1908:101; 1932:75)

Lads Clubs repeats the original view about street vendors that

We fear indeed, apart from methods of State compulsion which we have discussed elsewhere, or better still, the abolition of the conditions which produce him, nothing can be done. A youth of this class is usually so well contented with his apparently unenviable lot that he will not voluntarily place himself under the influence of any reforming agency. (1908:24; 1932:18-19)

There is a practical realism in the argument that not all boys could benefit from club membership and that the circumstances of the boys outside

the club in terms of family and working life were powerful indicators of their ability to voluntarily submit to club discipline. Moreover boys of the poorest classes would not always be able to pay their membership dues or for the extras required for full participation in club activities and for the Russells this was an important means of encouraging the independence in club members. Nevertheless there are tensions in this view that remain intrinsic to club-based youth work and the development of detached youth work and which still exercise the minds of youth workers and policy makers up to the present. The unashamed class- and gender-based perspective of the Russells enabled them to promote an exclusive concept of club work which does not sit easily alongside the idealisation of youth promoted in the inter-war years.

Both editions of this text reflected the class and gender biases and expectations of their place and time. These were biases which the universal conception of adolescence has often masked but never dispelled. The acknowledgment of the specificity of class and gender, though exclusive, is to some extent a strength insofar as it enables the authors to focus their vision of the potential of boys clubs. The books markedly lack any romantic notions about the possibilities of solving the problems of poverty and delinquency entirely through youth club work and no exaggerated claims were made for the potential of the work. Because they had a clear understanding of whose needs were to be addressed the authors were able to circumscribe their particular view of club work, to consider what was possible, to outline which methods might work, to make judgements about what was desirable and to include some warnings about what might create problems for the aspiring club worker. In narrowing their vision to a particular group and in making no apologies for their wish to create 'men' in the image desired by the dominant social ethos, they were able to articulate firm guidelines for club management and to highlight principles and issues of practice which provided a foundation for the creation of a successful club.

What they lost by taking this position was the ability to critically address the limits of the work in which they were engaged or to consider the expansion of the work beyond the confines in which they imagined it. They struggled, not very convincingly, with the problem of the inevitability of clubs becoming 'too respectable' to be attractive to the 'rougher youths who most need the club' (1908: 95) and swerve towards the old shibboleth that 'the contrast between collar and neck scarf falls away when ordinary dress is replaced by jersey and shorts, flannels or bathing drawers, and well developed muscles and straight limbs become the

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passports to esteem' (op cit). They are really at a loss as to how to address the contradiction other than to suggest that it is important to 'maintain an even balance' (op cit). To some extent their desire to create successful, well managed clubs overwhelmed their desire to provide facilities which reflected the self expressed needs and interests of the least advantaged boys. Meanwhile their tendency towards an unquestioning acceptance of the validity and value of the social status quo probably led to the self-exclusion of those young people whose non-conformity and insubordinate views might have led to a greater vitality and dynamism in the club movement. Whatever the benefits offered by club membership, ultimately, only those who were willing and able to conform to the values and standards already set in place would take full advantage of the opportunities offered. Apart from their acknowledgement that it might be possible to address the needs of the 'street urchin' through the clubs for a younger age group, they made no alternative suggestions about provision for those whom the club movement excluded.

Their concession towards the potential of clubs for the poorest street children seem to have emerged from Charles Russell having gathered information directly from such clubs whilst in the process of writing the 1908 book. It is recorded in the minutes of the Sunderland Waifs Rescue Agency and Street Vendors' Club, May 28th 1908, that 'Mr C.E.B. Russell' had written to the Club with regard to a book which he was writing 'on boys' Clubs dealing with the Street Vending problem'. The work of the Sunderland club with the school age sons of the poorest casual labourers living in the East End of Sunderland, with street vendors and 'waifs', was commended by Russell alongside similar work undertaken in Birmingham and Hull (1908:24), as 'excellent' but 'specialised' (1908:90). These clubs did not conform to his model, nor could they live up to the high ideals upon which he insisted. For instance in the Sunderland club, after some concerted efforts in its earliest days to collect the one penny subscription required for membership, the managers finally gave up and simply forgot to mention the matter again in their minutes. This would have been anathema to Russell and Rigby but it was clear in Sunderland that the boys and their families could not afford one penny for such luxuries as a 'club'. The Sunderland experience does appear to offer some evidence to support Russell and Rigby's view that by the time boys of this class reached adolescence it was already too late to influence their behaviour and just as *Working Lads Clubs* suggests 14, the school-leaving age, as the lower age limit for membership, so in Sunderland 14 is posited as the upper age-limit.

In their advocacy of the benefit of the children's clubs for the poorest and least respectable class of boys, it is significant that it is the work of the Hull Boys Club which Russell and Rigby chose to highlight. For in this club their ideals are most nearly approximated. The work they describe in Hull was rigidly organised and firmly controlled. For instance, Hull boys were subject with almost regimental efficiency to regular cleaning, feeding, haircuts and health checks. All this no doubt appealed to what Eager implies was Charles Russell's over-emphasis on discipline and order, (Eager, 1953:361) but it is possible that what he deemed to be of most interest in the Hull situation was the compulsory vocational education classes, the directing of school leavers towards work opportunities and the provision of a seniors club wherein progress could be maintained and monitored. Training for steady work was training for manhood and the club could be the linchpin that secured this for society. Education, by which he meant formal teaching and learning, a continuation of the process begun in schools and devised to suit the requirements of the family and working life of the boys as well as their interests and enthusiasms, was central to Russell's conception of the good club and its place and provision is discussed in a detailed chapter in both the 1908 and the 1932 books (1908:161-179; 1932:117-139).

By 1932 Lillian Russell was bemoaning the lack of development of the educational aspect of club work (1932: viii). No doubt the majority of boys' clubs had played to their strengths. In the triumvirate of recreation, education and religion which were understood by the Russells to be the very core of club work with boys (1908:19-20; 1932:14-15;Eager: 359) it was recreation which was the most attractive to boys. This aspect of the work had been reinforced by the health and fitness craze and the pursuit of the great outdoors in the inter-war years and encouraged further by national sports organisations. In some senses it was also the easiest to provide, requiring little more than enthusiasm, resources and organisational skills on the part of workers. Education and religion on the other hand were not in themselves attractive to working boys - often quite the reverse. Even Charles Russell with his high principles and ideals had been forced to concede in 1908 that it might be necessary to 'bribe' the boys, both positively and negatively, to participate in evening classes within the club and to guide them carefully towards the right sort of classes for their aptitude and situation.

In 1932, Lillian Russell sought to re-emphasise the difference between recreationally-based informal education and vocational and skills-based

formal educational classes. The updated book included the original educational perspective and sought to 'lay stress' on its importance. Nevertheless, the 1908 position is acknowledged as representing 'the rather narrower aspects of education'. In pursuit of an educational ideal which could be maintained as central to club work, Lillian Russell attempted to develop a wider vision of its meaning and in an addition to the original chapter extended the educational principle beyond the vocational and technical:

> Every manager ought to think for himself what education really means, what use it is, what he wishes it to lead to, what it is in its higher aspects. The wise manager's aim has been defined in words which cannot be bettered as to train the boy'to be able to appreciate beauty, whether it be nature or art, with the eye; to be able to appreciate beauty, whether it be nature or art, with the ear, and to be able to appreciate beauty, whether it be in nature or in literature with the mind.' Only by a carefully- thought-out and co-ordinated plan can education, so conceived, be made to play its true part in the club training - the training to fitness of body, mind and soul in unison. (1932:132)

She goes on to suggest that all aspects of the club, from physical environment, through to programming and the values and principles which are pursued make a contribution to the educational balance in a club. Her extension of the meaning of education perhaps captured more explicitly the culture which the original book had been implicitly pursuing but was unable to name in the more mechanistic and formally classified world of the Edwardian age.

Working Lads Clubs is an ambiguous text. In some ways it reflects the conservative rigidities of the Edwardian period and in others it bears witness to the political liberalism and fluidity which informed so much social reform. Class distinctions and certainties remain, but gone is the benevolence and patronising tone of amateur Victorian charity work. Russell and Rigby wanted to establish youth work which was professional, well ordered, socially legitimate and in which working class people could participate with dignity. Their text foreshadowed the new in its ideas about the potential of young working class adolescents to achieve independence and the benefits to be gained from engaging them in clubs which were sympathetic to their living conditions and environment, that encouraged their aspirations to achieve better. To some extent it was this, as well as its undoubtedly useful practical advice, which made the work a classic worthy of updating in 1932.

However, in 1908 no-one could have imagined the horrors of the First World War and its consequences - mass mobilisation, the elevation of adolescence and youth, the spirit of independence generated in young men and young women and the class consciousness which was to heighten the political desire of working class people to create organisations in their own image. Despite her efforts at updating and her desire to address the new conditions, there remained something unsatisfactory about *Lads Clubs*. Its basic structure reflected the concerns of another age. It was perhaps this which provoked Basil Henriques, who had assisted Lillian Russell by reading and commenting upon the manuscript, to produce his own textbook in 1933. Indeed Lillian Russell admitted in her preface, she had not always heeded his advice.

Nevertheless, both the original and the revised edition have relevance to youth work today. Young peoples lives have changed, youth work and youth workers have changed, the politics and policies driving youth work have changed and yet there are reference points established in the earliest days of the profession which provide the framework within which all those who seek to work informally and educationally with young people operate. The books are worth revisiting to remind us of some of the first principles of safety and organisation. Over and above this, they are worth revisiting to remind us of the gap in contemporary literature. No current text exists which could offer the new youth worker so much, which so comprehensively covers the history, values, methods and practices of youth club work.

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Carole Pugh

The editors have brought together a collection of essays that examine the issues of sexuality and discrimination. Buckley is a senior probation officer, who is currently working within a prison, she has a special interest in sexuality, gender and masculinity. Head is currently a forensic social worker in a special hospital, but is a former probation officer and youth worker. Until recently he was a specialist group worker and acted as one of the convenors of 'Lesbians and Gays in Probation'. The strong emphasis on probation work continues throughout (only one contributor is not from a probation background), which is not clear from the title or introduction and meant that the content wasn't quite what I had expected. While the selection of essay subjects and approaches initially appears disjointed the theme emerges of the refusal to accept existing stereotypes and simplistic understandings and the questions this raises about good practice.

Each chapter focuses on a discrete issue, and has a different style and focus, some are written by academics and teachers, others by practitioners, reflecting on policy and practice; others focus on personal experience and reflection. Some examine research, for example Meloy examines the practice of community notification about sex offenders currently running in the USA, she questions the ethics, effectiveness and desirability of this practice, examining the process by which someone is labelled publicly as a sex offender. Vaughan examines the issues of gay male domestic violence and argues for an increase in research, awareness and understanding by professionals of the possible incidence of this and the effects it has. He examines the way feminist work on abuse of women by male partners in domestic situations has informed and hindered practice with male gay domestic violence. He also draws attention to the reluctance gay men have in accepting the role of a victim in domestic violence. Vaughan argues for increased awareness from professionals. He also raises interesting questions about the interaction between gay identity, masculinity, and violence in relationships, issues that may be useful to consider when working with gay young men.

Others focus on practice; Thompson and Hodgett look at the personal consequences for staff that work on therapeutic interventions with sex offenders in the context of current social policies, they also consider the effect of societal norms and media representation on the work and recommend improvement in management and practice. This chapter gives a valuable insight into work with sexual abusers, and would be useful for anyone considering entering this field. Metcalf examines practice working with women who have committed serious criminal offences. She examines the balance between seeing them as women who have often experienced victimisation, oppression and abuse and as perpetrators of serious crimes. She argues for an approach that takes account of women's experience of sexism in undertaking rehabilitative work and critiques treatments premised on an understanding of male offending.

Williams and Phillips examine the role of probation officers working with clients who are considering or going through a sex change. They examine key issues for transgender people and the links with offending behaviour. They authors look at the process of going through a sex change and argue that there needs to be increased general awareness among practitioners if they are to work effectively in this area. They argue for the need for a wider view of gender and changes in social policy, which allow transgender people to change their sex according to the law. In addition they look at the difficulties of managing transgender prisoners within institutions that rely on gender divisions. I found some of the discussion in this chapter interesting and informative, however it closely related to probation practice.

Other contributions are personal reflections on experience and practice; Clare examines the approaches taken in training and teaching anti-oppressive practise around sexuality to social workers; she highlights useful approaches and materials and looks at the need for positive role models and representative balance within the delivery team. This is useful to anyone involved in working with practitioners around anti-oppressive practice. Allen reflects on his personal experience as a black gay man and as a trainer and group facilitator and examines the complex interplay between racism and homophobia and heteosexism, highlighting stereotypical images of Black people as heterosexual and challenging everyone to take responsibility for ensuring anti-oppressive practise. Perry reflects honestly on the difficulties in effectively challenging the thought processes of those who have sexually abused children and moving

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offenders on into taking responsibility for their actions and acknowledging the abusive nature of their sexual contact. He reflects on two specific case histories and the issues they highlighted for him working in an anti-oppressive way with gay male sex offenders as a male heterosexual probation officer. He raises issues about the information available to young people about gay identity, and the negative affects this can have.

The book is jargon free and easy to read, it promotes anti-discriminatory practice through encouraging critical self-reflection and highlighting issues that are often unexamined. The book raises questions, but does not always offer answers. Chapters focusing on different areas of work examined using alternative methods gives a breadth of discussion, but at the cost of a thorough examination of all of the issues contained in each. The book promotes the inclusion of sexuality in equal opportunities training and in developing practice that effectively and appropriately challenges inappropriate behaviour, by offenders, other practitioners and ourselves. I found it interesting, once I had understood the focus on probation work. It prompted self-reflection and highlighted some issues I had not previously considered. It may be a useful resource in equal opportunities training.

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KT Elsdon and others
An Education for the People?
A history of HMI and LifeLong Learning 1944-1992
NIACE, 2000
ISBN 1 862011109
£16.95
pp 192

Tom Wylie

'I have', wrote Oliver Cromwell of his New Model Army, 'russet-coated captains that know what they fight for and love what they know.' Much of the Cromwellian spirit imbues this book by Konrad Elsdon, a distinguished adult educator, researcher and former HMI. He takes his stand on the

most ambitious clause of the 1944 Act: '...the Minister, whose duty it shall be to promote the education of the people of England and Wales and the progressive development of institutions devoted to that purpose...' This clause was seen as prescribing a statutory right to 'Other Further Education', (OFE), a wide and elastic range of post-school activities encompassing adult education, youth work, community work and various voluntary organisations. It envisaged an active Ministry (later Department) of Education seeking to create and develop such work. It also saw the establishment of a new arm of HM Inspectorate to evaluate such provision in its immense variety of settings including village halls, youth centres, prisons, Ruskin College, extra-mural departments of Universities. On the basis of its evaluation, HMI advised Ministers and Departmental officials. But HMI were not content just to be the eyes and ears of Ministers: they sought to foster the work itself.

Their role, and their interplay with education policy-making, are the themes of this absorbing text, which also takes the reader into some arcane corners of the educational world! As well as offering overviews which point up similarities between the sectors, Elsdon provides chapters on each of the main arenas, identifying milestones such as the now-forgotten Red Book on community centres or the ill-fated Russell report on Adult Education. In these specialist chapters he also highlights key shifts in thinking and methodology, for example the growth in community schools, first created by Cambridgeshire's Henry Morris; the emergence of community development and the various initiatives it spawned in the 1960s; the role of the Arts and broadcasting in public education. In a chapter to which this reviewer has contributed some material on the 1980s, those familiar with Youth Service history will meet again some of their favourite reports – Albemarle; Milson-Fairbairn; Thompson. They will also find some enduring themes. Here is HMI diagnosing the weaknesses of the Youth Service in 1951: 'Ignorance of the purposes and aims of Youth Service on the part of the general public.... There is a good deal of opposition to Youth Service in the teaching profession, many members of which do not recognise youth work as a part of the educational system... The low standard of work in some civic youth clubs... stimulates such criticism.' Happily, while such analysis could too often still apply, we have also seen innovation and responsiveness in youth work over the last half-century. The work of HMI played a modest part in such development.

What bound these HMI together, notwithstanding differences in professional background, was a belief that, in a sector which offered a second-chance

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or even a third and fourth chance, there was more to education than simply the academic or the vocational. It was for active citizenship as well as labour market attachment. It was for the education of the imagination, not simply technical competence. It was concerned with the building of human and social capital. These HMI stood by the spirit of the 1944 Act's bold purpose.

Drawn from a relatively small field of professional endeavour they maintained extensive networks and continued a commitment to it while trying to be objective in reporting its work to the Department. Apart from a few years after 1944 and occasional flurries thereafter, the oxygen of sustained political interest and financial support was rarely available. As Elsdon records: '...no one doubted that schools and colleges should exist and be resourced. This was never true of OFE. Because of its peculiar nature, [HMI in this sector] also had to be developers, organisers, advocates and missionaries in and for their field; very often they had to defend its very existence.' From time to time, in particular fields, they were able to win some policy ground with the Department. It could not always be held when new Ministers or officials arrived or harsh economic winds blew on public expenditure. Their frustration especially with central government comes through these pages. But perhaps Elsdon is also right to suggest that 'their major impact... was exercised through individual influence on those responsible for the Service in LEAs and other providing organisations; by private talk with the heads [of centres]; in discussion with practitioners; through participation in innumerable local and regional meetings, conferences and in-service courses...'

Elsdon's account ends in 1992 with the creation of Ofsted into which many HMI, including a handful of youth and adult specialists, were absorbed. Ofsted had a quite different inspection methodology and operated at greater distance from the policy-making of the Department for Education. Even so, something of the approach and values of the post-1944 HMI cadre survived even there. With renewed ministerial interest in adult education and youth work, perhaps we are set for a renaissance of a genuine 'education for the people' extending beyond the school classroom. But, if we are, only HMI concerned with youth work will still be there to report it: the rest of the old OFE territory has been scattered on the Whitehall wind.

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Bren Cook

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'Transforming Youth Work' the new revelation from on high says that youth work 'enables the voice of young people to be heard, including helping them to influence decision making at various levels'. For those in the 'trade' this is not news but it is encouraging to encounter such rhetoric from central government. Those with slightly longer memories may recall that in the early 1980s the Thompson Report had something to say about participation and experience. In fact I have in my possession a photo album from a youth club in 1952 that captured a moment of participation in action entitled 'Committee Work '. It was therefore interesting when I opened my parcel from Youth and Policy to see that I had a book to review from an organisation of young people that specialised in encouraging participation. The organisation is called the 'Participation Education Group' or PEG for short.

Ben Dickenson the author in collaboration with the researcher Sara Bryson has pulled together this book from interviews, workshops and archive material. Ben, a graduate from the Rose Bruford College where he studied theatre, also did some drama work with PEG.

I looked forward to the read given that authentic participation is something that I have a passion for and so I opened the pages and began. I hit the first obstacle. Whether it's my age or I wasn't holding the book close enough I found the actual typeface a problem. It's so tiny and close together that I found it hard to read for any length of time. That not withstanding I plowed on!

The book has six main sections that take us through 'democracy', 'structure', 'method', 'peer education', 'educating adults' and the ambiguously titled 'nervous system'. There is a foreword from Helen Gregory (PEG Chair (1997-1999)) that explains, in a jubilant fashion, the successful receipt of nearly £100,000 for the work of PEG. This theme reoccurs throughout the book.

After the introduction the author launches into explaining the thinking behind PEG. It seems to find its legitimacy rooted in democracy and human rights. The book quotes the UN convention on the rights of the child and links it to the underlying philosophy that drives the ambitions of PEG. Apparently PEG emerged from an initiative within the voluntary sector about participation and started in the north east of England. Subsequently it has expanded its work towards Manchester and environs.

The author's style is chatty and the text is littered with rhetorical questions. It addresses the reader a bit too much, do you know what I mean...? This style tended to grate after a while and it felt like watching a Saturday morning telly programme especially for 'kids'. The exploration of the subject of democratic participation was well done in some places but the injection of too much narrative, particularly about past conferences, detracted from the point rather than provided illustrative examples. Sometimes the anecdotes reminded me of stories that people tell which conclude with a shrug of the shoulders and the phrase 'Well you had to be there...'

PEG's democratic ethos seems to mirror adult mechanisms and aspirations and I wondered what their stance is on the legions of young people that are exercising power of a different sort. I wondered how the anti-capitalists that gave Churchill's statue a grass Mohican would fit in at a PEG meeting. There was an absence of any critical explanation of the paradoxes of power and its potentially corrupting influence on the incumbents of offices within PEG.

There seemed to be very little political analysis beyond 'young people have less power than adults'. This is fine for a while but it left me with more questions about the efficacy of PEG than I received answers for. I hope their next book might include a description of how they exploited the demoralised state of the Tory party and managed to become the opposition party in 2006. Far from the production of a radical utopian manifesto PEG are on the search for authentic experiences of democracy. How to communicate that that is best experienced is an ambitious goal. This book partially does this. It could have done to be shorter, punchier and more visual. It does have a tendency to be a bit preachy and that is almost forgivable when you are trying to say something that you feel people don't want to hear.

The things that PEG have to say are important especially in this time of burgeoning Youth Parliaments and well intentioned words from civil servants. However I think they could have done it in fewer words and not in a form that feels that the books real purpose is about establishing credibility with adults and funders.

I am conscious that I am in danger of being one of those oppressive adults that poo-poo the enthusiasm of young people but young people shouldn't necessarily have to get credibility by trying to imitate adults. I would love to have seen a book full of visual excitement and dynamism that young people are brilliant at. I would love to have detected and seen some anarchy. Long live the revolution!

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Margaret Melrose, David Barrett and Isabelle Brodie
One Way Street? Retrospectives on Childhood Prostitution.
The Children's Society 1999
ISBN 1 899783 27X
pp 100

D. Barrett with E. Barrett and N. Mullenger
Youth Prostitution in the New Europe: the Growth in Sex Work.
Russell House Publishing 2000
ISBN 1-898924-61-9
pp 168

Janet Batsleer

The first recommendation made by the Children's Society Report *One Way Street?* is for the development of

> *street-based, young person centred services which provide opportunities for counselling, a chance to explore victimisation and offer long-term support, by providing education facilities; careers guidance; help with housing and welfare benefits; help with drugs and childcare; detoxification facilities and needle exchange schemes.*

The vital importance of such 'street-reach' projects, as well as longer term support systems for young people who are 'working' is made vivid in this report. The text draws effectively on fifty retrospective interviews with sex workers (mainly but not exclusively female) who became involved with selling sex as children, mostly before they had reached

the 'age of consent'. This need is also made apparent from the evidence drawn from a range of localities recounted in *Youth Prostitution in the New Europe*. Although young people's perspectives are not as evident in this second book, this provides a valuable cross-national framework for understanding the same issues. In particular, the links between Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe relating to the trafficking of sex workers is highlighted, as well as longer standing ties between Western European nations and their former colonies. Links that related not only to the sex trade, but also the well established cross national drug and pornography industries.

One Way Street? embraces a number of levels of analysis and challenges many of the emerging orthodoxies. Certainly the link with early experiences of sexual abuse is a powerful story - it's there for 21 of the 50 young people interviewed - but it isn't the only narrative. The report highlights the complexity of experiences as well as the apparent contingencies - the 'drift' as much as the coercion- that frames young people's entry into sex work. Once involved however, it's hard to escape. The report skilfully exposes the ways in which social and labour market policies contribute to this entrapment, and policy makers would do well to attend to these. The fact that young people become involved in selling sex often before they are of an age to enter the labour market means that policies that withhold benefits from sixteen and seventeen year olds will help confirm established patterns of making money by selling sex. School exclusion is also part of the experience of many young people in the study

Drugs- particularly heroin, crack and amphetamines - are an important feature of some of the stories. Both selling sex as a way of paying for a drug habit, or developing a drug habit as a way of coping. One of the real strengths of the report lies in the way it conveys some of the rationality and survival strategies of young people who have found themselves in a desperate situation. For a number of those interviewed, prostitution formed a best illegal option, as it carries no risk of imprisonment, unlike many of the other common ways of funding a drug habit. One woman explained that 'working' was the best option for her as 'she was no good at shoplifting'. On the basis of the evidence offered here we must clearly re-visit the issue of controlled prescriptions for the drugs that are needed.

One of the most marked contrasts highlighted within *One Way Street?* is that between the legal debates which are so important in framing police responses and the reactions of other professionals and the young people

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interviewed. The debate about de-criminalisation, and the recognition that young people involved in selling sex are entitled to protection from abuse rather than in need of labels such as 'common prostitute' has already become a focus of attention. It is certainly encouraging to read of shifts in policing practice in this area. However, the question of illegality was not a matter of great importance to the young people interviewed. In fact, in many ways, the criminal status of child prostitution chimed with a desire among the young people interviewed for recognition of the difficulties and hardships they had experienced as children and young people. In *Youth Prostitution in the New Europe* the ways illegal immigration and illegal sex work have become so often intertwined is well explored. The Italian initiative to grant visas to women who work in the 'sex slave industry' as a means of escape from it surely deserves imitation and development though the fact that the police have to be involved in administering it might constitute a serious obstacle to its success.

In the end though we still need to address the feminist question: 'What is to be done about the family?' Young people often drift into selling sex because they have run away from their families or from the care system and find alternative support relationships among peer groups where selling sex is an option. Far fewer people reported coercion as a factor than previous studies have suggested, although the experience of violence in relationships that in other families or peer groups might be more straightforwardly supportive is evident. It's a matter of opportunities, and, for a substantial number, a matter of having already learned about sex in the context of abusive relationships. It is sad that young people's views about what should be the policy towards men who buy sex from young people: 'castration' and 'knocking their knobs off' being frequent policy recommendations is so rarely reflected in anger about their own particular experience. Very few saw the men who had bought sex from them as 'perverts'. This is why the youth work interventions, the peer support and education projects, the refuges and the street outreach projects are vital not only to the street children, first incarcerated in Russian orphanages and later returned to the streets, but also here in the UK.

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John Bamber

This book is the culmination of twelve years of cross-cultural research into the problems and coping strategies of advantaged, non-advantaged and poor young people in twelve countries. Young people between 13 and 15 were interviewed in 1989, and another cohort between 18 and 20 were investigated in 1997. Over 10,000 young people were involved and the findings are analysed in terms of differences between socio-economic status (SES) and national groupings, and between males and females. The results of the studies in 1989 and 1997 are also compared for changes over time. The book is clearly structured and all twenty-one contributors write in a lively and accessible manner. Appendix 1 provides a useful taxonomy of the main research categories and sub-classes, and a comprehensive account of statistical findings for 1997 and 1989 is given in Appendices II and III.

Few readers will be surprised to learn, however, that academic achievement was of greatest concern to advantaged subjects and males; self-identity was of greatest concern to non-advantaged subjects; and family issues worried poverty subjects and females more than any other concern. Or even that the major concerns of impoverished subjects reflected more pressing material and psychological needs. Perhaps more informatively, the findings reveal that all SES groups and both genders resort to individual problem solving (e.g. planning or trying harder) as the most frequent coping strategy, with resignation and disengagement (i.e. no attempt to resolve the problem) as the second (Gibson-Cline et al, p. 53).

Nevertheless, the focus on young peoples' views ensures that the book makes some arresting points. One is that youth in the 1997 and 1989 studies failed to report major problems affecting this age group such as AIDS and drugs (Gibson-Cline et al., p. 46). A major conclusion is that youth of all backgrounds are using ineffective coping strategies to deal with serious problems such as these. Another interesting finding is that the subjects most frequently using resigning or disengagement strategies are advantaged youth, Furthermore, impoverished youth exhibit higher levels of altruistic concerns in spite of the fact that they have to deal

with urgent and immediate problems relating to larger societal and global issues beyond their control. Of interest to English readers is that resignation and disengagement were the first ranked category for impoverished English youth (Pereira, p. 226). Neither did they conform to the findings about altruism. The research also reveals that most young people look beyond their families to personal friends when they need advice and support, and few make use of professional counselling. The two paramount qualities desired in helpers were 'personal' (being a good listener, trustworthy and honest) and 'knowledge' (having relevant experience or being similar to the subjects so as to understand their concerns). Young people wanted the helpers to 'counsel' them (direct, advise and share information) and 'attend' to them (comfort or give reassurance).

The authors are puzzled by the apparent lack of concern amongst young people about issues such as AIDS. One perspective from America suggests that feelings of helplessness might be due to an inability to perceive the 'true' cause-effect relationships underlying problem situations and to use this information to create change (Maccarelli and Gibson-Cline, p. 186). More positively, Pereira (pp. 66-67) considers that young people in Brazil might be discouraged by the apparent inability of democratic institutions to create changes in their country. This explanation could justify both their decisions to solve their problems themselves and, at the same time, resign themselves or disengage from the situation completely, or do nothing at all about them. In terms of responding to this situation, the various authors tend to privilege a counselling approach which is, '...designed to empower clients, focusing on need identification and analysing the contexts in which problems occur' (Dikaiou, p. 25). The consensus is that preventative, informal group and community-based strategies in collaboration with other professionals and agencies, represents the way forward. A group information workshop in schools and communities, planned by young people in co-ordination with teachers and counsellors, is cited by Felce-DiPaula, (p. 199) as an example of good practice. The fact that young people turn first to peers would suggest utilization of peer and other para-professionals trained in basic helping skills (Maccarelli and Gibson-Cline p. 186). Because young people rarely seek counsellors on their own volition, services need to be locally situated with helpers being with young people in their world (Gibson-Cline et al., p. 239).

Youth workers, at least in the United Kingdom, may question the relevance of this research to their own practice since they serve a different target

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group to the majority of those surveyed who were university or technical college students. At the same time, the experiences reported are largely urban and situated within industrially advanced countries. For the sake of contrast, it would have been interesting to read about what concerns young Massai in Kenya, for example. Nevertheless, the book could be an asset to educators, trainers, researchers and practitioners across the helping professions for a number of reasons. For teaching purposes it provides (in Chapter 2) a very useful survey of counselling theory and practice. It also provides interesting thumbnail sketches of socio-economic and cultural conditions in the twelve participating countries. For example, the number of migrants residing in Greece today has increased from 5,000 in 1989 to over 1,5000,000 (Dikaiou and Haritos-Fatouras, p. 115). In doing so it offers a useful insight into social policy around the world and therefore provides a basis for comparison and critique of the situation in one's own country. For trainers there is a useful summary of abilities needed for twenty-first century counsellors (Gibson-Cline et al., p. 246). For researchers, it is a model of how to conduct and present research. Perhaps the real value for practitioners lies in its support for preventive and social action approaches. This situates the work of counsellors within a family of allied professionals and begins to converge with contemporary understandings of youth work.

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John Player

This study of the concepts, issues and practices surrounding the contested notion of 'outreach' work turns out to be a welcome addition to the literature. McGivney sets about in a systematic manner to address the contested nature of the term 'outreach', to look at current practice and the implications of doing, funding and evaluating outreach activities. The report is not

based on a case-study approach. Rather it is an attempt to explore, in relation to past and current practice, the different understandings of outreach, its role in widening participation among people under-represented in organised education, the implications of doing outreach and the range of practical and ethical considerations involved.

McGivney's work was supported by the Department of Education and Employment (DfEE) who were aware of a growing recognition of the need to extend opportunities beyond mainstream provision located on campuses. McGivney was given this remit because there is a growing recognition that 'outreach' has become an imprecise, catch-all term applied to any activity that goes on outside the main buildings of an education institution or organisation. Currently, the word is frequently used interchangeably with the terms such as 'widening participation' and 'combating exclusion' and it has become strongly linked to the notion of disadvantage.

Form the outset, my own concern, as a community education practitioner, was that DfEE funding would constrain the critical focus needed to produce a useful and objective report. The author immediately raised alarm bells in my head by illustrating a 'New Labour' understanding of 'combating social and economic disadvantage'. McGivney refers to the idea of social exclusion, which is currently defined by the UK Government and Scottish Executive as something that is more than just material deprivation. This dominant current discourse unfolds something like this, as families and communities may be 'materially poor but socially rich'; the most excluded groups are those who suffer both material hardship and subsequent breakdown or loss of extended family and social networks. Scottish Poverty Information Unit (SPIU) (2001), for example, argues that the drawback of using such a wide-ranging term as social exclusion is that its relationship with poverty (which is ultimately about lack of money) may be lost. To be fair McGivney later in the text, deconstructs effectively a notion of 'disadvantage' which within the current discourses around social exclusion tends to view employment as the overriding solution to disadvantage regardless of its cause. An analysis that has consequently led to outreach learning opportunities being overwhelmingly focussed on the goal of extending the 'employability' of the 'excluded'. McGivney clearly argues that a broader approach is required which caters for the needs of diverse groups of learners. I am convinced that McGivney report competently engages with the discourses surrounding social exclusion

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but readers may wish to refer to Byrne (1999) for a more substantive and radical assessment. In fact McGivney is adamant that all the evidence suggests that to create a more inclusive adult education system, outreach work should be disentangled from the notion of disadvantage. It should be, she maintains, integral and complementary to, and possess parity of esteem with, the mainstream work taking place within institutions. McGivney further convinces by proposing that the current connection of educational outreach with the notion of disadvantage has fuelled the belief that outreach work is automatically low level, or for second chance populations. She clearly and rightly maintains that it is not.

The text gives some useful examples of how to develop new innovative practice such as that undertaken at Knowsley Community College. McGivney argues that this initiative is an exemplar for widening participation, with resources targeted at specific groups such as ex-offenders, drug users, disaffected youth and people using family centres. Similarly she draws attention to the work of the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Network Project based at the College of North East London which has undertaken extensive work with refugee communities. Communities that are particularly hard pressed in poverty struck areas in Scotland as was highlighted by the tragic stabbing of a Kurdish Asylum Seeker in Sighthill in Glasgow last year. Certainly Edinburgh University could learn from some of the approaches McGivney highlights. Edinburgh, which is so skewed towards social class 1 and 2 that it makes a sickening mockery of its 'laird of pairts' reputation and misperceived tradition of egalitarian higher education. Edinburgh University might also learn from the account of the use of higher education students as mentors and role models. McGivney describes the evaluation of the NABCE (non-award bearing continuing education) programme which found that an 'outstanding' feature of the most innovative projects was the use of existing students as mentors, tutors, outreach workers and researchers, who acted as role models and built links between communities and institutions. In Sunderland local mature graduates were recruited as staff for a project to develop a strategy for the regeneration of the Ford and Pennywell estates. Thames Valley University trained undergraduates from ethnic minority communities to work as outreach workers with ethnic minority residents in Slough. These acted as role models and interpreters and helped recruit participants to learning activities in the community. Student groups were also linked into the School of Health Sciences, who were engaged in research linked to the needs of minority communities.

In her consideration of benefits in relation to costs, McGivney points out that since outreach is largely seen as a process to help the most disadvantaged people in education, it is inevitably expensive. Work with people with literacy problems, limited formal education or learning difficulties is resource intensive as tutors often have to work with very small groups. McGivney's report and insights into the need for sustainable long term funding for outreach work is of particular interest to us in Scotland. This is partly because Scottish Executive (2001) concludes that 23% of adults in Scotland may have low skills and another 30% may find their skills inadequate to meet the demands of the 'knowledge society' and the 'information age'. The evidence available suggests that around 800,000 adults in Scotland have very low literacy and numeracy skills. Analysis of the Scottish cohort in *'The International Adult Literacy Survey'* (IALS) identifies three factors as strongly associated with low literacy and numeracy skills:

- *having left education at 16 or earlier;*
- *being on low income;*
- *being in a manual social class.*

The outreach methodology described by McGivney should, I would argue, be off substantive interest. McGivney makes this point when she argues that in Scotland there is a current emphasis on community-based work. Taking up some of the main proposals in the 1998 report *Communities - Change Through Learning*, the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department distributed a circular on community education to local authorities. This states:

> *Authorities should establish systematic ways of taking the views of participants and potential participants in community learning. Reaching and involving non-participants will be essential. The audit and planning process should stimulate communities by extending their awareness of possibilities and needs. (Circular 4/99)*

For practitioners in Scotland the 1998 Osler Report quoted above and Circular 4/99 are the key policy developments that are currently determining our practice. The point here being that if the DfEE and the Scottish Executive are serious about engaging with the 23% of people in Scotland who have difficulties with literacy and numeracy they must travel the route outlined by McGivney in her exploration of outreach educational work and equally find the long term funding required to

sustain the development of the sort of curriculum McGivney alludes to. A curriculum she describes as follows:

> (The Community Development Curriculum) differs from mainstream adult and further education in significant ways. Community members are recognised as the true experts in relation to their experiences and situation and are actively engaged in all programme decision making processes. Also, with a focus on process instead of content alone, the curriculum is allowed to emerge in the process of action. In other words, learning takes place through he provision of integrated support and informal dialogue with community members, leading to local development work and action rather than the more traditional implementation of pre-packed aged, off the shelf classroom provision. (Taylor, 2000: 18)

In her conclusions, McGivney allows herself some radical latitude. She notes, for example and correctly in my view, that there has been far more emphasis on the business community than on the voluntary sector in the criteria for the composition of the Local Learning and Skills Councils. McGivney suggests that one of the most effective outreach activities currently being conducted by education providers is the training of local people to become learning champions, signposters or animateurs in their own communities. This is the kind of work that should be supported by the LLSCs and other funding bodies if there is a genuine wish to involve excluded groups in learning and encourage community regeneration. But it will require, she points out, close collaboration with the voluntary sector.

Finally, McGivney's report is a useful tool in the battle to address the symbolic violence perpetuated by the structural educational inequalities we collectively allow to continue. I feel it provides ammunition in the constant struggle for funding for such work and suggestions for useful monitoring and evaluation methods to allow for its sustenance. McGivney convinced me this report is not merely colluding with a DfEE or New Labour agenda.

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pp 172

Tony Jeffs

This short text emerged from a research project undertaken by the author in Glasgow during 1993 and 1994. Over 50 young people were interviewed with the focus on 25 homeless16 to 19 year olds who were then living in, or had originated from, the Drumchapel area. What makes the study especially valuable is that all but three of the second group were tracked the following year in order to unearth their 'pathways through homelessness'. The sample may be numerically small but to have secured that 'response rate', given the lifestyle and experiences of the subjects, amounts to a significant achievement. The resultant interviews impart a wealth of material providing a rare insight into the experiences of the respondents by offering a longitudinal account rather than the more usual snapshot of their encounters with homelessness. Although the focus is on the young people it nevertheless unearths considerable information regarding the effectiveness, or otherwise, of service provision in this welfare area although given the localised nature of the research it is not always easy to draw wider lessons relating to policy innovation.

The author found, within her sample, discrete sub-groups. These groupings related to the *status* of their accommodation - basically was it provided by one of the agencies catering for them or had individuals made their own 'informal arrangements'?. Second the *location* of that accommodation - was it in their neighbourhood or the more anonymous city centre?. Finally the *stability* of the accommodation they secure. The interplay of these variables helped determine where the young person was in relation to the six pathways Fitzpatrick identifies. These pathways are:

- *Unofficial homelessness in the local area;*
- *Alternating bewteen unofficial and official homeless in the local area;*
- *Stable in the official network in the local area;*
- *Alternating between unofficial homelessness in the local area and the official city network;*
- *Staying in the official city network*
- *City centre homelessness (a mix of rough sleeping, staying in hostels and incarceration).*

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The above should not be simplistically interpreted as a commuter route to despair - the young people joining at point one then descending inexorably to point six. For example it was found that the city centre homeless were a distinct subgroup who had relocated there almost immediately with the onset of homelessness. Equally a substantial number of those initially interviewed steadfastly remained within pathway one throughout the period during which the study was taking place.

Those familiar with the earlier literature will not be surprised by the commonalties encountered during the course of the interviews. Almost all the subjects had a long history of truanting; 'unemployment seemed to be the single most important factor underlying the problems of the majority' (p. 135); and virtually all had 'unhappy childhoods' (p. 81). Yet paradoxically most of these young people did not seek a clean break or a fresh start somewhere else. Even for the truants the school remained a place that potentially offered a point of contact. A site within the community that might potentially afford a base for advice and information services. Remaining the one institution that all had once had contact with. Equally although the locality might offer little in the way of employment prospects, it again supplied for most an element of stability, a place where friends and acquaintances supplied essential support. Consequently 'the level of attachment to the local area was the single most important motivating factor determining the pathways through homelessness' (p. 74). With those who managed the best and exited the most rapidly being the young people who stayed within the local official network. Finally although few perceived returning to the 'parental home' to be an option, this should not be simplistically interpreted as indicating that they had no wish to sustain a relationship with their parents. Most did. Indeed more than half were in frequent contact with one or both parents. The clear message emerging was that although certain experiences and 'characteristics' indicated a heightened possibility a young person might embark upon a 'homeless pathway' the most productive policy options revolved around the creation of small scale localised programmes. Workers and inputs striving to sustain and develop attachment to the locality, backed up with sufficient resources to offer material and practical assistance. For as Fitzpatrick found it was the opportunity to remain in a local 'known' community and within their established networks, along with competent professional help and support that most effectively aided young people's route out of homelessness. It is not big bucks, flash high profile projects and initiatives that will do most to curtail

homelessness amongst the young. Rather it will be small projects and long term work. Undertaken by permanent, trusted and accessible workers who know what they are doing, know the community and have time and opportunity to get to know the young people. For those looking for a succinct guide as to the first principles upon which policies designed to prevent and manage youth homelessness should be based it would be difficult to imagine a better starting point than Chapter Seven.

This book can serve as an introductory text for those seeking to acquaint themselves with current research and policy on youth homelessness. Equally it will be welcomed by anyone wishing to unearth 'first hand' accounts of being young and homeless. Finally it furnishes an excellent example of applied investigative research capable of extending the knowledge of practitioner and policy maker alike. Sadly however the price will serve to minimise the probability that it will be read by many of those who would benefit most from the encounter.

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David Green and Maxine Green
Taking A Part. Young people's participation in the Church
London: Church House Publishing
ISBN 0-7151-4939-3
£5.95
pp 88

Mark K Smith

It is some five years since a working party of the Church of England General Synod produced the influential report *Youth A Part* (1996, Church House Publications). Concerned with young people's relationship with the Church, the report's writers sought to map the situation and propose some ways forward. They also attempted to develop a theology for youth work. Their starting point was the aging of church populations - and the accelerating rate of departure of young people. The approach was to focus on the nature of adolescence, faith development and 'youth culture',

and then to develop a suitable response for the Church. All this generated a significant amount of discussion and some action – but the scope and scale of participation of young people within the Church of England has hardly improved in the interim.

David Green and Maxine Green pick up on this theme in their new book. They approach young people as a marginalized group who are often apart from the Church rather than a part of it. Interestingly, the book places an emphasis upon young people within the churches 'who are managing to be actively engaged, are hanging on in 'survivor' mode, or are just about to drop away from the Church' (p. 7). It is suggested that these groups offer an important source of information and enlightenment to policy makers both in terms of how they can best be involved and how best to contact and engage with their friends and peers outside the Church. One of the great benefits of this approach is that much of *Youth A Part's* mistaken focus on dubious notions of 'youth culture' has been discarded. Instead the starting point for much of the discussion is what young people, and the youth workers and clergy involved with them, are saying about their experience of the Church.

The book makes significant use of the parable of the talents (Matthew 25, 14-30). The writers comment:

> *We were particularly taken with the way the master chose different amounts for different servants; how he praised both the successful servants equally and asked them to 'come in and share my happiness'; how the successful servants had their talents developed by the master and so were entrusted to greater responsibilities; how the third servant was afraid and did nothing and even the little he had was taken away from him... [I]f servants are seen as the adult church and the talents are the young people, it is imperative that we adopt the behaviour of the wise servants.... So often we affirm the more public gifts, we affirm those who are very capable. In this part of scripture we are challenged to affirm all gifts and all growth, and to identify ways of responding to what young people bring, and of offering more opportunities to develop. (pp. 6, 38)*

David Green and Maxine Green are deeply critical of work with young people that sees them as being in deficit and seeks to create, or results in, dependency. They want to approach people as 'pilgrims' rather than 'refugees'. In this respect they revisit some of the themes that Maxine Green had identified in her work with Chandu Christian around *Accompanying*

(1998, Church House Publications). 'If people treat you like a pilgrim, then you begin to believe you are a pilgrim. If people treat you like a refugee, someone who is homeless and without rights, always looking for someone who will help, then it is easy to live like a refugee' (p. 45). While many readers may not be happy with the form of this characterization, the underlying orientation is significant. As part of this, the writers make connections with Paulo Freire's concern that people should not be treated as objects, and with the classic 'parent-adult-child' triad of trans-actional analysis.

They also set aside a view of young people as the 'seed corn' of the Church.

> *We often hear it said that young people are the 'Church of tomorrow' which misses the point completely. Even to say that young people are the Church of today and the Church leaders of tomorrow does not give full justice. We need to consider that there is only ever the Church of today, and with the gifts and skills that exist at any given time. Tomorrow will then be the 'Church of today', but with some differences. In this way we can acknowledge the emerging, developing gifts rather than thinking 'today young people are part of the Church, sometime in the future they will be leaders'. (p. 27)*

This is welcome. In the current context of fears about the sustainability of Church organizations, reminding Church members of the importance of looking to young people for what they are, rather than what people may wish them to become is much needed.

There are, however, a number of questions that the book does not approach in sufficient depth. Here I want to briefly outline four. First, the focus on young people who are within the Church, while important, does need to be balanced by an exploration of those on the margins of, or well beyond, participation in organized religious activity. We need to gain a better appreciation of the relationships, experiences and beliefs involved here. While this may well have been beyond the writer's brief, it would have been helpful to be pointed in the right direction with regard to the arguments and to further material.

Second, I think that David Green and Maxine Green have fallen into the classic trap of confusing generational change with youth. They are hardly alone here. Much of the debate around 'young people and the Church' is similarly mistaken. The fundamental problem is a generational one. The issue is not just that young people do not want to be involved

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in the Church, but rather that an increasing proportion of those born in the United Kingdom since the Second World War have not seen the Church as being particularly relevant to their experiences. It is an issue that often becomes revealed in youth but it is not a problem of youth. Declining participation in the Church Of England (and many other religious groups) is linked to fundamental changes in the way in which post-war generations view, for example, community, relationship and spirituality.

Third, I would have liked to see a much more extensive discussion of the impact of conservative evangelism (and the corresponding decline in liberal evangelism) upon the Church. One of the significant aspects of the evangelical revival of the late twentieth century is that while on the one hand it may have attracted significant numbers of people, it has also driven many away from participation in Church affairs. We have witnessed a growth in the number of those who either can be described as 'post-evangelical' or 'anti-evangelical'. There are references in the book to work that emanates from different traditions of belief and practice within the Church – but the writers largely side step the very real tensions and issues that surround the conservative evangelical orientation. This is a problem given the writers' concern that young people should be treated as subjects rather than objects - and the extent to which conservative evangelicalism's emphasis on conversion, and biblical and organizational authority, can drive its adherents to anti-dialogical behaviour.

Last, I think that rather more attention needed to be given to the institution of the Church itself. It may well be that, as Michael Riddell argued in *Threshold of the Future* (1998: 39), the form of the Church in the West 'has become the biggest barrier to the gospel'. 'The popular image of Christianity is formed by encounter with the church', he continues, 'and so Christianity is regarded as reactionary, oppressive, conservative, moralistic, hypocritical, boring, formal and judgemental'. It could be that the formal structures of Christianity in the UK need to whither and die in order that Christian faith can flourish.

The book provides a useful starting point for exploring the role of young people currently within the Church. It makes extensive use of small case studies and exhibits - and there is some interesting material here. However, the writers do leave some important questions relatively unexplored.

Mark K Smith *teaches at the YMCA George Williams College London.*

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