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ERRATA RE: ISSUE 76:

Apologies to **Andrew B. Hahn,** author of the article *'Does America have a Youth Development Policy?'* for misspelling his name in issue 76.

Also to **Michael Preston-Shoot** for the omission of his name in the contents list. He co-authored *'Mapping Youth Justice: What a difference a decade makes'* with **Stuart Vernon.**

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CROSSING WORLDS:
The youth worker as outsider-within

JEREMY BRENT

Insiders and Outsiders

In this article I explore the relationship between myself as a youth worker and the area in which I work, a large housing estate. I use as my starting point a phrase describing Black domestic workers in white households as having 'a curious outsider-within stance, a peculiar marginality.' (Collins 1990:11). I have borrowed this idea to explore my own situation, the very different and much more privileged position of public servant employed to 'serve' in a poor area.

There are large numbers of youth workers who, like myself, are employed in poor and marginalised areas, and there are thousands of other people in similar relationships of carrying out some form of 'service to the community', whatever that means. Over forty years ago Raymond Williams interestingly described two interpretations of community:

> *the idea of service, and the idea of solidarity. These have in the main been developed by the middle class and working class respectively. The idea of service, ultimately, is no substitute for the idea of active mutual responsibility, which is the other idea of community.*
> (Williams 1958:315/317)

That was written well before the growth of the current plethora of community professionals, but the role of these professionals continues to contain just that conflict between service and mutuality, involving questions as to *who* is being 'served', and *how*, with all the power dynamics and conflicting solidarities involved. These relationships are problematic, and are often criticised as being 'a form of dominating' people (Corlett, 1989:7), or a welfare colonialism which destroys communities (Alinsky, 1969:212), in contrast to their rhetoric of community and empowerment.

A major theme, an orthodoxy even, in Southmead, the area of Bristol that I am writing about, is that there exist 'outsiders' and 'insiders', and that outsiders are a problem to the life of the community. Les Palmer, a long time community activist, interviewed on a community radio station, said bitterly:

> *For years and years we have had people coming in from outside to find out what's wrong with us, how we live, and what makes us so criminal.*
> (Radio Southmead, August 1994).

His view can be contrasted with this quote from one of the first of those surveys to which he was referring:

> *It is impossible to overstress the importance of differentiating what people feel about situations and the situation as it looks to an intelligent outsider. ... which is much more difficult than to talk cool sense to people on the assumption that they are in a rational state of mind.*
> (Wilson, 1963:8)

People in Southmead feel immensely patronised by such an approach. Though that survey is now old, it has the honesty to state quite openly what is a common attitude of experts to poor and troubled areas; that the people inside them do not understand themselves, that only outside experts really know. Their 'scientific' knowledge is superior. This outsider/insider division bears resemblance to the divisions of power and knowledge described by theories of feminist standpoint epistemology: 'Objectivity vs. subjectivity, the scientist as knowing subject vs. the object of his enquiry, reason vs. emotion, mind vs. body' (Harding, 1986:23). Her insight neatly describes the position taken by Wilson, and can be applicable to a variety of situations of unequal power, not just to the patriarchy analysed by Harding. This scientific-objective approach can regularly be found amongst professional workers, and is much wider than that concerning just one housing estate on the edge of one British city. In his novel *Texaco*, Patrick Chamoiseau describes the visit of a town planner to a shanty town in Martinique; 'this strange visitor was coming to question the usefulness of our insalubrious existence' (Chamoiseau, 1997:11), a phrase that captures the tone of enquiry from which people in poor areas all over the world suffer.

'Insider' views of Southmead position themselves as different and opposite to official and media representations. Many of the locally produced community arts productions contain anger at the negative image of Southmead in the outside media. There is a desire to get away from 'Southmead again, big black cloud', and for the message to outsiders to be 'Stop being negative about Southmead. Be positive,' (phrases used by participants in a planning session for a community play). In her research on community art in Edinburgh, Gillian Rose shows how common it is for people involved in such projects to vent their resentment at press definitions of 'bad areas' (Rose, 1997). So whilst outside viewpoints create Southmead as object (usually of trouble), insider viewpoints assert their own humanity and existence as subjects, through producing plays, music, paintings, poetry, and so on. In my professional practice I have been involved in supporting, even organising, many expressions of local feeling through community and youth arts projects. What is my position

within this: outside dominator, or inside participant? (Brent 2000, Ch. 4 has a longer discussion on the dilemmas of community arts.)

The idea of inside/outside depends on the notion of a boundary, a skin, separating two sides: Southmead from the rest. However, this idea of boundary, central to Cohen as part of the 'symbolic construction of community' (Cohen, 1985) makes Zygmunt Bauman cynical about the existence of community. There are, he says, no border guards, and 'the very idea of community borders ... becomes ever so difficult, nay impossible, to uphold' (Bauman, 1993:44). Cohen's view, however, is that boundaries are not as solid and determined as borders, but are 'constituted by people in interaction' (Cohen, 1985:13). These borders are visible through cultural and symbolic delineation of places, with cultural differences - of looks, dress, speech and comportment - also being major markers of division and power. 'Culture is ... a powerful means of controlling cities ... it symbolizes "who belongs" in specific places' (Zukin, 1995:1). Inside and outside are positions of power as much as of place, so where do youth workers fit in?

Ethno self-analysis

I daily cross the border from where I live a couple of miles away into Southmead. I am not an insider, but have strong feelings of belonging to the area in which I work, not merely as an outsider who comes to it to work on behalf of a governmental agency. Though there are no border guards to confront on my journey, there are plenty of complex relationships to negotiate. To investigate these I will look at various episodes and examples from my work which throw up, at least for me, difficult issues. My research is not based on interviews with others as to their thoughts and experiences. This lays me open to the criticism that my research is rather solipsistic and self-regarding, but:

> *it is an impossible task to avoid the place of the subjective in research, and that, instead of making futile efforts to avoid something which cannot be avoided, we should think more carefully about how to utilise our subjectivity as a feature of the research process.*
> (Walkerdine, 1997:59).

So, I am using my subjective experiences carefully, subjecting myself to 'ethno-self-analysis' which, it has been argued, is anyway necessary prior to the analysis of others (Augé, 1995:39); we need to have a notion of ourselves before we look at other people, part of the reflexivity of everyday practice.

What is obvious is that throughout this process I am *within* what I am observing, even if attempting to keep some critical distance. The situation is well summed up

by Mikhail Bakhtin: 'The observer has no position *outside* the observed world, and his (sic) observation enters as a constituent part into the observed object.' (Bakhtin 1986:126). I am part of what I am looking at - an outsider within.

A day crossing between worlds

This way of being amongst what is going on, not separate from it is described in the following account of a particular day I spent working, walking and cycling in and around Southmead and Bristol. A number of geographers support the idea of moving within place as an alternative method of discovery to that of mapping it; 'walking in the city', rather than seeing it from the top of a skyscraper, which is 'to be lifted out of the city's grasp' (de Certeau, 1984:92), or 'wayfinding', finding one's way around, as opposed to seeing the world as if from an aeroplane above (Pile and Thrift, 1995:1).

The day in question was a especially busy and stimulating one, which is why, at the time, I felt moved to write this account, and why, some years later, I am still analysing it. Though it was a unique day, none of the events within it were unusual, being exceptional only in their concentration into such a short period. The account throws up a number of issues which will be discussed later. It has not been edited, except to disguise names.

> *8 April 1997 was sunny and hot, part of an early heatwave. The General Election campaign was under way, though scarcely noticeable until I watched television in the evening. During the day I criss-crossed to and from Southmead, moving between a number of different settings and different groups of people that felt, strangely for me as I travelled between them and had a part in each of them, as if they existed separately from each other, scarcely connected, despite the geographical distance between them being less than 5 miles, in the same city. Each setting had its own genre of language, behaviour and relationships, particularly noticeable to me as my purpose throughout the day was to try to make connections, to relate these settings and people to each other.*
>
> *9.00 a.m. B__*
>
> *B__ was walking along the pavement as I cycled through Southmead, and greeted me, so I stopped to walk along with him. He is 15 or 16, and I have known him, as both wild and troublesome, generous and inventive, over the past four years. Some local residents see him as a total scourge and blight on their lives, but I have also experienced his enthusiasm when he has the opportunity to be creative, and his generosity to his friends. For some months he has been on bail, for a large number of offences going*

back over the last two years (car crime, burglary, assaulting police officers - about 25 charges), waiting for sentencing by the Crown Court because of the seriousness and number of the charges. His bail conditions include a curfew - 7.00 p.m. every weekday, 2.00 p.m. at weekends - and certain times when he has to sign in at the police station. Because of his curfew I don't see him often.

I asked him whether he didn't get really bored being on curfew (he said, non-committally, 'S'alright'), and how much longer this was going to last. He reckoned on about another 5 months before he was sentenced. This period on curfew will not count against his sentence. Until he knows his sentence he can't really get on with life, there is nothing he can do to change the way he lives while he waits.

This short encounter with B__ left me with two feelings: of the frustration one gets when confronted by an injustice that one can do nothing about; and of the gaping difference between our lives.

9.15 a.m. - 12.15 p.m. The Youth Centre
The Youth Centre office is my space. I work through correspondence, phone calls, petty cash records - nothing spectacular, just keeping the place going. I write a memo complaining about the lack of support given to me in running the place, particularly the length of time it takes to get building repairs done. The burnt-out car outside has not been moved, though it's been there over a week. Maybe this sets up my thinking about different worlds, as I have to work in a place that is not being cared for by those with the means, but who are at a distance. They do not experience at first-hand the growing dereliction, and the difficult and at times dangerous relationships this is caused by and causes.

The weekly group for children excluded from school is taking place. There are three of them present. The atmosphere is cheerful, despite the broken chairs and graffitied walls. They ask me if I want some of the burgers they are cooking for lunch, but I tell them I am having lunch at the BBC - I get teased for name dropping.

Just before I leave, a member of staff comes in, and seeing me about to go says: 'You be careful out there. It's like a rogues gallery on the Green.'

12.15 p.m. The Green
The Green runs between the main road and what shops there are - most of the first block is shuttered up, still waiting for the re-development that has been talked about and promised for the past 5 years.

On the surface, the scene is peaceful. Quite a number of people enjoying the beautiful sunshine. But scattered around are a number of men, from twenty-year olds to forty-year olds, with the pinched and haunted faces of heroin users. For these all to be in the same place at the same time has a meaning. There is an air of concentrated expectancy. Supplies must be on their way, and nothing else is important to them - the presence of anything else is, as I am, an irrelevance.

12.20-12.50 p.m. The Ride
The journey to the BBC is pleasant. I can cut through the woods by the stream, full of spring sunshine, and then I am into prosperous Bristol - I cycle past comfortable-looking houses, shops selling luxuries, banks, restaurants.

12.50 - 3.15 p.m. The BBC
The meeting I am attending is about involving young people in radio. First we meet in the canteen for lunch - clean, undamaged furniture, good, cheap food, relaxed atmosphere. We catch up on gossip. A world away from the tension of the Green. People look good, are well-dressed, polite. Speech is different in accent and form from that in Southmead - quieter, smoother, with less humour, irony, and anger.

We move to a meeting room, talk about the work of the youth radio producer, whose job is to create access to the radio for young people. The plan is to make a series of short radio plays written and performed by young people. The problem of money is discussed - we have to find money to work with the young people, but discover that we will also have to pay any costs of recording the plays, including engineers' time, even though we will be providing the BBC with broadcast material.

Young people can express themselves on radio so long as this is paid for. Access to have their voice heard, which is generally thought to be a 'good thing' depends on cash - in the case of this project, whether this cash can be raised from charities.

One world excludes the other. The more powerful one excludes with ease, at a committee meeting, politely, with no discernible violence done, with no contact between the opposing parties, nor even a realisation of opposition. No young people know of the meeting, no deliberate décision has been made to exclude them. It is just a fact of life.

3.30 - 5.15 p.m. The Watershed
Next stop was the Watershed, to see how the exhibition 'The Place We're In' is progressing. It is to open to the public in three days time.[1]

Most of the visual panels are up. Instead of bringing a different reality into the gallery, the reality that they are claiming to represent seems to me to becomes estranged in the gallery setting. That reality is Other to the gallery itself, incompletely translatable into the genre of communication of the gallery. This is still a gallery, will never be a Southmead. The photos might upset or anger or excite people, but they themselves are inanimate, do not answer back or threaten. People who would not dream of visiting Southmead or envisage talking to the people in the photographs can stare at them uninterruptedly. They become aesthetic objects, full of the joy of colour and form, with their social context lost.

There was an urgent message for me to phone the University of the West of England about our material for the Bristol Digital City website. The representative there was concerned that it was controversial, and might have legal ramifications (was this last a smokescreen?), so might not be accepted at the editorial meeting later in the week. The website was intended, she explained, to give voice to the community, not to be controversial - as if these two functions are incompatible. I said that they would have to take all the material or none - we would not cut at their behest. I emphasised our credentials - that legal advice had been sought, that I work for the City Council, that we had been extremely responsible. The argument about those without a voice having a right to have one seemed irrelevant, and the Internet lost its gloss of being a libertarian dream of free information. The site is controlled by Hewlett Packard, and it was up to that (large multinational) company to give approval for Southmead to have a place on the Internet!

I also gave an interview to the local paper. The journalist asked me if the exhibition was controversial. After my previous conversation, my reply was that it was 'thought provoking'. Again, I felt I had to be very careful to say what was acceptable in print, which was different to what may be acceptable as thought and language in Southmead.

Simon and Hannah, the artists, and I spend time listening to tapes of young people talking, to see how this material is best represented in the exhibition. The voices on the tapes seem distant, and insufficient in the gallery environment, curiously exposed and vulnerable, despite (or because of) their rough talk. What they are saying makes little sense when heard this way in this place, makes the logic of what they are saying, which is understood in Southmead, appear weak and untenable. We decide to split the interviews up into fragments, tasters of talk, to emphasise their incompleteness.

We then experiment with the security camera. I still have problems explaining to the others my intention, of making those looking at the photographs aware of themselves as surveilling Southmead from a safe social and geographical distance, bringing out Southmead as subject, not mere object, which also looks back at them. However, some of the photos are strong enough to do that themselves, I hope.

Speech at the Watershed is similar to that at the BBC - no taking the piss, more wordy, a lot of use of the telephone. My speech too alters - and people notice if I talk in a way inappropriate to the particular place and moment. I hear myself talking differently than in my conversation with B__.

6.15 - 7.15 The street, the Club.
That evening I return to Southmead. I am looking for young people who will talk to the local newspaper about the work at the Watershed when they ring up for an interview the next evening. I'm lucky - I meet the people I want out in the street. Other young people ask me for the postcard which goes with the exhibition, which is in great demand.

C__ is there - he comes into the club with me to look at the composite panel from the exhibition that is going to go into the library. Girl's Club is starting. Girls come in, L__, the worker, wants to talk with some of them about their behaviour when they help with the Little Spacers club for under-10's, and the abuse of the power that they accumulate through this help. The discussion is forthright, with real issues of power being aired, so good youth work, but C__ and I need to leave - we are the wrong gender. Power is an issue within place as well as imposed from outside.

7.15 p.m. The Deal
Immediately outside the door of the building there is a group of some ten or a dozen people, late teens/early twenties, some of whom I know, looking very agitated. I overhear the word 'police'. They are looking all ways, checking the roads on each side of the site.

They look unhealthy, anxious and are completely absorbed in their own activity.

We have walked into a heroin drop that has been disturbed by the sighting of a police car. No-one within the building is aware of it, though only separated by a door. That close.

C__ and I walk on and are soon back in the atmosphere of it being a lovely Spring evening, on our way to the meeting of the Voice of Southmead. C__ tells me how he is losing his friends to heroin.

7.30 - 8.30 p.m. The meeting

The meeting is in the Southmead Rugby Club clubhouse. It is only meant to be a small meeting, to arrange a mass leafleting of houses over the next fortnight, but still there are 25 people there. There is some talk with the plain clothes policemen who now attend. The Voice of Southmead is a group determined to get drug dealers out of Southmead.

The meeting is informal - the bar is open, people get drinks, many are smoking. P__ however is a businesslike chair/leader, and has his proposals for action ready. No minutes or ceremony, plenty of swearing, but decisions and results. The room is covered with its own cultural artefacts - rugby cups, strips, club honours board, shield and so on.

The leafleting, to publicise the public meeting planned for 2 May, is to be carried out in large groups, to show strength. 60 will start in a street where they know there are dealers, and then they will split up into groups of 15. One women offers to do her street, but is told: 'No disrespect to you, but we want all us blokes to be seen, to show them our strength.'

There is talk about the street deals that are going on. P__ thinks it is because dealers are no longer able to deal from houses, so instead heroin is brought in by car. This is much more public, and should be easier for the police to stop. It is strange sitting in this meeting, only some 300 yards and ten minutes away from the deal, still in Southmead, in such a different atmosphere.

There is discussion as to the difference between users and dealers. On man thinks that 'they are all pricks', but the line of the group is clear - it is the dealers they are after. The users are victims. There is also talk about other things they can do in Southmead, after the public meeting, such as talk about helping the Southmead Project (which provides a drug education and counselling service) and the Youth Centre.

The group is described as a 'community action group' by the police, in a statement handed round. That is a short-hand description of a complicated process.

All white - like the BBC, Watershed. More male though than those places, with an emphasis on using this masculine strength to get results.

There are questions directed at me as to why I have brought C__ - his brother is a dealer. I tell them of the work C__ does with young people at

the Youth Centre as a volunteer. I'm not sure if I convince them, and even I carry a faint question mark in my head about him. I tell C__ about their concern - but he knows all their past records too.

As in all the places I have been today, I am myself accepted without formality. I am not a stranger even if I am a slight outsider. Maybe it is rare to be in a group in which one is a full insider. My name here, as throughout Southmead, is either Jer or Jerry, as if I am a different person from the Jeremy of the BBC and Watershed.

8.45 - 9.45 p.m. The Club.
Two members of staff have left early, upset by the behaviour of the girls, so L__ is on her own. The girls are being rough, abusive.

A group of girls, most of whom I think are taking heroin, are plotting to get J__, 'that nasty little heroin dealer'. Though he's only 16, his name had been mentioned at the earlier meeting. There is a lot of passion and energy around.

It's hot and sweaty. I'm glad when I can go.

10.30 p.m. Home, television.
It's difficult to relax after such a day. I turn on Newsnight to see how the election is going. Tonight's programme is about inequality. Some bishops have just issued a report, and one of them is talking to it. There are clips of film of people talking about their poverty, and there is a selection of poor people in the studio: pensioner, single parent, unemployed. Also a millionaire, and three party spokespeople who have little to say about inequality, seem to want to hide what I have been seeing all day, seem to be in yet another world without nastiness.

Before analysing this account of a single day, I will briefly follow up events between then and the time of writing this article, some five years later.

Three and a half weeks later the Labour Party won a landslide election victory. The Voice of Southmead public meeting took place on May 2, and was attended by 500 people. There were shouts at the newly-elected Labour MP of 'We elected you, what are you going to fucking do for us?' Since then national government policies, such as in education, the benefits system and economic management, have affected Southmead in a variety of ways (the closure of the local 'failing' school, and a raft of regeneration and renewal initiatives). How, or whether this election, and the change in politics it signalled, affected the campaigning of the Voice of Southmead, and the results it achieved, or other issues affecting Southmead, is

hard to pinpoint. I suspect that it did, as the MP was present at a later meeting when deals between different agencies were being brokered which led to a growth in work with young people at the Youth Centre (Greenhalgh, 1999, Kimberlee, 2000). Street heroin deals have been reduced (not eliminated), and public street life in Southmead has changed accordingly.

B___ went to court in the following August. He was given a non-custodial sentence, but has been in a lot of trouble with the law since. My own contact with him has reduced; the following year he drove a stolen car into P___'s sister's car, so has discreetly laid low. I still question if his future would have been different if he had been dealt with differently at the time of his first offence.

The area around the Green was developed later in 1997, with the derelict building demolished and replaced by a supermarket. The new supermarket has led to people coming *to* Southmead to shop, changing the flow of shopping traffic between Southmead and surrounding areas. The development has stopped the land in front of the Youth Centre being used as a dumping ground for stolen cars, and the Youth Centre itself was refurbished in 1998, the graffiti cleaned up, the broken chairs replaced, the atmosphere changed. It has been thriving since.

That was my last meeting at the BBC concerning youth radio. The website material was accepted in entirety. Judging by the exhibition comment book, the taped voices of young people we were agonising over as being insufficient were one of the most appreciated parts of the exhibition. Young people have continued to participate in a variety of arts projects.

C___ became a fully-trusted member of staff at the Youth Centre, and works closely alongside some of those who were at that time questioning his position. The political changes that the Voice of Southmead was campaigning to bring about also changed personal relationships between people within Southmead. One of the dimensions of collective action is the changes it brings about in relationships, with people 'making emotional investments which enable individuals to recognize themselves in each other.' (Melucci, 1989:35). This is one example of that sort of shift: there were plenty of other personal and relational changes which occurred as effects of the campaigning of the Voice of Southmead.

The evening meeting was just one episode in the history of the Voice of Southmead (Brent, 2000). The account shows that there must have been a 'before', and that there was going to be an 'after'; the Voice was not a static phenomenon that could be encapsulated in that one meeting.

I now want to pull out from this account several themes which illuminate the social and knowledge relationships of my involvement:

1. **Partiality**. The account of the day is avowedly partial, narrated from a particular viewpoint. This shows that there were also other people involved, with other viewpoints, a very different approach from more official approaches to social research, in which people become: *'mute objects, brute things,* that do not reveal themselves in words, that do not *comment upon themselves.'* (Bakhtin 1981:351, emphasis in original). The avowed partiality is a major contrast to surveys which claim (I believe unjustly) to provide total information about areas such as Southmead.

2. **Power**. As an outsider within a number of different situations, I witnessed the workings of a range of power relationships. Collins, who I started with, argues that 'an outsider within stance functions to create a new angle of vision on the process of suppression.' (Collins 1990:11/2). In the course of one day there is only so much active suppression taking place; most of what could be seen as oppressive, in regard to the BBC and the website, was passive, based on years of embedded practice. However, if I had not been there, I would not have known about these decisions, and certainly young people had no idea how their access to expression was being decided upon. However, I was not a mere observer, and being within these situations gave me too a certain position of power.

3. **Understanding**. The fact that I was partially inside helped me to read what was taking place. For example, a complete outsider would have found it difficult to understand what was taking place on the Green, other than that there was a group of people sitting in the sunshine, not a group of addicts waiting for a drop.

4. **Language.** There was a very powerful contrast of language and its use in the various different situations described. It was the use of language, especially the different tones, that delineated in the strongest way the differences and boundaries between those distinct social worlds, in a way that was almost physical in its power. I had to be fluent in all these different language communities, and had to be able to translate between them, though in my description of how the photos changed their meaning in the setting of the gallery I show how difficult it is to carry meaning from one context into another.

5. **Complexity**. Complexity was the order of the day. Southmead on that day was *both* a place of heroin deals, *and* a centre of anti-heroin activity. It was the scene of gender conflict. It was full of controversy, not a cosy community with an easy message to put on a website. It eluded singular definition, which is an infuriation for those policy makers who wish to deal with defined

objects. It was full of what De Certeau calls 'micro-stories' which mean that, as a place, it was 'finally *polyvalent.*' (de Certeau, 1984:125). Place can and does contain several different meanings and several different activities at once, as Southmead did on that day.

6. **History**. From my moving vantage point I was able to see a certain amount of fluidity and historical change - particularly when reflecting on the history of events since that one day. Thinking that 'things never change' is a political fatalism from which poor areas suffer, often fuelled by static community profiles that freeze relationships at a single point in time, as if they never change, as if these areas exist outside of history. It is the possibility of creating change that provides the optimism that fires collective action and community politics.
7. **Identity**. My name, the way I spoke, my own identity changed as I crossed the various boundaries - a rather uncanny, if at times exciting, experience.

Before getting carried away by the wonders of being an outsider-within, I must emphasise the limits on the role. This is not a sort of freewheeling part that can take one anywhere and everywhere. Insider knowledge also means that there are places in Southmead I do *not* go, which I keep myself outside of, in which I can never be an insider, as shown by this note of a detached youth work session.

> *F___ and I decided not to go into the pub where we would have found young people we should be in contact with. This despite F___ being born and brought up in the area. We ourselves would have felt uncomfortable, as well as the people in there. We would not have been going in for the simple and explainable purpose of having a drink, so the people inside would have tensed up and behaved differently.*

My knowledge of the area, even when working with a 'native', prevents me attempting to enter certain 'insider' places, and makes me aware both that not all boundaries are breachable and that my presence changes what happens.

Difficulties of taking action

However being an outsider-within is a highly ambivalent position from which to take action. The idea of being an outsider-within gives a connotation of being on no side at all, while taking action comes from being in a certain position, taking a stand. In my main account, my actions were benign, supporting the area against censorship, organising a place for young people's work to be shown, taking part in community decision making. For my next account I describe an event within Southmead in which I took action that was controversial, for which my position was severely tested, and about which I still feel ambivalent.

I was at work sorting through old photographs for a display at a community funday. Out of the window I saw three teenage boys I know stealing bicycles from a delivery van. I ran out to find them unpacking the bikes just by the Youth Centre. I asked them to return them, but was told to 'fuck off' as they rode off. I talked to the police, who gave chase. They returned empty handed, and requested a statement from me. I asked for time, and went looking for the boys. I found one of them, together with a group of friends, and told him that if the bicycles were returned I would not give a statement to the police. The group was angry and threatening. One said: 'What do you think you are, a fucking hero of the community?' Another: 'You don't come from Southmead. It's none of your business.'

Later that day, as no bikes were returned, I did give my statement to the police. Over the next few days I was physically threatened and publicly abused as a 'grass' by a large number of people not directly involved with the incident for breaking the communal taboo of 'no grassing'. My own bicycle was trashed.

The funday took place several days later, and was successful and friendly, with people continually saying 'this is what community is about' to each other, to me and to anyone else who was listening. People loved the photographs, there was much laughter as they recognised young versions of themselves and their friends, and remembered the occasions when the photos were taken. The event itself went on long into the night, with people drinking in a marquee. I was told afterwards by one of those present that there had been discussion about the bicycle incident, with the men there talking with the boys about my role in the community (including my length of 'service'), and finally supporting my action. From then on the abuse I received fizzled out. Despite that support, several people felt I had been foolish to report the boys, because I knew what would happen. The boys all went to court, pleaded guilty, and were fined.

Here I am seen both as 'within' - helping with a community event, and 'outside', breaking a taboo. There were attempts to push me right out, to deny me any kind of insider status. My very act of 'grassing' cast me as an outsider. Fortunately for me, I had enough insider support to back me, showing the mutual support insider status can give. However for me there was no easy 'side' to be on - the whole situation was so ambivalent. This point can not be overemphasised - in youth work there is too much bland assertion by workers that they are on the side of young people, and in community work there are similar assertions of being on the side of whatever 'community' the person happens to be working with at the time. In that version,

our role is simple: it is to empower them to achieve what they want, which assumes that *who* they are, and *what* they want is unproblematic, rather than being the very questions that need to be asked (Abu-Lughod, 1994). Taking sides on this occasion was a difficult and ambiguous matter, both for myself and for those that eventually supported me. Incidentally, both the thieves and the police could claim that they were on the side of Southmead - one set because they live there, the other because they were acting as its legal protectors. However, in that incident there was also no possibility of being *outside* the situation, no neutral non-side. If I had done nothing, I would have been condoning the theft, and supporting young people who were stealing other young people's bikes.

Of the three boys involved, one has cheerfully graduated to joyriding, one has had a heroin habit, and has been in custody for a number of offences, and one I see regularly and am on good terms with. There are no clear messages for me from their histories.

The outsider within - ambivalence, dangers, and strengths

The strains of being an outsider within are one of the daily issues of being a youth worker. It is an always ambivalent position to be in, a constant reminder of Bauman's insight that 'ambivalence resides at the heart of the "primary scene" of human face-to-face.' (Bauman, 1993:10). Being an outsider within does not provide any easy answers. In fact, the position poses certain dangers, though these are offset by arguments as to why this is an important position for youth workers to be in.

The first danger is to build the role into being that of some kind of existential hero who moves easily across social divides. The critic Hal Foster is scathing about artists who similarly work with 'other' communities. The position is very attractive, as it promises a kind of reflexive practice in which the worker indulges *both* in self-critique (which can become self-absorption) *and* in romanticising people at the margins. The artist collaborates with what Foster calls a 'sited community', only to use this work to glorify themselves while treating the inhabitants as exhibits (Foster, 1996: Ch.6). Youth workers are not averse to bragging about how difficult 'their' young people are, seeking glory from being able to get inside such difficult places.

This leads to a second danger, the danger of co-dependency, in which the outsider-within becomes fixated onto and dependent on the relationship with the place they work, and uses the subordinate position of (in my case) Southmead to feed their own needs. The definition of a co-dependent person as someone who 'cannot feel self-confident without being devoted to the needs of others' (Giddens, 1992:88) is a warning to those devoted to the needs of the people with whom they work. There is often acknowledgement of this amongst people who work in Southmead, who

know that their services would not exist without it being a problem area. When a crime audit named Southmead as the worst crime hot-spot in the city (Bristol Community Safety Partnership, 1999), there was an ironic cheer amongst my colleagues - our jobs were safe! No wonder there can be antagonism, as we can seem to feed off other peoples difficulties.

The third danger is taking the role of insider too far, and taking over the right to speak for the people with whom one is working, second-guessing their opinions while in fact silencing them as you speak on their behalf. One must not overclaim one's insiderness.

The fourth danger is that of becoming a spy upon the people we work with. The writer bell hooks warns against informers, 'those folks who appear to be allied with the disadvantaged, the oppressed, who are either spies or there to mediate between the forces of domination and its victims.' (hooks, 1991:9). We pretend to both ourselves and our clients that we are with them, but being within does not mean that we are not still representatives of outside authorities.

And the fifth danger is becoming completely displaced and outside of everything, making oneself a total stranger, not any part of the situations one is in. In moving around so much one can cease to have any empathy at all with people who are unable to be social travellers, and become alien and threatening to them. Those for whom movement is possible can fail to understand those for whom a fixed place is home, be it chosen or forced upon them by circumstance.

Set against these dangers, however, there are great strengths in the outsider-within role - a strength of knowledge, and a strength of having relationships with the people one is working with in which they are not merely objects from which we hold ourselves aloof.

I have shown how much knowledge one learns from moving across different social worlds. By this movement one can follow all those threads of power, each one of which is barely tangible, that, to use Foucault's metaphor, weave together as a net: 'Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation.' One is witness to a range of what he calls 'polymorphous techniques of power' (Foucault, 1980:98; 1979:11) - and there are examples of these in my accounts. Tracing the threads can be a powerful position for the outsider within. Like a domestic servant knowing more about the cutlery than the master, I know more about the threads and connections that bind Southmead than I would from having a merely stationary vantage point, relationships that more objective approaches fail to capture.

An outsider-within mobile approach means that Southmead ceases to be reduced to being merely an object of social exclusion or concern, a phenomenon to which

things are done to by others in order to solve the growing tendency to pursue a technological, 'resolutionary' approach to social distress. In contrast I pursue a listening approach (Melucci, 1996). In place of being an object of technical social intervention, I experience Southmead as a living place, full of the subjectivity that people living there so actively seek, and whose denial is itself an oppression. As Jessica Benjamin proclaims, 'where objects were, subjects must be.' (Benjamin, 1998:xii). This leads us to a humanising view of youth work, very different from a dryly instrumental social administration approach. Even if as public servants we are inevitably separate from the people we work with, we should respect them because we are also partly within, and share responsibility for, their social worlds.

The greatest enjoyment of being an outsider-within several social worlds is the challenges of language and identity that they create, the attempts to find a place in each of them, challenges that mean we have 'to redraft our map of the mind to include the territory of self and other, that space in which we know, discover, and create the world through our connections to it' (Benjamin, 1990:192/3). This approach does not overcome the dilemmas and ambivalences of being this outsider-within, but describes why these are so worth grappling with.

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Notes

1 The Watershed Media Centre, in the centre of Bristol, includes exhibition space. 'The Place We're In' was a multimedia exhibition and website created with young people from Southmead about their area.

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SEEKING OUT THE GIFT OF AUTHENTICITY

HEATHER SMITH

As a youth worker experiencing different relationships with young people, what has been central is my commitment to care. This commitment involves placing the welfare of others as a priority and not making decisions or judgements in a 'detached' capacity. This is not always easy and often involves a high investment of time, energy and emotion. But it is something that I see as worthwhile, even if only one young person benefits from the relationship.

As a practitioner I am concerned about the direction in which youth work is heading especially the lack of emphasis placed on the valuable nature of relationship. This article is a representation of what I believe to be the key conceptual elements of community and Informal Education and how I see this relating to my experience and practice. My concern is that of keeping humanity in relationships constructed within the Informal Education Sector.

The essence of informal education lies in the informality. It is part of our everyday lives and for the worker it is about being in everyday situations with people and seizing learning opportunities as they arise. Smith (2000) argues that informal educators, 'spend time with people in everyday settings' but that they also 'create opportunities for people to study experiences and questions in a more focused way'. He highlights the point of spending time with people before engaging in more focused learning. From this I begin to conclude that relationships come first in informal education, they are what inform the informality of the learning. Informal education is not about imposing a curriculum but about people learning in a way that is right for them, without the restrictions placed on them by a formalised structure or curriculum. Key to the nature of this learning is the voluntary nature of the relationships formed and the learning engaged in.

The process of informal education takes place in a great many settings and groups, all of which offer valid examples of informal education in practice. However this article is concerned with youth work as informal education and many of the examples and experiences related herein will pertain to the youth work in which I have been or am involved personally. The background of my experience is within both the statutory and voluntary sector.

The Aims of Youth Work

The *National Occupational Standards for Youth Work* document (NYA, 2000) offers a standard set of guidelines for Youth Work Qualifications and recruitment processes and new contracts. The standards can be used to set performance benchmarks and

as a means for developing and evaluating training (NYA, 2000; ii). With this document the NYA aims to 'represent youth work in it's entirety and not the specific contribution of individual youth workers.' (NYA, 2000; ii), indicating that 'Youth work is conventionally understood to be, at it's core, about young people's personal and social development' (2000; iv). The report also goes on to emphasise that youth workers need to encourage young people to be 'critical and creative' about their experiences of the world and should be concerned with how the young people feel, not just what they know and do (NYA, 2000; iv).

The occupational standards document identifies one key purpose of youth work: 'to work with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, and enable them to gain a voice, influence and place in society.' They highlight six key aspects that are thought to enable the key purpose, they are summarised as,

a) Build relationships with young people.

b) Facilitate young people's learning

c) Enable young people to organise and take responsibility for activities

d) Work in accordance with core values of youth work

e) Plan, manage and develop youth work

f) Support and develop effective, efficient and ethical practice

(NYA, 2000: xvi)

The layout of these key aspects suggests that the relationships formed are the underpinning factor of any work done. Nevertheless we see the concern shift from maintaining these relationships towards planning and managing young people's experiences. It appears from this model that the relationships of youth work are formed not on the basis that being in relationship with each other has intrinsic value, but rather in order to guide, explore and manage the experiences that young people have. This contradicts the view that informal education relationships are voluntary and are about an individual directing their own learning in a way that is appropriate for them. What the NYA is suggesting is something very different. In this context it is appropriate to ask whether the direction that youth work is taking is really concerned with informal education.

The National Occupational Standards are not concerned with the contribution of the individual worker, but rather with the general aim of youth work. However, this does not mean that in the reality of our everyday practice workers are free to let these relationships develop naturally because the National Occupational Standards provide a basis for contracts and for monitoring the performance of the

youth workers. Planning and managing elements are always included in any youth work programme or initiative. I take an agency where I worked as an example. In that agency, there was a service level agreement designed to create a partnership between a funder and the agency. The agency agreed to provide a certain level of 'service' in return for funding. This already indicated that more is required than simply being in relationship with the young people. Such agreements shape youth work practice.

In their simplest form, service level agreements may be useful requiring each party to document their focus and responsibilities. This provides a level of accountability, but at the same time the spontaneity of youth work is taken away or marginalised. Through service level agreements agencies agree to provide proof of their work, which is symptomatic of an age of increasing materialism, but how do workers prove that they have relationships with young people? Proof of the quality of human interaction is hard to achieve, so agencies are instead asked to provide quantitative evidence. Consequently, numbers become a priority for the agency and so youth workers are constantly aware of the fact that 'bums on seats' is a large factor in securing funding. The quantity of participants attending is prioritised rather than quality of the work and the relationships within it.

The notion of relationship is complex and when discussed in youth work literature, professional integrity, the notion of boundaries and the ethical issues involved in building relationships are included. In practice when building relationships, youth workers have to consider factors that make demands on their time, such as structured session times, paper work and staffing commitments. I highlight this because it can be these commitments that reduce face to face contact with young people. With all these factors, both theoretical and practical, it is difficult to remain to be open and honest, when openness and honesty have to be in accordance with a certain way of being, that of the distant professional worker client relationship. It is this encouraged distance that causes concern for me as a worker.

I believe that to actually be able to support a young person through the often complex process of adolescence workers need to be able to be real and provide a steadiness of presence, in order to begin to reach an authentic relationship. This is something that I aim to do within my work but definitely something I found easier before I became a senior youth worker. The acceptance of such a post meant that my time was not simply concerned with the young people but with writing 'achievable targets', securing adequate numbers and ensuring the staff team was working as a cohesive unit. My priorities had to change, and as much as I fought against it, it was the time given to my face to face contact with the young people that diminished.

It is for this reason that I want to focus on examining the notion of authentic relationships, firstly exploring the nature of relationship and what characteristics make it an authentic experience. To then bring the discussion into the area of informal education I consider how, and if, this type of relationship can be achieved in the context of youth work.

The Nature of Relationship

Before examining relationship in the context of professionalism and authenticity, it is important to first establish the meaning of the term 'relationship.'

If we explore the notion of relationship in our everyday setting, we see that relationships occur between individuals and involve a connection. The level, depth and type of connection can vary, but may include elements of the physical, emotional and spiritual. The term 'relate' can be turned into a variety of phrases, all of which suggest a connection. Using this idea of connection I will further explore how this manifests in human interaction.

This connection allows us to get to know each other and to build up a sense of belonging, both in the public and private worlds. Perlman takes the concept further; she defines relationship as 'a catalyst, an enabling dynamism in the support, nurture and freeing of people's energies...' (1979; 2). It is something that Storkey in her book *The Search for Intimacy* would describe as 'a need which lies deep in the human psyche for the security of being loved just as we are' (1995; xii).

In *A Way of Being,* Rogers (1980), describes his marital relationship as '...an increasingly deep communication of hopes, ideals and aims...' (1980: 31) and his relationship with fellow academics as 'mutually trusting' (1980; 32). Both descriptions offer a similar theme; relating to people is about trust and communication. He says, 'interpersonal relationships best exist as a rhythm; flow and change, then a temporary quiet; risk and anxiety, then temporary security' (Rogers, 1980; 44). Even professional relationships are about connecting with people, not working on them.

The differentiation between the public and private can often cause tension for many practitioners. How far are we able to support and nurture young people with the constraints and expectations of a 'profession'? What relationships exist in the professional world of the client/worker arrangement and what connects the people involved?

Professional Relationships in a Public World

The idea that youth work should be seen as a profession has been given much thought and publicity. This can be evidenced through the talks and seminars held surrounding the possible identification of a code of ethics for practitioners and the establishment of a regulatory body (NYA, 1999). It is clear that the arena of youth

work wants to be recognised for its specialised knowledge. Revealed within this recognition is the expectation that the use of specialised knowledge in tackling 'social ills' guarantees a positive outcome but with the unpredictability of the human condition how can anything be guaranteed? Furlong (2000) makes a similar point. He argues that what is expected of the teaching profession is operation on the high level of a specialised knowledge, but in reality,

> *Rather than inhabiting the 'high ground' of professional certainty, they have to work in the 'swampy lowlands' of everyday life, facing situations that are complex and messy, defying easy technical solutions.*
> (Furlong, 2000; 18)

This is also true of youth work practice. It is not within the 'high ground' of professionalism but in the 'swampy lowlands' that we engage in relationships with young people encountering what Perlman (1979) describes as 'emotionally freighted interplay'.

Relationships forged under the umbrella of youth work are rarely done so because of the intrinsic value of being with one another. More often than not there is an agenda, whether it be to reduce street crime by giving the young people somewhere to go, or tackling the latest moral panic. The presence of a specific but not always explicit agenda suggests that what is wanted is product, evidence that this specialised body of knowledge is having an effect on society. This is something that distinguishes the professional relationship from a 'normal' or non-professional one.

Allocation of time and involvement dictate how and when the interaction between the youth worker and the young people takes place. Many youth centres have set sessions for set ages. Contact with the young people outside of these times is rare. It is not discouraged, yet the time structures in place for different sessions, activities and meetings leave little room for 'extra curricula' contact.

An appropriate question to ask here is where the allocation of purpose, time and involvement comes from. In this context it is worth exploring recent policy papers. In *Transforming Youth Work, Developing youth work for young people* the DfEE attempted to 'highlight successes, challenge weaknesses and set out objectives for youth work.' (DfEE, 2000: 3). This document was released in conjunction with the beginning of the Connexions Service, and highlights the importance of youth work if Connexions is to succeed. In it, the DfEE proposed that the aim of the youth service is to keep young people in 'good shape' (DfEE, 2001: 13) and that 'Youth workers will play a key role in keeping young people in good shape' (DFEE, 2001: 14). This is identified as being done through youth workers taking a professional role and identifying areas of a young person life that are in 'poor shape' (DfEE, 2001: 14).

This pre-set course of action is troubling if the youth worker considers the work to be about spontaneity; seizing opportunities when they arise and getting to know people through what they allow the worker to know about them following a natural process of encountering. Of course such an approach entails working with a set of variables many of which are not quantifiable, the most prominent being the unpredictability of human nature. Government reports and directives are contrary to this process. They seem to be an attempt to remove the unpredictability, to homogenise youth work practice, to make it quantifiable and easier to manipulate.

For a service provision to be identified as good value for money by government, the purpose and outcomes have to be clear. Extracts from an OFSTED inspection included in *Transforming Youth Work* identify poor practice,

> *Despite clear progress, reasonable levels of achievement among young people, and a recent successful track record in managing external projects, resources are poorly deployed, the quality of youth work is too variable and the service still lacks a consensus about its overall direction and purpose. It currently therefore offers barely satisfactory value for money.*
> (DfEE, 2001: 10)

Though it may be the case that the young people are achieving a great deal as a consequence of youth work interventions, what is mainly required is that workers demonstrate clarity in direction and outcome. All variables have to be managed, in order to offer evidence that the work is proceeding in a consensual direction. This is not a recipe for diversity!

This theme is reflected locally, for example in Southwark Council's *Best Value* document,

> *...the Youth Service is an improving service, however if it is to achieve consistent improvement and move to upper quartile performance, it will need to be managed with greater rigour and direction.*
> (Southwark Leisure, 2001: Fig 2.1.2)

It is apparent that professional relationships are seen to be concerned only with value for money, identified through clear direction and a measurable outcome.

This does not tie in well with the notion of a caring profession whose primary concern is supposed to be the well being of young people. If we examine Perlman's identification of a good relationship as being one which, 'provides stimulus and nurture by which both persons involved feel sustained, loved, gratified, given to, helped and freed to experience their selfhood and to realize their potential' (Perlman, 1979: 24), the

reconciliation of these two perspectives is not possible. How can a relationship form itself at its own pace incorporating love and nurture, if we have to clearly identify direction and purpose even before the initial interaction has taken place?

The need for direction and targets within youth work is partly a consequence of the fact that these relationships exist within the public domain. Exploring the notion of authenticity and how youth workers can incorporate integrity into their practice, may begin to indicate whether it is possible to achieve authenticity within these public professional relationships.

Authenticity

To understand the meaning of 'authentic', we can explore things within everyday life that are regarded as authentic, be it a friendship or a material object. Something is identified as authentic because it is, 'real or true; being in fact what it is claimed to be; genuine' *(Cambridge International Dictionary of English, 2000).* This encapsulates the essence of the concept; authenticity is about something being exactly what it claims to be.

The initial exploration argued that relationship is about connection, trust and communication and for Perlman (1979) it is about nurturing, loving and feeling gratified. So if we marry ideas about authenticity and relationship, it is possible to understand that an authentic relationship may be one wherein love and nurture can exist, but the essence lies in the realness and genuineness of the experience. This has implications for relationships in informal education. The constraints of the 'profession' and the attitude of the worker have an impact on whether the relationship between worker and young person is authentic or not.

Rogers highlights the idea of a 'client centred' approach, arguing that it is often the client who knows the best way to proceed. By appreciating people for who they are, a value is placed on them as a person rather than just a client. It is this that Rogers argues is the worker's 'operational expression of her essential confidence and trust in the capacity of the human organism' (Rogers cited in Kirschenbaum and Henderson, 1990: 309). Rogers also explores the idea that the 'facilitator' is more likely to be effective in assisting learning if they enter into the relationship being themselves. He argues that this involves, 'coming into a direct personal encounter with the learner, meeting her on a person-to-person basis' (ibid: 306). What Rogers is arguing is for a 'realness' on behalf of the worker, not a 'front or façade' (ibid: 306) but a genuineness in who they are. He carries this idea into the realms of education. Smith identifies a strength in Rogers' approach to education which can be found in the focus he places on relationship. He quotes Rogers, 'The

facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities that exist in the personal relationship between facilitator and learner' (Rogers cited in Smith (a), 2001: 3).

From this point it is possible to explore the authenticity of relationships within youth work, from the stance that the authenticity may begin with, or be linked to, the attitude in which the worker approaches the relationship.

For many, the location of the relationship, i.e. whether it is in the private or public domain, may inevitably affect their approach. For example the levels of tolerance and loyalty in a relationship may be far greater in the private domain because a higher value may be placed on personal relationships. Yet it is this placement of value, or lack of it, that may begin to have detrimental effects on 'professional' relationships, causing a breakdown in connectedness.

Rogers is not suggesting that 'working' relationships should be approached in the same way as our private ones. What is being argued is that 'professional' relationships should be regarded as valuable both to the worker and the client and that the worker should appreciate the value of being authentic within this. This has implications when informal educators or youth workers begin to develop relationships with young people.

Is Accompanying Enough?

The above question can be considered in relation to the notion of 'accompanying' defined by Christian and Green (1998). Their popular book *Accompanying Young People on Their Spiritual Quest,* occupies the middle ground between strict secular informal education and Christian youth work that uses a strong evangelical approach. It combines the notions of spirituality or faith together with informal education practices such as mentoring. 'Accompanying' is understood as a process or relationship that is about one person joining alongside another, just to be with them. It is not about the mutuality of experience, but about one being the 'accompanist' and the other the 'accompanied'.

Christian and Green argue that the ability to accompany is found in attitudes and skills rooted in humanity, (1998: 27) involving more emotional energy than a friendship (1998: 26). The reason for more emotional energy is that accompanying is not a skill that can be learnt but a skill that comes from the grace and compassion central to the accompanist's being (1998: 6). Christian and Green highlight the importance of the accompanist's character. Although processes such as mentoring and supervision can be learnt and experienced, these are secondary. The primary importance in any accompanist is their central being. This model of a youth work relationship could be one way in which to achieve authentic relationships within informal education.

Because the skill of accompanying is found within the accompanist, this type of 'care' cannot be achieved without genuineness of character; ability to care is more about a way of being, rather than a skill that can be learnt. Christian and Green seem thus to present a relationship that offers the space to be real and genuine in experiencing life. But can accompanying really be seen as an authentic relationship?

Answering this involves both questioning the realness of the situation and the validity of the experience being described as a relationship. The authenticity of the experience is not called into question as much as the idea of the experience being a relationship, because it is the genuineness in the care that brings to the forefront the notion of accompanying in the first place. If mutuality of experience is integral to the definition of a relationship, it may not be possible to class accompanying as an authentic relationship. To explore this I will offer my own experience of accompanying.

In my early teens I joined a church youth group that was run by an older married couple from the church. During my time as a member of the youth group I turned to them to talk about various issues that many teenagers go through. They provided me with time and space to explore my feelings and make sense of things. I felt accompanied by them. As I moved on through my teens, they left the youth group but I continued to see them. The seeming experience of accompanying began developing into an authentic relationship. Through the natural process of time, a friendship began to develop. Now the experience is no longer just about me; it is about us, and the support and love we have for each other as human beings. In retrospect I cannot describe what I experienced in my early teens as an authentic relationship because the focus was on me and my development and growth, not on a relational basis of give and take.

It is important to acknowledge that such a movement from worker/client relationship to a supportive friendship is not always appropriate. For example, many relationships built on a counselling structure would not have the room or scope to develop to this level. I also acknowledge that between young people and youth workers there are often experiences that are built on the authority of adult over child. This is inevitable and frequently necessary, but the idea of accompanying includes the inevitable condition that once mutuality of support is experienced, accompanying must end. If the concept of accompanying had been applied to my experience I feel that I would ultimately have lost out on knowing two people who have had a large and important impact on my life. If the experience must stop when it achieves mutuality, despite its authenticity of emotion, accompanying cannot be used as a basis on which authentic relationships in informal education can be built.

Can youth workers become friends with each young person, or are authentic relationships rare and therefore more special? It is nigh on impossible for a youth worker to develop an authentic relationship with each young person whom they know in the context of their work, just as it is impossible for any individual to develop a special bond with each person they meet. Nevertheless, this 'specialness' creates a need for workers to be aware of, and seek out, opportunities that provide a glimpse of our ability to build, and be part of, an authentic relationship.

In my own practice I encountered one particular young woman, and feel that we have begun to build a solid foundation of a lasting relationship. This has happened not only through our interaction in the youth club, but through the extra time spent together. For example I walk her home after each session. These seemingly insignificant pockets of time created a bond, a time when she could share things with me without the judgement of others around her. At this stage there is not the mutuality or reciprocity that appears in authentic relationships, but the potential was there. There was an unspoken bond and a sharing of space, but not something that I could name or quantify. Buber calls this interaction, 'the sphere of the between'. He highlights what that 'something' may be,

> *when a human being turns to another as another, as a particular and specific person to be addressed, and tries to communicate with him through language or silence, something takes place between them which is not found elsewhere in nature.*
> (Buber cited in Hodes, 1973; 72)

The experience of relationship in this sense is about 'one' relating to another as 'one', not about labels or roles. This is what I hope to achieve as a youth worker and a person.

It may be possible to use the idea of the authenticity of care which is present in the concept of accompanying, and integrate it with an experience that works towards the notion of a mutual relationship rather than away from it. To move the discussion on to explore how authenticity may be incorporated into relationships in youth work it is first necessary to accept, that to a certain level, authenticity of care is there for the youth worker to bring and that, 'If we are not in youth work because of our love of our fellow men we have no business there at all' (Brew cited in Smith (3)2001: 1).

If realness and genuineness in the ability to care is central to their being and motivations, workers need to explore how we weave this into their 'professional' relationships.

Bringing Yourself

In *The Courage to Teach* (1998), Palmer explores how professional teachers can include their personal identity in their work and the benefits of doing so. He argues that 'good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher' (1998, 10). Palmer indicates that in order to achieve integrity in the work it is necessary to bring self to it. Weaving identity into teaching involves the importance of remembering and acknowledging why the work was personally attractive in the first place. Keeping this at the forefront and linking it with the authenticity of care, may provide a foundation from which an authentic relationship can grow.

The idea is not without problems for any practitioner. Palmer suggests that people who engage in something they care about and bring themselves to it, become vulnerable (1998: 17). Criticisms of their work can be seen as criticisms of self. It is this fear, he argues, that divides people, the fear of a live encounter where we may hear something we do not want to (1998: 36/37). Yet this fear of losing identity through a conflict of ideas can also help workers to grow and develop both as practitioners and as people. The threat of uncertainty creates in us a need to be adaptable.

This is directly applicable to my field of work. I am in my job because I care for people and I can identify with Palmer that this, at times, leaves me feeling vulnerable. This is not always a positive experience and can sometimes leave me far from intact. But I would argue that it is this acceptance of vulnerability and expectation of live encounters that keeps me from 'stagnating':

> *Stagnation is the state chosen by teachers who are so threatened by students that they barricade themselves behind their credentials, their podiums, their status, their research.*
> (Palmer, 1998: 48)

It is possible that the avoidance of stagnation in our work is achievable by simply bringing ourselves.

However, the wider picture may offer more challenges to our caring for young people. Even if they manage to hold on to the authentic voice of the 'teacher within' (Palmer, 1998: 29), workers may face the obstacle of the need which the world has for objectivity. This notion of objectivity is central to the idea of professionalism and encourages distance between professionals and clients, or between youth workers and young people.

There are written and unwritten codes of behaviour within youth work. Written codes of practice such as Child Protection policies stipulate emotional and physical boundaries that should exist between adult and child in professional care agencies.

These are there for the protection of the children in our care, which is a positive thing. But on the flip side these boundaries can be taken to the extreme and youth workers can be left feeling that any physical or emotional interaction they have with young people may be misconstrued.

This is an example of that genuine fear which causes the divisions between people in the public world identified earlier by Palmer. This fear carries into the realms of our professional judgement. The professional concern is that making an objective judgement about someone's life may not be possible if an authentic relationship has been formed.

Notions of genuine emotionally fuelled connections between individuals pose a threat to the use of technical knowledge and we return once again to the 'swampy lowlands' of human interaction. Yet this, I have argued, is what working with people is all about. The grey areas are what keep us on our toes, they are the 'live encounters' that we both fear and expect.

The messiness of human interaction, to which sure-fire objective, technical solutions cannot be applied, is often what attracted people to working in the field of informal education. Yet this attachment to humanity is often actively avoided in professional practice. Is it possible that by keeping people at arms length and in specific categories, avoiding really listening to them and trying to understand them, makes it easier for 'professionals' to rationalise and justify the decisions and judgements they make which affect people's lives?

Conclusion

The aim of this article was to explore the relationships between youth workers and young people. All of the issues raised and discussed have their relevance, but do not provide a blueprint for the future.

When I began my youth work training, I thought I would somehow get the answer to how I could make a difference in the lives of the young people I worked with. I guess I had a bit of the 'rescuer' syndrome. How I feel now is very different, I don't want to rescue anyone; I just want to get to know them. But in a world where targets must be met and society constantly presents a desire to see people rescued, I don't know how possible this simple act of getting to know someone is.

Exploring the concept of accompanying brought to the forefront the notion that care is, or at least should be, central in youth work relationships. This highlighted the reality that because the limits of the experience are defined, mutuality and reciprocity present in truly authentic relationships are often pushed to the margins. Ensuring that there is a balance within our relationships is therefore difficult. Being aware of the issue

can go some way to address it, yet it is important to acknowledge that awareness is only valuable if it has an impact on action. So for me, being aware that there is the danger of openness, honesty and mutuality being marginalised in my youth work relationships, helps me to seek out the rare times when it can emerge.

Palmer's work has had an impact on how I understand what I do, and has gone some way in explaining why the work I am involved in impacts upon my emotions and the way in which I interact with people. Accepting that vulnerability within the work is necessary and inevitable can go some way in keeping a level of realness in our interaction with people.

As workers, acknowledging our 'professional' knowledge is important; we shouldn't deny what we know. Yet hiding behind it simply alienates the very people we wish to know. It is essential that professionalism, and the social distance implied or involved in this, doesn't undermine the creation and sustainability of relationships in youth work, especially those that have the potential to become truly authentic.

But something needs to change in youth work if authentic relationships are to flourish. In particular the move towards a particular understanding of the professionalisation of youth work that has caused the need for targets, boundaries and set ways of relating should be questioned. It is possible that youth workers wanting public acknowledgement for the difference they make has had the negative consequence of putting obstacles in their way causing a breakdown in them connecting in a truly authentic way with young people.

It is important that youth workers are aware of the impact that directives from both central government and other funding bodies can have on their relationships with young people. We need the courage to speak out when the impact is negative on what, after all is central to the activity of youth work as informal education. What I have come to realise, however, is that if we do prize relationships over targets and do truly care about the people we encounter, it is possible to take personal responsibility to seek out the gift of authenticity.

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GENERATIVE METAPHOR, PROBLEM SETTING IN POLICY AND THE DISCOVERY OF YOUTH AT RISK

JUDITH BESSANT

What comprises a field of study like youth studies? It is constituted by some of its most innovative and influential contributors; by its program of theoretical and empirical research into young people's lives, and by the findings produced and by the explanations that are developed. Clearly all this and more goes into the development of such a field. Certain constituents within academia define various components of youth studies more effectively than others by the particular ways they organise knowledge and employ certain investigative techniques- including the use of metaphor. Indeed descriptive accounts of research into the lives of young people are typically rich in metaphor. This also produces an abundance of colourful material that the media loves and for this reason the activities of media workers is central to understanding how research informs youth policy.

What we know about certain groups or 'types' of young people and particular youth problems owes much to research. Of course it is not a ground-breaking revelation to say that research informs government policy. And, although establishing exactly how research has shaped youth policy is a significant empirical question yet to be undertaken systematically in the English-speaking world, it can be argued, that alternative models of policy like a policy as discourse approach or governmenality theory indicates how it happens.

In this article I focus on youth related investigative enterprises to explore how such research influences policy. Before doing so however, I offer a brief comment on youth studies. The dominant research framework in this area includes a mix of abstracted empiricism and various kinds of positivisms to legitimate assumptions that research problems are 'objectively there'. There are also large questions about how the youth research agenda is constituted, by whom, and in whose interests. A post-Foucauldian sociology of knowledge which builds on the work of Latour (1987), Bloor (1976), Schatzki (1995) reveals aspects of these elements in such research enterprises. Here I undertake a limited enquiry that draws on the valuable, but yet to be fully valorised interest in the modes of rhetoric revived in the United States in the 1980s and subsequently.

I focus on a particular kind of metaphor - pedagogical metaphor - in this paper because it is an important component of rhetoric and has value for understanding policy-making (Nelson, Megill and McCloskey, 1991; Ortony, 1998). Rhetoric is a technique used to secure the authority of knowledge claims and convince others

about the virtue of particular ways of seeing. We rely on numerous rhetorical techniques to secure claims to know and to successfully argue for a particular policy position (McCloskey 1998). Those techniques include appealing to evidence, the use of various forms of logic and tests of validity, the construction and use of narratives, and the use of a range of different metaphors. My interest in metaphor is based on a recognition of the value of rhetoric in helping understand youth policy (Nelson, Megill and McCloskey, 1991). The skilful use of these practices constitute a 'framework of authority' which policy-makers use when endeavoring to convince an audience. The study of rhetoric involves understanding how we try to be reasonable and persuasive by weighing and considering all the reasons, and not only the claims made by certain epistemologies, methodologies or logics to secure access to the truth (McCloskey, 1998: 185). To accept the value of focusing on the techniques of persuasion that a study of rhetoric involves means amongst other things, not accepting positivist claims that statistical tests for example *exclusively* provides the only secure grounds for true knowledge. It means also questioning interpretivist claims that secure knowledge is *exclusively* gained only by mastery of hermeneutic and symbolic-interpretivist techniques.

In the first section of this paper I establish the salience and character of metaphors as central to any account of the rhetoric of policy, paying particular attention to the pedagogical use of metaphors. As Schon (1979) argued the critical generative role of pedagogical metaphors in the initial problem-setting phase of policy making makes this an analytic imperative. In this context I consider how pedagogical metaphors and research are put to work by the media to 'inform' public opinion and policy making-communities about the problems which policy makers claim to address.

I survey a range of policy models to establish their preparedness to acknowledge the central role played by metaphor. I begin with the traditional rational action model, then discuss the idea of the policy-making community and expert networks. Finally I use examples from the 'youth at risk' research within the setting of governmentality theory to illustrate the role of metaphor in constituting both our knowledge of youth problems and their role in policy-making.

The article is written from an Australian perspective, which involves using some Australian examples. I note however that the general arguments and themes addressed here apply across most modern western nations. Finally, I argue that within investigative practices on youth studies are important themes and assumptions which flow into the making of youth policy across many countries. I indicate the significance of this influence for policy decisions and suggest that attention to pedagogical metaphor can improve the quality of policy processes and outcomes by helping to identify the authority of particular discourses, and by indicating what metaphors reveal or conceal about a youth problem that policies are said to address.

I begin by identifying some of the ways metaphors are used in youth research.

Although a variety of metaphors exists (eg. constitutive, medical, navigational, instructive, perceptual), I restrict this article to a focus on pedagogical metaphor and do this for two reasons. Firstly, pedagogical metaphor pervades youth research and communications about it. Secondly metaphors play a generative role in policy making processes. Pedagogical metaphors are also used when introducing novices to new ideas (Klamer and Leonard 1994).

Before launching into detail about the pedagogical metaphor, some clarification is needed regarding what is meant by metaphor generally.

Metaphors and how they function

Metaphor is critical to our understanding of the world. Rather than the objects of research (young people) informing us directly, what we know about 'youth' and 'their' activities is mediated and captured in and through words, in the stories we articulate and in the metaphors we use. The names used when pointing to youthful expressivity, to 'misconduct' or indeed to exemplary conduct represents the identity of those being observed.

In general terms, a metaphor involves turning something seen as literal (young people) into something figurative ('threatening uncivilized savages', 'sport star'). Thus, metaphor involves a process of transferring meaning. It is to see associations between apparently unrelated areas or objects that the metaphor connects. For example the metaphor an 'alienated strata of young people' uses the term alienated (ie., 'foreign', 'alien') and 'strata' (a geological reference – stratum or layer) carrying over a meaning not usually applicable to young people thereby creating an image of a detached, different and problematic section of the youth population.

Metaphors have ontological, emotional, creative, illustrative and performative functions. They allow us to understand, imagine and feel in ways a 'literal' reading cannot. For example an 'epidemic of juvenile crime' is a metaphor used widely through the 1900s by many researchers, media workers and policy makers to explain the emergence of certain kinds of 'youth cultures' or 'gang' activities. In the USA we hear reference to 'out of control gang warfare' and read how some researchers produce 'gang thermometers' to gauge the danger or incendiary 'heat' of certain youthful activities (Knox, 1997: 21).

Pedagogical metaphors as generative metaphors

I give particular attention to this kind of metaphor because they are critical to problem setting activities in policy making process. Moreover, they are prevalent in media accounts of youth problems, many of which draw on youth research and play an important role in the 'discovery' of the problem policy later address.

Typically pedagogical metaphors are used to introduce certain phenomenon. They have exegetic value and work to create images, and an appreciation of complex ideas that are otherwise difficult for the new-comer to conceptualise. Reyna describes pedagogical metaphors as functional metaphors used to convey meaning about novel concepts by relating them to well-known ideas (Reyna, 1986). They are best understood as instrumental. Indeed whether a metaphor is pedagogical depends on its context and the way it is used. Determining the pedagogical status of a metaphor depends not on whether a certain element defined as pedagogical is inherent in a figure of speech, but whether it contributes toward an understanding of something that was relatively new.

In a context where many policy makers are not accustomed to the specifics of a particular youth problem, metaphors like 'lost generation' or 'misfits' may become pedagogical. They become pedagogical to the extent that they perform the task of instructing policy makers and others about the nature of the youth problem that a policy seek to address. Thus, 'feral' can operate as a pedagogical metaphor because it functions to elucidate by framing 'the problem' in terms of the danger presented by feral-as-wild youth.

At this point, it is also worth observing how some metaphors used to denigrate or problematise, (like 'feral') have been appropriated by those being described as such. The identity of 'feral' according those describing themselves in that way involves, amongst other things, taking on a particular appearance (eg. dread-locked hair, the modern hippie look) and a certain political, ethical, philosophical outlook. Typically this politics incorporates strong environmental commitments which some 'ferals' take seriously enough to give practical expression to by inhabiting make-shift tepees amongst the trees of rainforests. Appropriation aside, the metaphor 'feral' when applied to young people typically introduces or reinforces images of an untamed and barbarous lot. In terms of their moral status such metaphors function to caste 'them' as indecent and offensive to 'civilised' sensibilities.

The idea of 'lost generation' is further example of a pedagogical metaphor used in research to introduce and promote a particular understanding of problems like youth unemployment and suicide (Eckersley, 1992; 1993); thereby delivering powerful directives about young people as victims and threats. Likewise, 'youth as casualities of change' can operate in an exegetic way informing or teaching policy makers about a youth problem (Eckersley, 1992; 1993). Here young people as 'casualties' introduces the idea that this group has been unjustly treated and 'sacrificed' to 'the alter of high capitalism'. 'Youth as casualties of social change' informs policy makers that 'jobless youth' unfairly bear the brunt of major socio-economic change. Such

readings depict young people as 'victims-cum-scapegoats' rather than the source of their employment. It is a metaphor that helps construct arguments that joblessness amongst young people is not the fault of those who are without work (eg. because they are lazy, stupid or work-shy); rather, the reason for high unemployment from this perspective is likely to be explained as a problem caused by the fact that growth in job numbers has not been great enough to keep up with the employment demands of those seeking waged work.

Here we see the identity of a young person or group of young people as initially viewed helps frame the problem and thereby directs or prescribes subsequent 'solutions'. Being introduced to the problem courtesy of pedagogical metaphors like 'casualties of change' encourages a view of 'unemployed youth' as victims, making it 'obvious' that the young people in question deserve sympathy and support. This is contrary to 'solutions' likely to result from the use of alternative pedagogical metaphors like 'work-shy' or 'job snobs' which set the problem in a completely different way. The use of the pedagogical metaphor 'work-shy' constitutes the problem of 'unemployed youth' as unethical youth, not willing to engage in their 'reciprocal obligation' and thus deserving of punishment. This construction of the problem thereby creates 'solutions' that require punitive regulation (eg. the introduction of 'work-for-the-dole' policy initiatives).

Metaphors are also used to explain policy making itself. In policy studies metaphors like a 'policy making community' or 'expert networks' operate to connote the existence of a group sharing common interests and objectives who come together for a collective purpose. This image however is far from what happens when policy is made. Rather than a community-like process, policy making is typically a fragmented, tension filled set of actions that involve contesting groups of 'stake-holders'. Typically stakeholders in a 'policy community' do not meet communally, and most usually do not know each other personally as members of a community might. The idea of 'a policy making community' is however a useful pedagogical metaphor for communicating certain images about policy making processes.

How players in a policy community understand the problem being addressed often depends on how they are first introduced to the problem. In this way pedagogical metaphors play a generative role when policy makers are more likely to be unfamiliar with the issues at hand (Schon, 1980). Attention to the character of language and particularly to the use of pedagogical metaphor is useful for understanding policy as a discursive activity. As Schon observed, when we examine problem setting stories told by analysts and practitioners of policy, it becomes apparent that the framing of the problems depends upon the application of metaphors (Schon, 1980: 255). It is at this beginning phase that the use of pedagogical metaphor is particularly effective. (Elias, 1978; Bahktin, 1968; Douglas, 1967).

The persuasive power of pedagogical metaphors also depends on the degree to which they are congruous with dominant prejudices, fears and hopes (ie. youth as an inherently troublesome phase in 'the life-cycle' or 'youth culture' as synonymous with immorality reinforce already well established prejudices). From the early twentieth century, youth cultures were 'known' to be closely linked to delinquency (Burt, 1927) and psychological understandings of 'maladjustment'. Indeed 'maladjustment' is another metaphor frequently used in youth research to describe certain conduct as an aberrant phenomenon that can be measured against a index of normality. Thus the metaphor -'maladjusted youth' has long been used to signal danger of social disruption by drawing on larger discourses about social order and social integration, resulting in law and order policies like youth curfews, mandatory and indeterminate sentencing and other new law enforcement legislation (Jeffs and Smith, 1995: 1-14).

Taboo allegories which also function pedagogically, representing young people as an unrestrained force, are similarly followed-up with increased law enforcement policies. For example, reports on transgressions of animal<>youthful-human boundaries operate to infer a dearth of civility. Under the spell of this metaphor, it becomes obvious that 'riotous' and 'unruly' behaviour is bad and increased governance that regulates such 'lawlessness' is good. Increased supervision of those deemed unruly restores normative boundaries said to be critical to health, civility and humanness (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991).

The media, metaphor and problem setting.

Observing the employment of pedagogical metaphor by media workers is critical for understanding how the use of language in youth research impacts on policy. Most media workers understand well how metaphors make complex issues appear simple; how they add colour, increase the emotional impact to reports and how they sell copy. Moreover, for the purpose of this paper, examining metaphor in the media is a productive line of inquiry given the formative role of journalist and editors in the initial problem setting phase of policy and given their reliance on researchers-as experts for the making of news (Sercombe, 1997; Cohen, 1973).

Given that media like the press, radio and television are major stake-holders in the policy making community, any attempt to understand the relationship between youth culture research and policy cannot ignore their activities (Cohen, 1973). Liberal political theory for example grants a role to the media as 'Fourth Estate' thereby incorporating it into policy and political processes. Similarly, from the 1970s neo-Marxist cultural analysts (eg. the Birmingham CCCS group), argued for an analysis of the ideological effects of the modern mass media. According to this school of thought the media shapes our basic perceptions of the world by ideological

processes of inclusion and exclusion. For writers like Stuart Hall the media is able to construct the world for us meaningfully in discourse. 'What they [media workers] exercise is the power to represent the world in certain definite ways' (Hall, 1986: 9).

On the other hand, post-foundationalists by-pass arguments about the ideological character of the media and policy, cautioning a need to be careful about assuming there is a simple 'discovery' process that involves the unearthing of problems that the state then through its various agencies subsequently responds to (Foucault, 1976; Yeatman, 1990). Writers like Yeatman (1990) and Danziger (1994) for instance argue that politics and policy formulation are discursive contests over meaning and that researchers and policy makers play a generative role in the act of discovering problems (ibid). Even non-Foucauldians like Cohen in his work on 'moral panics' suggest there was a need to pay attention to the processes in which problems connected to youth cultures are discursively and politically constituted.

Metaphors like 'casualties of change' and 'youth at risk' achieve a pedagogical function in the media as they shape 'public opinion' (Catalano and Hawkins, 1996). Such metaphors simultaneously operate to persuade members of the policy-making community that certain young people present a problem that warrant specific policy responses. Thus the youth problem is framed in a way that prescribes 'the appropriate' policy response.

The term 'subculture' is one more example of a pedagogical metaphor frequently used in the media to communicate the idea that a particular kind of relationship exists between the collective activities of certain groups of young people - 'youth cultures' - and 'wider society' or 'mainstream culture'. As members of 'sub' or 'youth cultures', young people are described as belonging to something that is 'sub' to , that is subterranean, under-ground, beneath, of less value, or a section of 'mainstream culture'. This is evident in the work of many youth researchers including reputable writers like Hall and Jefferson (1976), and Hebidge (1979) as they described the social action of certain groups of young people as a form of 'resistance' to the 'dominant hegemonic culture'.

Policy models.

I now turn to consider the heuristic value of various models of policy for understanding how the use of metaphor in research functions to inform policy. I argue that traditional functionalist-cum-rational action models have limited value in helping to demonstrate their influence. I continue the inquiry by assessing the virtues of alternative policy models ('expert networks' and 'policy making communities') in respect to the insights they offer about the influence of metaphor and research on youth policy. Finally I focus on 'youth at risk' research to discuss governmentality theory and the heuristic value of such an approach in respect to the question being addressed.

The conventional method of demonstrating how research informs policy-making processes relies on the 'discovery' of evidence used to demonstrate what are said to be causal connections between the research practices and later policy outcomes. That evidence might take the form of anything from the raw data, or more fully developed research findings and research reports through to the tracking of memos and correspondence, minutes of meetings, and policy documents in which reference is made to the research material which 'proves' that research produces certain policy outcomes.

This approach is problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, it requires demonstrating in an empirical way, a myriad of causal connections. Secondly it operates with an assumption that the policy-making process is a rational, systematic and orderly process that can be traced from point a, to b to c (Weber, 1978; Simon, 1945). Finally it rests on the assumption that policy intent is identifiable, that the problem being addressed is objective and that those describing the problem (namely, the researchers) are politically neutral and value free .

More recently such classic understandings of policy-making have been challenged. Analysts like Brook (1994) have offered alternative accounts such as the 'policy making community model' that highlight the limitations of rational action, objectivist models. Indeed 'policy making community' models and similar 'actor/expert network models' (Considine and Lewis, 1999; Hall, 1990) have become dominant paradigms in the study of interest groups. This is partly because such models accept the generative or constitutive role of the intellectually-trained, or 'actor networks' (eg. youth researchers, journalists) and their use of rhetorical devices including pedagogical metaphor. Moreover, they suggest that conventional claims about objectivity are suspect. In other words, there is a focus on the activities of experts, including policy makers, as they work to ensure that certain matters they consider important come to seen more generally as a youth/social problem worthy of policy intervention. Proponents of such models also accept that policy making is frequently a fragmented and irrational process, and that it is typically a disordered and irrational process (Brook, 1994). Kingdon's work is particularly valuable in respect to understanding how particular issues come to be placed on the policy agenda. He drew attention to the problem setting phase of policy-making, explaining how some things enter the public realm and are placed on the policy agenda because of a combination of 'circumstances and politics' (Kingdon, 1984).

As mentioned earlier, post-empiricist approaches to policy study such as discourse analysis, informed by social constructionism and post-foundationalism (Yeatman 1990; Schon 1980) similarly stress the role of language in policy making. These more recent approaches produce quite different accounts to traditional explanations about how policy is made (Marshall, 1951; Titmuss, 1966; O'Connor, 1973; Habermas,

1974). Unlike the objectivist, functionalist perspective where the problem is seen to have an objective status, from a constructivist perspective language plays a formative role by constituting the object of policy.

Similarly, a policy as discourse model entails seeing policy as a system of statements that produce particular versions of events and which construct objects that are then said to require policy intervention. From this perspective, particular modes of reasoning are more than abstract ideas about 'youth problems', they are purposeful in the way they problematise and shape youthful identities. From this theoretical position, pedagogical metaphors play a significant role in problematisation processes, or to put it in policy language, they play an important part in the problem setting phase of policy. The use of pedagogical metaphor in problem setting can be observed in recent approaches to 'the problem' of 'youth at risk'.

Youth at risk.

'Youth at risk' is a popular figure of speech frequently used to problematise and 'discover' youth problems. These 'discoveries' shape research enterprises while adding momentum to media driven moral panics about 'escalating youth crime', 'pandemics of youth suicide' etc - all of which inform policy (Ricoeur,1983: 42).

Policy study and more general modes of government typically involve attempts to identify the formation of identities, capacities and statuses of certain sections of the population- in this case, young people. With the 'new science' of risk research, recognising the difficulties represented by certain young people starts with the identification of the various types of 'youth at risk' (Catalano and Hawkins, 1996; Le and Miller, 1999). Indeed 'youth at risk' is a versatile metaphor used to communicate the idea that a full range of young people are in danger and/or constitute a danger to others. 'Youth at risk' offers a new version of deviancy theory and as such is a part of a long tradition of research that identifies different 'types' of 'youth offenders', the juvenile underclass, maladjusted youth etc. (Bessant, 2001).

When the central theme in youth research is 'risk', it is identified as a problem that comes to be observed in a host of individual, familial, community and social factors. What youth at risk research tends to do is to problematise certain young people once more as actual or potential juvenile criminal, homeless, suicidal or jobless (Farrington, 1978; National Crime Prevention, 1999; McKenzie and Chamberlain, 1998). Risk based research especially as it pertains to 'crime problems' make it clear that the risk referred to 'targets' one specific section of the population, namely, urban young people who offend - in other words, the group identified as the 'underclass'. (National Crime Prevention, 1999).

Representations of the 'juvenile underclass' deploys a wide range of generative metaphors that emphasise the threat to civility (Jencks and Peterson, 1991; Braithwaite and Chappell, 1994; Dryfoos, 1990). Here the role of the media in communicating a particular construction of 'the problem' becomes apparent. Tropes of danger have been conjured up through the a generous use of martial metaphors. The juvenile underclass is particularly risky and represented as such especially as a force waiting to sow disorder and destruction. In the press 'they' are described as 'brewing ferment' these 'youth-as-urban-guerrilla-gangs' who plan 'aggressive attacks', whilst building 'garrisons', and roaming through the suburbs as 'breeds of outlaw children'. These 'armies of young people' are ticking like 'time bombs'. Almost as popular, animal metaphors are also used in the literature and reportage; invoking 'predatory', 'urban tribes' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 January 1983). 'These youth at risk restlessly wander all night ... These kids are getting progressively more violent' (*Bulletin*, 3 April 1990:50) The main characteristic reiterated about the juvenile underclass is their criminality and violence.

The idea of poverty as a self-reproducing condition in which 'the juvenile underclass' is responsible for their own condition, has a long history in English political economy (Dean, 1991). It belongs to a genealogy of discourses about 'the poor' which is part of an economic tradition that started when English political economists began shadowing eighteenth century urban and capitalist industrialisation. Today's debates about ever expanding numbers of 'youth at risk' and the underclass builds on the legacy of classic economic liberals who argued that policies which rewarded poor people for their fecundity were not only bad in economic terms, but were also socially and morally dangerous. The difference with contemporary debates about 'poor urban youth' who constitute risks to themselves and others is that they build on the work of social liberals like Booth and Hollingsworth whose aims were to reform the living conditions of 'the poor' (Booth, 1902; Hollingsworth, 1979).

This more liberal and progressive approach coincides with conservative forces often producing shared policy outcomes such as increased governance of those 'at risk'. According to neo-conservatives 'the underclass' with its accompanying 'youth at risk' problem has resulted from an 'over-generous welfare system'. This is a particular extrapolation of the 'new right' arguments since the late 1970s, that Big Government had created inflation, unemployment and recession (Sawer, 1979; Murray, 1994). Within the context of 'a crisis of the welfare state', represented as either a cash crisis, or as a crisis of public debt, the media has generally argued that a combination of unprecedented levels of youth unemployment and a boom in welfare dependency has created large numbers of youth at risk as part of a growing juvenile underclass.

With 'science of risk' research, policy makers direct their attention towards the 'target' population. It is also worth noting how reference to youth at risk usually excludes, for example, questions of government mismanagement, the collapse of the youth labour market, the failure of governments and private elites to invest in social and physical infrastructure (Catalano and Hawkins, 1996). Indeed if 'the problem of youth at risk' were defined in terms of a failure to invest in labour creating enterprises etc 'the problem' would be framed quite differently, with very different policy directives inherent in that framing. Rather than directing attention toward the least powerful sections of the community (ie. young urban poor) under the pretext of 'crime prevention' framing the problem to identify government and private elites as somewhat responsible, would make it obvious that corrective measures needed to be directed toward those groups

'Youth at risk' is a metaphor that implies uncertainty, challenge, and insecurity. Historically the idea of risk was associated with gambling, and can be traced to Renaissance Italy and the idea of *risicare,* meaning to dare. From the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, actuaries associated with the insurance industry, and more recently emergency services have made the concept of 'risk' central to their professional calculations or interventions. In recent years 'risk' entered the language of social theory. Indeed the idea of risk has now become a central metaphor used by many contemporary social theorists to discuss the regulation of human affairs and in particular the lives of young people (Beck, 1992; Kelly, 1998; Bessant, Hill and Watts, 2002).

More generally, risk discourses are very attractive to policy makers because they hold out the promise that within an era of globalisation, people or states can still at least try to manage the multiplicity of uncertainties they now confront (Beck 1992). In this way the metaphor of 'risk' and risk based research has become increasingly central to government and policy. As Dean (1999: 131) observes:

> *Risk is a way - or rather a set of different ways - of ordering reality, of rendering it into a calculable form. It is a way of representing events so they might be made governable ... It is a component of diverse forms of calculative rationality for governing the conduct of individuals, collectivities and populations.*

This is not to suggest that risk research as it is now used in respect to young people is new. On the contrary, it is a way of seeing and reasoning that has been around for a long time. 'Risk' as a metaphor is a relatively new-fashioned way of framing old problems while reinvigorating and extending old projects of governance. In this way long-standing governmentality projects 'targeting' young people have been able to take on fresh life via the 'science of risk'.

Since the late 1970s, Foucault's (1991) work has been used to develop new ways of thinking about the discovery of social problems through research and subsequent policy responses. Rather than assuming that problems such as 'youth crime' or 'youth homelessness' have a self-evident facticity, Foucault, like proponents of 'expert network' and 'policy making community' models suggested there is value in studying what experts are involved in the construction of problems. In this way Foucault sponsored a useful approach to research and scholarship around the ideas of policy and governmentality.

Foucault's work points to a long-standing and continuing attempt to regulate the conduct of the entire population (although some sections are seen to require greater regulation than others) (see also, Rose, 1994). From this perspective, the idea of policy as part of government is not simply just about what the state or political parties institutions do. While policy and government can refer to what the English Blair, or the Australian Howard governments do, it also addresses all attempts to govern the conduct of others. In this sense policy can refer to a loose amalgam of objectives (like juvenile crime control or prevention), and can include techniques of social investigation (like empirical social scientific surveys) and an array of institutional practices directed to the constant 'care', control and 'betterment' of problem populations (eg. compulsory schooling, compulsory child vaccination programs).

This involves a general form of organised reasoning that embraces practical ways of posing and addressing youth problems. As Foucault argued, social science research enterprises and especially disciplines like psychology, sociology, criminology and economics play a key role in informing policy and governmental projects more generally.

Government involves a number of distinctive activities oriented toward policy (Dean and Hindess 1998). They include problematisation which is an activity based on a recognition that in order to make policy, one first needs to establish who is the problem and what are the qualities of the problem; in other words, who will to be subject to the policies. Thus for insight into policy making it is first necessary to inquire into the investigate enterprises that make certain groups recognisable as a problem warranting intervention. From this perspective, to understand youth related policy, it is necessary to understand how certain youthful identities, capacities, and standings are formulated, and this entails reference to youth research.

The role of pedagogical metaphor is critical for understanding research and how certain ways of knowing frame youth problems and subsequent policies. More traditional models of policy like the rational-action, objectivist approach have limited explanatory value in respect to establishing the relationship between language,

policy and research. More recent models that give credence to the formative role of experts and language like expert network models and governmentality theory have considerable heuristic value in helping us understand the relationships between rhetoric like metaphor, research and policy.

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FROM MAPPING TO TRAVELLING

Negotiating the complex and confusing terrain of Youth Justice

MICHAEL PRESTON-SHOOT AND STUART VERNON

The last decade has witnessed major changes in youth justice and an ever-increasing rate of change in youth justice policy and law. A previous article[1] examined the major provisions of youth justice legislation in the last decade and established the significant parameters for youth justice practice that are set by law. By doing so it evidenced the drift towards authoritarian, controlling and interventionist policies.

The purpose of this article is twofold. Firstly, to argue that the last decade of youth justice legislation has constructed a number of parallel youth justice systems, each characterised by its own policies and politics. This leads on to further consideration of the apparent chaos or fragmentation within youth justice provision, and of the rapidity of change. Secondly, to indicate how practitioners and managers might respond within these systems, using the concepts of space and alliances to seek a creative, sensitive and constructive practice.

Parallel Youth Justice Systems

Interrogating the map of youth justice legislation it is now possible to suggest the co-existence of six youth justice systems rather than one coherent and homogeneous institution indicated by the phrase 'youth justice system'. Each of these systems can be described by identifying the legislation that constructed them and the broad politics and policies that inform them.

System 1- youth justice for the under 10s

Despite the age of criminal responsibility being set at ten years of age, there is now a youth justice system for those under this threshold. Children under ten involved in anti-social disorder or sub-criminal activities can be made subject to local child curfews and child safety orders. This system was constructed by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (sections 1 and 11-15). It reflects a number of concerns: that communities can be victims of anti-social, sub-criminal behaviour; that very young children are often involved in such activity; that early intervention can prevent graduating to offending; and that peer group pressure is a cause of criminality. The rationale for the child safety order is early and targeted intervention as a response to anti-social or disruptive behaviour. Such intervention is seen as preventive and protective of a child's welfare (Home Office, 1998a). Local child curfews are linked with child safety orders in the objective of early targeted intervention with children who are particularly at risk of drifting into crime (Home Office, 1998b). The provisions of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 have extended this system. Local child curfews are extended to children up to the age of 15 and the police may now make applications as well as local authorities.

It is contended that these new orders constitute a criminal justice domain despite the fact that local child curfews are available through administrative application and child safety orders are within the jurisdiction of the family proceedings court. Both orders are 'enforced' by the police and both construct groups or individual children as 'sub-criminals'. One of the grounds for a child safety order is that the child (under ten) has committed an act, which if s/he had been aged ten or over would have constituted an offence. Such orders can be seen as a covert lowering of the age of criminal responsibility.

The construction of a 'youth justice system' for those under the age of ten is significant. At one level there can be little argument with orders designed to prevent young children embarking on a criminal career and to assist local authorities and the police in establishing and maintaining good social order. However, there are sufficient powers already available to local authorities under the Children Act to deal with just the sort of problems identified as requiring the introduction of child safety orders. Local authorities already have a duty to take steps to encourage children not to commit offences and to reduce the need to bring criminal proceedings against children (schedule 2, Children Act 1989). The order marks a significant widening of the net to involve children (and their parents) in an expanding and expansive youth justice system.

Local child curfews are to be seen in the same context. Again the Children Act provides equivalent powers, that is the right of a police officer to take a child into police protection, and the duty of a local authority to investigate the circumstances of a child who is or might be suffering significant harm. The curfew order shifts the focus from social services to the police as the front line and as such constructs a quasi-criminal response to a set of circumstances that could be dealt with in a different and non-criminal manner.

System 2 - police reprimands and final warnings

Police reprimands and final warnings have succeeded juvenile cautions as the primary means of diverting children and young people from the formal court-based youth justice system. This second youth justice system is constructed by sections 65 and 66 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and is seen by government as contributing to the delivery of the statutory aim of the Act, the prevention of offending by children and young persons. Despite this declaration of a preventative focus, the orders are also seen as an element in a graduated response to offending (Home Office, 1998c). It is also possible to see these two orders as contributing to the greater control of this group of young offenders outside the formal court-based system.

Though the decision whether to caution was the responsibility of the police, many police forces took advice from multi-agency (cautioning) panels before deciding

whether to charge or caution. A welfarist voice was often provided by social work representatives and a number of local authorities ran 'caution-plus' schemes to provide support for children and young people who had been cautioned.

The decision whether to reprimand, warn or charge is now solely that of the police, with the possibility of advice from the Crown Prosecution Service, with the consequence that a welfarist influence on the police is now missing. However the legislation (s.65) makes it clear that consequent upon administering a final warning, the police shall also refer the child or young person to the youth offending team for assessment for participation in a rehabilitation programme. The declared purpose of the programme is to help the offender (and his or her family) to change the attitudes and behaviour that led to the offending so as to prevent any further offending. Programmes can include assessment of the young person, work with parents, counseling directed to behavioural change, reparation to victims and work to improve educational attainment (Home Office, 1997a).

Though the declared objective of such programmes is preventative and the rehabilitative function is expressed through the title of the programme, there may be other, less positive, consequences of such orders. Unreasonable non-compliance with the programme is recorded and may be considered by a court when sentencing for a subsequent offence. A number of parents may resist or reject involvement; they may blame their child for involving them with a programme and with agencies they have little time for. In such circumstances parental support may diminish rather than be mobilized. The administration of rehabilitation programmes may constitute a wholly disproportionate response to a minor offence and an unwelcome or even resisted interference in family life on the contested claim of parental responsibility for youth offending.

System 3 - referral orders and youth offender panels

The vast majority of first time young offenders who plead guilty have been annexed to a third youth justice system by the provisions of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999. Such offenders are referred to a youth offender panel for the purpose of negotiating and agreeing a youth offender contract designed to confront first offending and prevent further offending.

The initiative for this system can be traced back to government dissatisfaction with the structure and procedures of the youth court, and a view that the court merely decided guilt or innocence and issued sentences. Government wished to see a shift toward a 'wider enquiry' into the nature and circumstances of a young person's offending behaviour and action to change such behaviour (Home Office, 1997b).

However, the declared objectives mask a number of problems that substantiate the claim of confusion, complexity and fragmentation within youth justice. On what basis do the police decide whether to utilise the reprimand and final warning provisions or to charge a young person who accepts their guilt, so that a referral order (1999 Act) may be imposed? The availability of referral orders may mean that more first time offenders are being processed through the courts. If this is the case we may expect to see an escalation of the criminalisation of first time offenders in direct contravention of the established objectives of diversion.

It is entirely possible that the making of a referral order and the consequent contract between the panel and the offender may be disproportionate to the offence and therefore in contravention to the principle of proportionate sentencing established by the Criminal Justice Act 1991. Contract terms can be comprehensive. They may include financial or other reparation to the victim or others affected by the offence; attendance at mediation sessions with any victim or affected person; unpaid community work; home curfews; education or work arrangements; participation in specified activities (such as those designed to address offending behaviour, educational issues, or rehabilitation from misuse of drugs or alcohol); requirements to present to specified persons at times and places specified in the programme, or to stay away from specified places or persons or both; supervision arrangements.

The youth court may not make a parenting order or a parental bindover when it is making a referral order. Consequently the referral order seems to relegate parents to attendance and observer status in such proceedings. Offender accountability is established to the panel and to any practitioner involved in the administration of the terms of the contract programme rather than to the parents. The increased emphasis on parental responsibility established by the 1998 Act is essentially by-passed in the search for personal offender responsibility expressed through contract negotiation and terms.

Guidance strongly advises panels to exclude legal representation and legal aid is not available. Consequently children and young people are required to negotiate the terms of a contract without legal representation at an age where their contractual capacity would be very limited or absent in other situations. This is of particular concern where the terms of the youth offender contract can be seen as akin to a criminal sentence. In such circumstances there is a distinct absence of due process rights and it is possible that there is a breach of the fair trial guarantees provided for in Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

System 4 - repeat but non-persistent offenders

This system for repeat but non-persistent young offenders is a formal court-based youth justice system. It has been constructed through the decade of our inquiry,

largely by provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000. As such, it is based on a tension between the principles of proportionate sentencing (1991 Act), the statutory aim of the prevention of (re-) offending (s.37 1998 Act), the influence of the principles of restorative justice (1998 Act) and the enhanced sentencing provisions of the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000. In an added twist to the tensions of these principles, the welfare principle of section 44, Children and Young Persons Act 1933 should direct hearings in the youth court for this group of offenders.

This youth justice system evidences a number of contradictory policies. The principle of proportionate sentencing requires sentencers to reflect the seriousness of the offence in severity of the sentence. Though this principle applies in the youth court as well as the adult courts, the Home Office Guide to the Act also stressed that young people should be dealt with in a way that reflected their age, development and the extent to which parents should take responsibility for the crimes of their children. The statutory aim of the prevention of (re-) offending is established in section 37 of the 1998 Act. It reflects a concern for the supposed existing confusion about the purpose of youth justice and tensions between welfarism and the need to protect the public, punish offences and prevent offending (Home Office, 1997b). Restorative justice shifts the focus away from the seriousness of the offence toward 'restoration', 'reintegration' and 'responsibility' (Home Office, 1997b).

In this youth justice system the 'justice' orientation of proportionate sentencing is being superseded by a 'prevention' and restorative justice focus on the offender and their family and community environment. Such a focus can be used to legitimate the increasingly interventionist, authoritarian and supervisory impact of youth justice (Muncie, 1999). The sentencing provisions of the 2000 Act, including the extended availability of curfews and electronic monitoring, and the introduction of exclusion orders, is a continuation of this trend.

System 5 - repeat and persistent offenders

Repeat and persistent offenders are fast-tracked through their youth justice system. The statutory framework for this system can be traced to the secure training order provisions of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and to the statutory time limits introduced by sections 43-45 Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The former were designed as a custodial and supervisory sentence for 'persistent young offenders', a group of offenders constructed by elements of the media and a number of criminal justice agencies (Muncie, 1999). The latter reflect the managerialist concerns of government and provided the necessary statutory framework for fast-tracking persistent young offenders through the youth court.

Delays in the youth justice system figured prominently in the government's plans for youth justice reform and were the subject of a separate consultation paper (Home Office 1997c). Persistent young offenders were singled out for special measures and they are to be processed more quickly than other defendants. This category of young offenders is defined as encompassing those sentenced on three or more separate occasions for recordable offences and within three years of the last sentence are subsequently arrested or have an information laid against them for another recordable offence (Ashford and Chard, 2000). This definition is wide and, given the frequency of spree offending and juvenile criminality, could establish a significant number of children and young people as persistent young offenders.

There must be concern that speeding up criminal proceedings in the youth court may lead to the undermining of a defendant's rights and interests. Such developments reflect a trend away from recognizing the vulnerability of a child or young person in the criminal justice system and appear again to undermine the significance of the welfare principle in section 44, Children and Young Persons Act 1933. In these developments 'fast-tracking' in the youth justice system is in danger of failing the standard set by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This requires that in all actions concerning children in courts of law the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration.

The category of the persistent young offender is also important in the statutory criteria established by the 1998 Act for detention and training orders. This custodial and training sentence is currently available for offenders aged twelve to fourteen and fifteen to seventeen, though for the younger age group the offender must be a 'persistent offender'. The legislation provides for the Secretary of State to extend the order to ten and eleven-year-old offenders, but again they must be 'persistent' offenders.

The inclusion of both a custodial element and a training element in the order allows claims to be made about the order within the language and rhetoric of community punishment, prevention and rehabilitation. However, the detention and training order, and the secure training order that preceded it, mark a clear shift toward the increased use of incarceration for youth offenders. The 1998 Act extends the custodial powers of youth courts in relation to both the length of sentence and age range. By doing so it confirms both the government's commitment to custody as a central element of youth justice, and a continuing tension with the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 which requires youth custody to be used only as a last resort and for the minimum period of time (Muncie, 1999). This commitment to custody is confirmed by provisions in the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 extending the use of remands to local authority secure accommodation.

System 6 - the Crown Court and grave crimes

This system has two elements: firstly, it involves trial in the Crown Court and secondly, it may result in a lengthy custodial sentence. Children and young people tried in the Crown Court may be sentenced to a detention and training order for up to 24 months, or to detention under the 'grave crimes' provisions of section 53(2) and (3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (now consolidated into the Powers of the Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000).

The trial of children and young people in the Crown Court has come under substantial scrutiny as a result of the European Court of Human Rights case brought by the two boys convicted of the murder of James Bulger. The Court held (by 16 votes to 1) that their trial had been a violation of their right to a fair trial as guaranteed by Article 6 of the Convention. The article guarantees the right of an accused to participate effectively in their trial. Following the decision of the European Court, the Lord Chief Justice issued a practice direction stressing that Crown Court trials should not expose young defendants to avoidable intimidation, humiliation or distress. Trial procedures should be adapted to assist young defendants to understand and participate in the proceedings. (*Times Law Report*, February 17th, 2000.) The practice direction makes it clear that Crown Court trials should have regard to the welfare of young defendants as required by section 44, Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

The 'grave crimes' provisions allow the Crown Court to impose lengthy custodial sentences on children and young people who have committed serious indictable offences. The principles that inform sentencing under these provisions have been set down in important guideline cases. In R v Fairhurst [1986] 8 Cr App R (S) Lord Chief Justice Lane commented on the desirability of keeping offenders under the age of 18 out of long term custody. However he made it clear that this must be balanced against the need to provide appropriate punishment, the necessary deterrent effect and appropriate protection to the public (Ashford and Chard, 2000).

The number of children and young people exposed to this youth justice system has increased through the extension of the category of grave crimes and by judicial encouragement to magistrates to commit more indictable and either-way offences to the Crown Court so that such offenders may be 'appropriately' sentenced. This youth justice system is becoming increasingly important at a time when a number of the due process rights that characterise Crown Court trial are under attack by government and the recommendations of the Auld review (2001) of the criminal justice process. Children and young people dealt with in the Crown Court should benefit from the human rights declarations that emerged from the consequences of the Bulger trial rather than become trapped in the shadow of an increasingly punitive adult criminal justice system legitimated by the supposedly managerialist concerns of the Home Office and the Auld review (2001).

Comment

It is possible to place each of the six youth justice systems identified on a linear model with prevention and punishment at either end. However, reference to a linear model suggests coherence and can obscure the tensions within each of the systems identified. Such tensions characterise the complexity of contemporary youth justice. For example, while child safety orders can operate to prevent offending at a later age, they also display elements of punishment. While a lengthy Crown Court custodial sentence may constitute a severe punishment for offending it may also provide the site, time and place for successful rehabilitative intervention and supervision. Muncie (1999) argues that such tensions are implicit in the processes, sentences and orders of youth justice and that they draw 'upon justice, retribution, rehabilitation, treatment, punishment, prevention and diversion'.

These characteristics are to be found across the six systems described though it is contended that each of the six systems displays dominant (or a dominant set of) characteristics. The emphasis in the first three systems is on prevention; punishment and retribution dominate the fifth and sixth systems.

The rhetorical value within the language and notion of a unified and homogeneous youth justice system is considerable. Government is able to present youth justice policy as coherent and purposeful to a society increasingly concerned about the manifestations and impact of youth offending. The use and articulation of a statutory principal aim, the prevention of offending, is just such an example. The idea of a 'principal aim' invites government, society and youth justice practitioners to sign up to a simplified model of youth justice.

The identification of the six systems of youth justice is both an attempt to counteract the values attached to the rhetoric of a single system and to describe the complexity and conflicts experienced by suspects, defendants, offenders and practitioners. Rather than explaining and defending the conflicts between the dominant characteristics of the six systems, by arguing that they represent a continuum of appropriate responses to disorder and crime (Home Office, 1997b), the charge explored here is that the underpinning policies and politics are too dissimilar to offer a coherent approach to young offenders and their offending. The argument raises the possibility of the 'six-furcation' of youth justice rather than the established bifurcatory explanations.

What are the challenges for those seeking to understand their experience of youth justice? It may well no longer be possible to talk of a youth justice map, even one with six different keys or legends. Perhaps we now need to accept the existence of six maps, placed not side by side but one upon the other. Each map represents a

particular facet of youth justice, one for diversion, one for grave crimes and so on; and each would provide a glimpse of the others to represent the interfaces between each system. In such a model successive maps could be taken away to reveal a fresh representation of similar and additional features.

As government continues to legislate for youth justice, its energy and appetite for new initiatives and 'fixes' adds to the complexity and confusion. Ultimately the speed and frequency of change begins to undermine claims for the coherence of earlier major reform. In their place come allegations of quick fixes, failure and misunderstanding. To the established explanations of complexity and confusion in youth justice policy, reviewed in the previous article, we now add a further analysis based on psychodynamic theory and some guidelines for practitioners seeking to understand and develop their youth justice practice.

Exploring Chaos and Irrationality

The 'six-furcation' of the youth justice system can be seen as evidence not of a well thought out reconstruction but of patchwork defences against the anxiety generated by questions of crime control in a changing social and economic environment. Garland (2001) criticises policy-making for being characterised by two non-adaptive responses - denial, revealed by a disregard of evidence that crime is not readily responsive to severe sentences, and acting out, an unreflective rapid action to assuage popular outrage, to reassure and to restore system credibility. Brown and Pratt (2000) allude to the latter response when observing that there has been little reflection on the ethics and efficacy of the new powers, on the social context of offenders, and on what definitions of dangerousness and monstrosity tell people about themselves. Young (1999) also alludes to defensive policy-making by suggesting that politicians have created a cosmetic criminology, applying simple ointments to soothe the problems that crime causes for society rather than operating on the society that causes the problems of crime.

There is a third non-adaptive response - omnipotence, the assumption that taking increasing power is sufficient to maintain social cohesion and to deter young people from offending. Young (1999) exposes this fallacy by demonstrating that offending is also affected by informal control in communities, patterns of employment, the cultural and moral climate, types of parenting and human assessment and reflexivity. Without a move towards social justice, without fairness in social and economic justice, social order will prove elusive. Nonetheless, political posturing and a get-tough rhetoric, rather than a concern for effectiveness and responsibility, have energised youth justice policy (Goldson, 1999). The analysis here interrogates this 'energy', which may be reproducing the very mayhem it seeks to contain (Preston-Shoot, 1999).

W(h)ither evidence-based practice?

Worrall (1999) and Anderson (1999), drawing on statistical evidence, illustrate that anxiety about crime is greatly exaggerated. Jackson (1999) uses research evidence to show that coercion, so much now in vogue, is counter-productive. Welfare and rehabilitation are more effective strategies than punishment; emphasising responsibility without partnership is unhelpful. Goldson (1999) demonstrates that most youth crime is petty, opportunistic and transitory. However, the effective 1980s policies of diversion, decriminalisation and decarceration have been supplanted by the promotion of prosecution, expanded forms of criminalisation and intensification of incarceration (Bell, 1999).

Youth justice policy-making is not learning focused. Rather, it has undervalued knowledge held by young people and youth justice practitioners, and represents another attack on professional thinking. It has become dominated by immediacy and the need for results, which has reduced complex phenomena to manageable bits and pieces. The result is policy proliferation, solutions prescribed before fully defining and understanding the problem. Goldson (2001) makes similar observations about how politics has obstructed the application of research to policy formation and practice development. He contrasts provisions in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 with the evidence that offending is a relatively 'normal' part of growing up and is mostly non-serious, that custody is corrosive whilst diversion is very effective, and that most young offenders have experienced disadvantage such that they are children-in-need. Young (1999) similarly contrasts political change, occasioned by urgent and atypical cases or events that provoke hostile reactions and magnify people's felt insecurities, with administrative evolution, concerned with coherence and feasibility by reference to standard cases.

First order change

Policy focuses on individuals and groups, seldom making the context a subject for exploration or comment. Yet, social, economic and psychological factors impinge on young people. Goldson (1999) notes that poverty and structural disadvantage limit young people's opportunities. Worrall (1999) argues that young women offenders will only change if and when they have access to the structural preconditions of social justice, and when they feel recognised as people of worth. Anderson (1999) criticises current policy for failing to recognise that multiple problems require interventions and solutions at different levels.

Instead of appreciating the multi-faceted nature of work with young offenders, policy is reductionist and individualistic. Complexity and ambiguity are denied. Focus is on individual problem solving - first order change - to the neglect of interactions and relationships - second order change. Policy interventions are highly likely,

therefore, to ultimately prove ineffective. Frosh (1987) warns of the danger of reducing the social to the microsocial, of hoping that social change emerges through alterations in individual behaviour rather than the other way around. He argues that the social world limits the extent of personal change possible through policy-making and professional intervention, building systems that neglect structuring factors, such as racism and exclusion, which influence people's relationships, and which suggest that it is possible for professional intervention and the law to reverse orders of causality. This is to fall into the reductionist trap of reading social order as produced by the free behaviour of individuals. However, rather than reviewing the relationship between social forces, law and policy-making, when hoped-for changes fail to materialise, disillusionment about the repetitive nature of problems prompts policy-makers to elaborate but repeat more of the same approaches to tackle them.

Dehumanising individuals

Childhood has increasingly been constructed around negative stereotypes, including offending behaviour. Whilst rooted more in fear than fact, this is a powerful contributory factor to the extension of powers of control. Worrall (1999), for example, identifies the discrimination young women experience, based on inadequate provision and stereotyped assumptions about their 'needs'. Jackson (1999), perhaps thinking of the abolition of doli incapax, argues that youth justice policy is negating young people's specific needs as children. Thus, danger may lie not in young offenders so much as in the policy response to them. Unwanted anxiety, generated by the behaviour of some young people, is expelled rather than contained. As Young (1999) notes, precariousness is a fertile soil for projection - ejecting the 'bad' allows the location of the monstrous in the 'other'. Condemnation translates into demonisation, from which it is a short step to regarding a group as not fully human (Wardhaugh and Wilding, 1993) and moving them beyond the bounds of moral obligation. They become categories for routine activity rather than professional judgement and relationship skills. The Cleveland Report's observation that a child must be seen as a person rather than an object of concern (Butler Sloss, 1988) warns that systems can act as if young people do not matter.

Legalism

The increasing reliance on law to effect social change assumes that the former will necessarily promote the latter (Roach Anleu, 2000) when, at the most, legal coercion can only change external behaviour (Cotterrell, 1992) rather than internal attitudes. Additional strategies will be necessary to achieve the goals of preventing youth crime and 'disorder'. Moreover, among the prerequisites for effective legislation are compatibility and continuity with established cultural and legal principles, positive

incentives for compliance alongside negative sanctions, and the commitment of enforcement agencies to the goals outlined by statute even if not to the values within it. There are question marks here. For example, pace Webb (1976), the use of child curfew orders and child safety orders may be prompted by factors dredged up on a basis of correlations that are not necessarily causally related and do not reach the legal standard of evidence on the balance of probability.

Finally, the imposition of procedures may hinder good workers by constraining flexible and sensitive practice without helping less effective practitioners. Indeed, Blaug (1995) cautions that standardised practice distorts face to face interaction, whilst Pietroni (1995) warns that it undermines the capacity of practitioners for individual thought and professional judgement. Prins (1975) adds that procedurally led practice may reduce the quality of decision-making and practice by weakening the sense of personal responsibility which professionals bring. Moreover, as evidence suggests in the fields of child protection and mental health, a legalistic, highly regulated approach cannot guarantee risk-free and problem-free practice (see Preston-Shoot, 2001).

Interrogating the pace of change

Hypotheses drawn from psychodynamic theory illuminate the upheavals of the last decade in youth justice. Firstly, policy and politics is imbued with anxiety about failure. Secondly, political and media responses escalate a sense of danger, which intensifies anxiety and unbalances debate. Anxiety and 'disturbance' circulates around interactions between politicians, the media and the public. The more the community is anxious about crime, the more policy makers respond. The more they respond, the more they become anxious, and the less secure the community feels. The result is an escalating spiral, characterised by repetition compulsion - more of the same interventions. Following Foster and Zagier Roberts (1998a), what is not understood inevitably reappears and the response, in the form of tighter controls, is destined to result in problem repetition because it reflects change without sufficient understanding of the problems. There are several consequences.

Firstly, no one feels contained. The community is unable to offer containment because it is disturbed at the prospect of offenders in its midst (Foster and Zagier Roberts, 1998b) and wishes to defend itself from 'attack'. Young offenders are unable to reintegrate because they do not experience community, either internally or externally (Foster, 1998; Landau and Wallbank, 1998). Policy makers also feel the need to defend themselves from 'attack', the imperative becoming a need to control rather than to understand. The temptation is to rush to action and to forget what is known, especially when that is inconvenient or uncomfortable (Foster, 1998). A reflective space wherein participants, out of concern for others, take more responsibility for the complexity of their feelings and for the consequences of their actions (Nathan, 1998), is lost.

This generates the second consequence, namely splitting (Hinshelwood, 1998). Instead of policy makers, and others coming to terms with their own ambivalent contradictions (Nathan, 1998), 'badness' and 'blame' is split off and projected into others, in this instance young people, who then attract harsh responses. This highlights a third consequence, the creation of collusions (Biggs, 1998) that exclude particular voices. Most recently, policy makers have engaged victims and communities in a dyadic relationship that splits off young offenders and their parents, and thus promotes a limited view of crime. This analysis invites the conclusion that laws can become more dangerous than the dangerousness that they were meant to govern (Freiberg, 2000).

Locating a Space for Practice

This and the preceding article have catalogued concerns and reservations about both the pace and the nature of changes in youth justice legislation and policy. These include the authoritarian, interventionist (net widening), controlling and sometimes punitive nature of youth justice reforms. However, practitioners have to find enough space for creative, sensitive and constructive practice, notwithstanding the extended boundaries within which youth offending teams will be working.

One source promoting space is the commitment to prevention as the statutory aim of youth justice (section 37, Crime and Disorder Act 1998). A second is the continued influence of the welfare principle (section 44, Children and Young Persons Act 1933). These suggest that practitioners should wherever possible reframe perceptions of young offenders. Fell and Piper (2001) provide an example of community intervention to promote intergenerational trust and challenge negative stereotypes of young people. Considering young offenders as children in need (section 17, Children Act 1989) is another example of reframing that, additionally, has diversion at its core and focuses on one element of 'what works' (Smith, 1999), namely addressing needs and problems related to offending. Education, employment, health, poverty, and housing are the focus here, both at the strategic planning level of multi-agency co-operation (Fullwood, 2001) and at the practice level with individuals and groups of young people. Thus, Rogowski (1995) advocates community-based initiatives that confront inequalities of wealth and power, which lie behind youth crime. He also stresses the importance of offering young people compensatory experiences, interests and relationships. Fullwood (2001) emphasises the constant need for prevention, early intervention and support, including projects aimed at social regeneration and inclusion. Initiatives being sponsored by the Youth Justice Board, youth offending teams and partner agencies can provide significant space for positive practice (Youth Justice Board, 2001).

Practitioners should resist the attraction of the formulaic authoring of pre-sentence reports. The preparation of such reports and the proposals contained with them

offers space and opportunity for creative, individualised responses to offending. This is particularly important where, for instance, the report is proposing the implementation of an action plan order, a community sentence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The programme of activity and intervention suggested to the youth court must make proper reference to the seriousness of the offence and the interests of any victim, but it must also reflect the offender's needs and potential for rehabilitation.

The effectiveness of previous diversionary practice may have been undermined by the 1998 Act's reprimand and final warning provisions (Muncie, 1999). The challenge, here as elsewhere, is to hunt the latitude - to find spaces where it is possible to advocate for young people and to reinstate informed use of discretion, so that decisions are based on what is likely to be effective rather than on the simple application of rules.

The third source of space lies in the acceptance by government of the principles of restorative justice. Peters and Walker (2001), for example, provide guidance for youth justice practitioners about their participation in the implementation of referral orders (Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999). This includes advising panels on suitable interventions and on proportionality - balancing the content of the contract with the seriousness of the offence. It also includes ensuring that the contract is workable and considering direct and indirect ways in which the young offender can make reparation to the victim and/or community.

Space may also be derived from an emerging domestic jurisprudence of human rights and its supporting values following the implementation of the Human Rights Act 1998. These provide, for example, important support for anti-discriminatory youth justice practice, itself given legitimacy by section 95, Criminal Justice Act 1991 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The youth justice systems described in this article are subject, through the Human Rights Act 1998, to the values and rights established by the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Practitioners working within this human rights space must though also recognize the limitations that may emerge from the emerging domestic definition of Convention articles. Due process rights (Article 6), rights to privacy and family life (Article 8) must be recognised as legitimate by youth justice practitioners and managers, even when they impinge upon welfare-based models of practice with young people. The space for good practice in the youth justice system is subject to the human rights guaranteed by the Convention. This principle applies to punishment perceived as disproportionate in the same way as it applies to interventions that are perceived as desirable on welfarist grounds. The European Human Rights

Commission has made it clear in the case of Nortier v Netherlands (1993) 17 EHRR that due process protection must not be sacrificed to the interests of welfare or rehabilitation.

Values-driven practice includes listening to the experiences of young people, including racism, sexism and the ineffectiveness of custody (Rogowski, 2001). It includes critical commentary on differential arrest rates, charging practices, bail and remand decisions, and sentencing outcomes. It involves ensuring a proportionate response and engaging with young people in a manner that leaves them feeling cared for as people.

The final source of space derives from the promotion by government of evidence-based practice. Smith (1999) restates the evidence that decarceration and diversion work. He points also to other elements of 'what works', namely systems management, intervention proportional to the risk of reoffending, and community based measures that strengthen support for young offenders. Similarly Rogowski (1995) and Fullwood (2001), highlighting the ineffectiveness of custody, emphasise clearly focused and structured community and supervision programmes.

Making alliances for youth justice practice

There are a number of contemporary developments in youth justice and the legal system that provide the possibility for important and positive alliances to be made between youth justice practitioners and others involved in the administration of youth justice.

Shared statutory duties, and their underlying values, are an important basis for alliances. The statutory aim of prevention in section 37 (Crime and Disorder Act 1998) includes a duty on 'all persons and bodies carrying out functions in relation to the youth justice system to have regard to that aim.' Those subject to this duty are not defined by the act but it should be seen to encompass members of youth offending teams and partner agencies, the police, youth court magistrates, court officials and lawyers. The anti-discriminatory principle of section 95, Criminal Justice Act 1991, a duty to avoid discriminating against any persons on the ground of race or sex or any other improper ground, applies to 'persons engaged in the administration of criminal justice', a similarly broad category. The welfare principle established by section 44, Children and Young Persons Act 1933 should be understood as a fundamental principle of the youth justice system. It has now been in force for nearly seventy years and has survived numerous legislative opportunities for amendment or repeal.

In addition to the European Convention there are other international obligations to inform alliances for positive practice in youth justice. The welfare principle is

reflected in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 to which the United Kingdom is a signatory. The Convention includes a number of articles relating specifically to youth justice including the primacy of a child's best interests in court proceedings, the deprivation of liberty as a last resort and for the shortest possible time, and specific guarantees of due process (Ashford and Chard, 2000). Though the Convention is not itself enforceable in domestic law, it is accepted as informing the jurisprudence of the European Convention on Human Rights now enforceable through the Human Rights Act. There are a number of other broadly human rights standards for youth justice, each sharing a broadly similar value base, including the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (1985) (the Beijing Rules) and the UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (1990) (the Havana Rules) (Starmer, 1999).

Contemporary developments in youth justice mean that practitioners have an increasing involvement in the lives of offenders and their families (Worrall and Souhami, 2001). Alliances with others involved in the administration of youth justice can help to develop consistent and constructive approaches to inform preventative, supportive and restorative justice work. Two important alliances can be made with defence lawyers and youth court magistrates.

Defence work in the youth (juvenile) court has traditionally been seen as low status legal work (Morris, 1983). However it is important to recognize the contribution good legal representation can make to a child or young person's experience of the youth justice system and to the outcome of their court hearing. Home Office Guidance identifies a number of responsibilities for defence lawyers: acting to reduce delay, ensuring that decisions are understood by clients and their parents, encouraging parents to attend at court, and providing opportunities for children and young people to participate in youth court hearings (Home Office, 1998d). But the role of the defence lawyer can go further. Ashford and Chard (2000) argue for a 'broader advocacy role': directed to ensuring necessary social services support, appropriate education provision and welfare benefits advice.

This more comprehensive role for defence lawyers provides an obvious site and model for alliances with youth justice practitioners. These alliances should be assisted by recent changes in the organization of legal services introduced by the Access to Justice Act 1999, and in particular by the payment of 'criminal legal aid' funding through franchising and contracts and the establishment of the criminal defence service. These developments provide for the possibility of an identifiable group of publicly funded and salaried defence lawyers with expertise in defending children and young people. The professional responsibility of this group of lawyers to protect the legal interests of the defendant provides a clear child centered focus

that should form the basis for professional alliances and a counterforce to the authoritarian and punitive elements of youth justice legislation.

Another equally important alliance should be sought with those magistrates who sit in the youth court. The organisation of magistrates courts means that there will be an identifiable panel of youth court magistrates with whom local youth justice practitioners can seek important relationships and alliances. Both magistrates and practitioners are subject to the statutory aim of prevention, and magistrates are subject to the section 44 Children and Young Persons Act 1933 welfare principle. Though there is a history of distrust between youth court magistrates and social workers, this legacy can be challenged and superseded by a mutual knowledge and understanding of respective functions and interests. Such informed alliances can increase trust in community sentencing, reduce the use of custody and reduce youth offending (Vernon, 2000).

The International Association of Schools of Social Work and the International Federation of Social Workers include in their widely adopted purpose for social work (2001) the promotion of social change and commitment to the principle of social justice alongside problem-solving in human relationships and empowerment of people to enhance their well-being. The spaces and alliances identified above are indicative of a continuity. Welfare may be more conditional, offence focused and risk conscious but its apparatus is still in place. Working practices may not have changed as drastically as the evolving legal mandate presumes (Garland, 2001; Preston-Shoot, 2001).

Working in the spaces and within alliances suggests that youth justice practitioners are seeking adaptive responses (Garland, 2001) and a moral entrepreneurial role (Young, 1999) that:

- *Seeks to redefine some behaviours that are currently criminalised*
- *Focuses on causes as well as consequences*
- *Embraces and values those who are excluded or marginalised*
- *Reframes success in terms of outputs as much as outcomes*
- *Redistributes responsibility for crime, and*
- *Debates the political choice inherent in the risk that communities have to bear (Pratt, 1997) so that single events or cases do not automatically restrict the choices that youth justice practitioners can make.*

Conclusion

The authoritarian nature of the new youth justice system should be recognised. Offending will trigger punishment and intervention. When compared with the adult

criminal justice system, this may constitute both an unwarranted and disproportionate intervention in the lives of offenders and their families. These considerable powers, particularly those concerning prevention and parental responsibility, have a quasi-civil rights and human rights context that should not be ignored or under-estimated. In this threatening context, the challenge for youth justice practitioners lies in restating the core components of effective work and applying them to mediate the legislation in practice and to create sensible and coherent services. The necessary space for such practice is available, important alliances can be constructed and unifying values are defined in domestic law and international human rights obligations.

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Notes

1 Preston-Shoot, M. and Vernon, S. 'Mapping Youth Justice: What a difference a decade makes' Yout & Policy 76: 77-96

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Classic Texts Revisited

Lesley Button
Developmental Group Work with Adolescents
London: Hodder and Stoughton 1974

SUE ROBERTSON

Lesley Button was lecturing on the University College Swansea full time training programme for youth workers and teachers when he wrote this book. Although such joint-qualifying courses were widespread during the post-war period they had almost all disappeared by the end of the 1980s. Their existence however helps to explain why *Developmental Group Work* has a chapter on group work in secondary schools and why there was a subsequent book focused on tutorial work in schools (Button 1982). As a consequence of his involvement in the education of both teachers and youth workers this and a previous book *Discovery and Experience* (Button 1971) bridge the divide between the two professions in a unique way. However, this review concentrates upon the relevance of *Developmental Group Work* to youth.

Shortly after publication, Faulkner (1975:17) reviewed *Developmental Group Work* in *Youth in Society*, concluding that it offered

> *a conceptual framework, a repertoire of skills, strategies and guidelines for practice that should help practitioners to think more theoretically and diagnostically and thus act more effectively in the group situation.*

Faulkner also noted that workers were confronted by an abundance of theoretical models relating to group work, predominately imported from the United States during the 1950s. These were, he argued, incorporated into youth and social work training courses with insufficient adjustment to enable them to fit the different circumstances encountered by practitioners. His enthusiasm for Button's book partially reflected a belief that it would help dispel *the mystification surrounding the function and role of the group worker (ibid).*

Three decades later, opinions regarding the merits of Button's work are divided. It is certainly possible to encounter negative views amongst older youth and community workers trained according to his methods. Especially critical are those who subsequently found therapeutic rather than developmental models of group work more valuable. There is also

some distrust of the whole notion of group work from those who may have had painful experiences of therapeutic variants. More frequently though one encounters devotees amongst senior practitioners. Individuals first introduced to his ideas at college still retain a passionate enthusiasm.

Along with a number of other texts on group work, notably Matthew's (1966) *Working with Youth Groups,* Button's was part of an upsurge of analytical and creative writing on youth work that appeared in the years following publication of the Albemarle Report (Ministry of Education, 1960). Button provides a clear rationale for the work alongside an appropriate methodology. Although his style may to some contemporary readers appear dated, particularly regarding the absence of a gender perspective, his enthusiasm and commitment still shines through.

Button argues that the social changes then impacting on young people, such as a revolution in communication, a decline of traditional industries and a burgeoning availability of more reliable methods of birth control, were creating an identity crisis for adolescents. The crisis was often expressed in particular within the context of their relationships with authority, family, vocational identity and gender roles. Like other contemporary writers he viewed adolescence as a unique period of transition and a time of questioning. However unlike many others Button emphasised the creative function this had for the wider community.

Button's philosophy of group work

For Button, group work:

> *is about helping people in their growth and development, in their social skills, in their personal resource, and in the kind of relationships they establish with other people. Social skills can be learnt only in contact with other people and it is the purpose of group work to provide the individual with opportunities to relate to others in a supportive atmosphere, to try new approaches and to experiment in new roles. (1974: 1)*

From the outset he stressed how the methods advocated evolved from experience. Further, these had been 'tested' on different groups. Button is determined throughout to identify himself as a group worker, to differentiate his approach from both casework and community development alike, advocating a style of group work standing apart from therapeutic work and recreational youth work. This he saw as a difficult balance to strike, and one requiring on the part of the practitioner skills that could only be

acquired via extensive training. Practitioners needed a fund of appropriate knowledge and a sound understanding of the processes involved to be effective developmental group workers.

Button argues that group work is important for young people as, for many of them, problems stem from an inability to make friendships with peers. Peer group relationships are, he contends, the most important ones for young people. Instead of seeing this as a bad thing, as so much youth policy and youth work literature does, he emphasises the vital need to develop friendship networks. Therefore youth workers and teachers must speak via group work, to foster such relationships. Likewise group work is viewed as a means whereby young people might help each other:

> *Many youth workers see their pastoral work as striking a friendly or confidant relationship with individual members, whereas they might enable young people to help one another much more effectively than they can help them personally. (ibid:9)*

The need for young people to develop heterosexual relationships (the possibility of any other type of sexuality is not contemplated by Button) is stressed. These are viewed as essential, for he argues it is via such relationships that young people acquire significance and security. Another important need is for adventure and new experiences. Again he suggests young people must be helped because:

> *The satisfaction of this need does not turn only on having the opportunity: as with the satisfaction of other needs, such as the need for companionship, we must have the personal capacity to seek our satisfaction. It means that we must be able to stir ourselves, take action with sufficient effort and persistence for us to derive satisfaction from the opportunities that present themselves. (ibid:13)*

Button does not blame young people for being bored and apathetic but suggests the education system bears a great deal of the responsibility for inculcating dependency and a need for direction. However he places considerable importance upon personal responsibility, maintaining that individuals often live less fully than they would wish to because of the limitations of their personalities and lack of social skills.

Throughout the book, Button employs individual stories to bring theory to life:

> *Janet was the self appointed clown of her group. She would sabotage any serious conversation, and was seen by the staff at school as*

> *the leader of mischief. She seemed to relish the prominence - even the punishment - that her behaviour brought to her. (ibid:25)*

Via this approach he strives to demonstrate how the behaviour of individuals frequently reflects prevailing group norms. He indicates how such norms often limit young people and how group work can liberate young people from them, especially where the norms have become internalised, inhibiting individual development. For example:

> *Although the routine of the group was repetitive and boring it had to be seen as a 'great time. Anybody who missed an evening was told, when next seen by the group, that he had missed a 'really great night' though in fact it had been very like, and just as dull as, all the other evenings. (ibid:25)*

Using the example of worker intervention with a group meeting regularly outside a chip shop (ibid:106-108), which led to the formation of two sub-groups that met separately, Button illustrates the importance of enabling young people to examine group norms. He showed how having been helped to look at their relationships, young people become better able to deal with those group norms which inhibit the freedom for individual experiences to develop.

Button's methods

Button provides a framework for developmental group work. This lends itself to being used in the training of youth workers. By being clear regarding the process to be gone through for effective group work to occur he provides a helpful tool kit for any youth worker starting out on their career. Whilst emphasising the need for careful reconnaissance and observation of the group, he stresses that 'a certain urgency must characterise our making contact as it does the rest of our work' (ibid:29). He advises workers to practise the observation of groups using a check list. This list approach is extended to asking questions. Button suggests that workers are often unduly cautious at this point, worried about alienating the young people they wish to work with. On the basis of his experience as a researcher he opts for a direct approach arguing that this has worked as 'few youngsters failed to respond to the genuine interest expressed in them by the worker' (ibid:39). He suggests that the fear of rejection on the part of workers is often the greatest impediment to success. Therefore training involving 'role play' helps to give workers the confidence needed to overcome their timidity.

Rather than 'going along with' whatever the group is doing, something many detached workers tend to do, Button stresses workers must be prepared to set a new context for the group. This should be directed towards changing prevailing group norms. The nature of this intervention depends on the worker's diagnosis of the group's needs. Arriving at this desired outcome will involve interviewing group members and possibly undertaking sociometric tests designed to show friendship patterns and group norms. Blueprints for these are provided within the text along with a repertoire of techniques to employ. Button is an enthusiastic advocate of group enquiries or action research as an activity for young people, for example, finding out about the neighbourhood or others' opinions of the merits or otherwise of a youth club. His justification for this approach was that by focusing on something outside the youth group, individuals gain confidence and develop skills. Recently there has been growing emphasis in youth research circles on the involvement of young people (Kirby,1999 France, 2000) However what is different about Button's approach is that what is done is clearly undertaken with the needs of the young people foremost. Research outcomes are always secondary to those needs.

Button is honest about the ultimate limitations of this methodology. He is certainly concerned to change behaviour, something that may not sit well with those approaches that view empowerment as the prime objective of youth work. However Button always stresses that his focus is on the needs of young people - although of course the group worker interprets these. He holds that young people are often trapped in roles unhelpful to their growth and development, and in this respect he is not merely focusing on the 'disaffected'. All of his techniques are designed to help young people find out for themselves about themselves, for instance by using sociograms to look at friendships within their group (Button 1974:54) or looking at roles.

> *The group then turned to a discussion of Terry's behaviour. His role in life, it seemed, was that of the scapegoat and as they examined it more closely they grasped its significance. They seemed fascinated by the idea of personal roles and by the possibility of changing roles—They set about considering what they could do to help. (ibid:72)*

After presenting his methods Button discusses their effectiveness acknowledging that:

> *Sometimes the odds have been far too great and the voluntary and very much part time contact with the worker has been insufficient to take the youngsters into really different modes of behaviour. (ibid:128)*

However he feels, that overall, the application of his methods will bring about beneficial changes within groups and commensurate gains in the social skills of individuals - 'it is encouraging to feel that we at least may have been able to help people develop whatever resources they have' (ibid:127). He seems to leave it there, omitting to provide strategies for exiting from the group or for following up and reviewing the work.

Button considers how his ideas can be implemented in different settings. In this respect the chapter on large youth organisations is particularly valuable. He holds that the youth service has tended to set considerable store on association but notes that the question of how such association takes places is rarely asked. He views the role of the youth worker as that of a *'social architect'* someone with a duty to ensure interaction takes place. Yet he notes that in many youth clubs the normative structure demands young people *'hang around'* and consequently it becomes extremely difficult to stir the members into active participation. For Button, one of the solutions was small group work designed to offer a more intense experience than that offered within large gatherings. This implies a structure designed to enable numerous small groups to be functioning facilitated by paid staff, volunteers and senior members supported by a fulltime worker. It is all about offering young people real opportunities for personal development as 'they need to be caught up in the kind of experience that is likely to extend them' (ibid:141). Youth work has often shied away from the notion of being seen to be a provider of activities (Foreman 1987). However, Button does not share such a reluctance and provides a clear rationale for activities when used as a developmental tool.

Button describes a phenomenon of the worker being drawn into the apathy of the young people. This is yet another example of how powerful normative controls can be. Button is clear that the worker has a responsibility to influence the group and therefore cannot opt to be just another member of it.

Contemporary relevance

Small group work is resource expensive. It offers neither the numbers nor the focus on targeted and issue-based work so sought after by present

day managers. However we should beware of imagining a golden age when the ideas of Button ruled. I suspect that although there was much talk about group work amongst youth workers in the recent past there was little of this type of very focused work practised, certainly in most youth clubs. As a new, untrained full time youth worker I recall worrying about what was this group work everyone talked about, until being reassured by other workers that it just meant working with groups in the way that Button describes as 'recreative group work, concerned with personal extension through activity and companionship' (ibid:3). This is similar to the definition of association given by Doyle and Smith 'joining together in companionship or to undertake some task, and the educative power of playing one's part in a group or association' (1999: 45, see also Smith, 2001). In Button's view, developmental group work shades into recreative group work on a continuum of group work. Therapeutic group work is located at one extreme and the support of some objective seen as being of benefit to the participants such as religion or sport resides at the other extreme.

Group work went out of fashion and social education and participation became much more the focus of youth work during the 1980s leading to an expansion in work viewed as more politically conscious. Yet I first employed Button's methodology whilst undertaking developmental group work as part of a Youth Action Scheme in the early 1990s. This was a scheme to work with young people 'at risk of drifting into crime'. While we were initially wary about the response of the young people to developmental group work our fears were misplaced for they loved it! We used outdoor activities as a way for the group to work together and begin to look at their individual behaviour.

With the current emphasis on youth workers going into schools or taking young people out of them to join groups organised for the 'disaffected' this may well be an apt time to revisit Button and his methods. As workers look for a clear focus in their work perhaps Button's approach can provide it, but not in a way which meets the agenda of the current government. Re-reading this book made clearer for me the reasons why we should be wary of the Connexions agenda. Button focuses on the needs of young people giving a clear blueprint of how the methods he advocates work alongside practical exercises to aid implementation. Stressing the importance of observation in the social diagnosis of situations, his emphasis is firmly on individual need and how young people can be helped to relate to each other, to achieve a sense of self-esteem and make secure friendships.

These issues are very important to young people and sadly neither the Connexions (DfEE, 2000) agenda, with its focus on jobs and training by means of Personal Advisers, nor Transforming Youth Work (DfEE, 2001) which talks about keeping young people in 'good shape' address either of these issues.

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FEATURE REVIEWS

Feature Reviews

Bob Franklin (ed)
The New Handbook of Children's Rights: Comparative policy and practice.
London: Routledge 2002,
ISBN 0-415-25036-6
pp 420

Stuart Hart, Cynthia Cohen, Martha Farrell Erickson, and Malfred Flekkoy (eds)
Children's Rights in Education.
London: Jessica Kingsley Press 2001
ISBN 1-85302-977-7
pp 238

Roland Meighan
Natural Learning and the Natural Curriculum
Nottingham: Educational Heretics Press 2001
ISBN 1-900219-19-0
Price £10
pp 130

Kate Philip

Although children and youth have provided a continuing focus of interest for academics, policy makers and politicians, it is only recently that attention has been paid to issues surrounding children's rights. By contrast, much research focused on the perceived problems of youth, notably about recurring and new forms of moral panics. Central to this approach has been a view of young people as an undifferentiated mass, usually raging with hormones and in a state of 'becoming'. Thus young people have been largely the objects of researchers gaze, rather than active participants.

Arguably, current preoccupations with the 'new' sociology of youth and 'childhood' have challenged traditional conceptualisations of young people as inherently unfinished. Work based on these perspectives has re-framed children and young people as active agents capable of participation in their social worlds and of reflection on their situation. These challenges to the traditional developmental theorising of childhood as a state of preparation for adulthood have stimulated a more critical examination of the social and political contexts in which young people are growing up. They have also identified a need for better understanding of the diversity of experience of childhood and youth and of how young people act towards social and educational structures both individually and collectively.

The children's rights movement has clearly influenced the conduct of this strand of research and policy making, adding impetus and raising further questions as to frameworks for rights and appropriate ways of working with children and young people. Work within the voluntary sector and youth settings, which has been poorly acknowledged in the past, has provided valuable insights into more child friendly approaches and mechanisms for enhancing the voices of children and young people. However the notion of children's rights has retained a relatively low profile in popular thinking perhaps reflecting a more generalised ambivalence about the place of children in late capitalist societies. Within the UK, for example, it is clear that children's rights have been very grudgingly acknowledged, as Fortin wryly comments, in her chapter in the *New Handbook of Children's Rights:* 'to date the notion that children have rights and that these must be fully acknowledged and promoted, has been regarded with some suspicion in the UK' (p 122).

It is still the case that uncertainties about whether young people are active agents or 'deficient developers' has characterised the development of many policies targeted at both families and young people, a point investigated by a number of the contributors to the texts by Franklin and Hart et al. This theme is further examined by Franklin in his opening chapter that analyses the powerful impact of the UK media over interpretations of children's rights.

In his vigorous introduction to the new *Handbook on Children's Rights* Franklin points out that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by countries across the world with the notable exception of those two pillars of democracy, Somalia and the USA. The incorporation of the Convention holds a number of implications since it is binding on countries to account for their attempts to implement it. However, as both Franklin and Hart et al conclude, progress has been uneven with a quarter of the world's children continuing to live in poverty and many still having poor access to the basics of food, clean water and shelter. In relation to education, the stark figures of 100 million children without access to primary schooling pointing to the continuing challenges faced in implementing rights for children.

The appearance of these three volumes in itself points to a growing recognition, at least in some fields, of children's rights as a legitimate area of interest. Each of these books tackles the topic from a different angle although there is some duplication between Franklin and Hart et al, in relation to the implementation of legal frameworks to promote children's

rights. Meighan's offering provides some contrast to this, not least with its journalistic style and iconoclastic approach. Nevertheless each book demonstrates the complexity of the issues under consideration and the ways in which these have been tackled. A key challenge for each text lies in how well children's rights work takes account of the very different contexts and cultures in which children are growing up. This is a challenge that is largely neglected by Meighan whose references to international aspects is confined to experiments in home schooling. Similarly the ways in which children themselves participate in the debates around children's rights is absent from Meighan's account. There is a degree of overlap between Franklin and Hart et al in the choice of topics: an emphasis on participation and inclusion, democratic education, special needs and the case for specific posts of ombudsmen as arbiters. But these are given different treatment and the relevant chapters in each volume further illustrate different aspects of how children's rights are understood, interpreted and addressed. Meighan's book interestingly pays little attention to the perspectives of young people and to debates on children's lives, focusing on parents and family without any explanation of what is meant by family or consideration of different styles of family organisation. Similarly power relations within and across families is scarcely touched on. In this respect, *Natural Learning* could be described as gender blind and culture blind, taking for granted traditional models of family and childhood.

It is around education that key debates relating to children's rights are frequently played out with formal education providing both a battleground and an access point for the exercising of children's rights. The publication of *Children's Rights in Education* is therefore timely. The editors claim to provide perspectives, insights and recommendations into the issue through a comprehensive review of the current state of children's rights and education around the world. The book is concerned with the global context seeking to give an overview of the history of children's rights and an early examination of the development of international standards by which to measure progress across countries. This collection is based on papers presented at an international conference on children's rights and education which took as its framework the progress on educational aspects of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 28, 29 and 23). It sets out to bring together current thinking on implementing both the specific 'educational' articles and in extending the notion of education beyond these, in exploring issues of 'respectful learning communities', questions of respect for children, issues of disability and themes of participation. Sixteen key themes are

identified and these are underpinned by a recognition that *children, no matter how young, are already fully human beings entitled to full human rights* (p 219). The importance of integration of both formal and informal strands of education is highlighted by a number of contributions and a critical approach is taken to secondary schooling for sometimes contributing to a loss of competency among young people.

Of particular interest is Verhellen's chapter entitled *Facilitating Children's Rights in Education,* which examines how children are conceptualised and explores how the UNCRC is itself redefining concepts of rights, participation and inclusiveness. Power et al explore dimensions of the 'just community school' and democratic education within an explicitly developmental perspective which attributes a lack of competence to children and argues for a paternalistic form of guidance. The authors argue for an apprenticeship model for socialising young people with very little critical consideration of the disadvantages of such an approach. Clearly questions of how children can actively participate as citizens and make their voices heard are absent from this discussion. This approach appears to contradict some of the standpoints previously stated by Verhellen who emphasises a need to redress the underestimation of children's capabilities. John's article on respect for adults and children explores how an understanding of power is central to issues of children's' rights although readers may take issue with some of the underlying assumptions which deal with tensions between protection and rights. Flekkoy's account of the ombudsman's role in Scandinavia highlights the potential to support and work with children to address key issues in education, given resources and power through a rights framework. The concluding section pulls together the 16 themes through an illustration of the chapters but signally fails to engage in any debate over the different perspectives adopted. Overall the book provides an interesting selection of chapters which illustrate how children' rights are viewed within the international policy making community. However, absences in relation to discussion of areas such as the status of girl children, street children, refugee children and the rights of gay and lesbian young people, mean these are given scant attention. Such omissions are significant since they largely replicate absences within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child itself and raise fundamental questions about the relevance of rights based approaches.

The New Handbook of Children's Rights edited by Bob Franklin includes 25 chapters covering different aspects of children's rights. Themes are addressed within five sections beginning with an overview of developments

to date, this follows an energetic introduction by the editor. Part II, entitled Changing Legal Frameworks includes articles usefully highlighting new legislation. It relates these to wider policy concerns and investigates the implications of the frameworks. Part III titled Cases for Action, covers a diverse range of issues including rights of access by children to public space, environmental issues, health, the medicalisation of children's behaviour, issues of consent in health, sexuality education, and the rights of groups such as refugees, young disabled children and carers. Part IV explores innovative approaches and structures for listening to children's voices and views including within research. Finally, Part V comprises a series of chapters on comparative perspectives drawing on international experiences and examples.

It might be expected that such a sprawl of interest would result in an unwieldy and superficial coverage of these issues but this would be a misconception. It largely succeeds in demonstrating the interrelated nature of rights, the need for investment in a more coherent approach to enhancing and developing children's rights and of the contradictions inherent in existing policies and practice. Franklin's introductory chapter weaves these rich seams together into a coherent overview. The result is an accessible and comprehensive picture of key debates and issues in current work on these themes, providing a grounded and thorough introduction to the area. A key strength of the book lies in its reflection of the interdisciplinary nature of current debates and the range of innovative work being undertaken and this is due to the contributions from key thinkers from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines. A concluding chapter might have helped weld these more firmly together and to explore ways of confronting the policy developments and media representations that continue to shape public perceptions about children and young people. What is missing is an analysis of the parallel development of these strands of radical thinking and their signal lack of impact on government strategies targeting youth and families.

Roland Meighan considers the issues of children's rights within a somewhat different framework in *Natural Learning and the Natural Curriculum.* This is basically a compilation and extension of columns written by the author for the magazine *Natural Parent.* This book lies firmly in the free schooling tradition drawing on an eclectic mix of philosophy, educational theory, personal views held by the author and critiques of formal education. The book is divided into six parts with the opening section exploring the potential for natural learning and the dilemmas facing parents in seeking

out an education that respects the principles of this approach. Meighan outlines three options: firstly to identify and utilise the few schools which are based on natural learning principles; secondly to provide supplementary learning at home in terms of critical dialogue with children; or thirdly to provide home based education. From this the book takes its direction. His demolition of terms such as school, curriculum and education is somewhat contradictory followed as it is by a section which outlines what he describes as the 'natural curriculum' a surprising use of a term which he has so recently consigned to the bin. Further points covered in this section include the ways in which children identify play as work. This is an example of a somewhat irritating tendency in the book for the author to throw up a potentially controversial or interesting point without developing it further. This is tantalising for the reader and occurs throughout. For this reader it was particularly evident in his casual dismissal of single sex settings as 'recipes for chauvinism'. These examples demonstrate the limitations of transforming a magazine column format into a book chapter and suggest a need for more critical editing.

The remaining sections focus respectively on parents, learners and teachers. The section on learners is interesting in that it makes little reference to children's own perspectives on education save for a rather superficial account of peer pressure. This precedes a section on superstitions that sets out to explode current taken for granted assumptions about learning. The final section is titled 'Visions of a learning system' and comprises interviews with John Adcock and Christopher Ball with a concluding section on Learning Centres. This short section is mainly a review of advice available for parents wishing to pursue further the ideas explored in the book and about the creation of learning communities. After a promising start the book seems to fade at the end, running out of steam and lacking a firm conclusion.

In certain respects Meighan is less concerned with how children themselves articulate their experiences of education and more with how parents can set the context by promoting a set of educational processes fostering natural learning. It represents a movement towards developing learning climates and frameworks that are consistent with what the author claims are the natural learning capabilities of children. The polemical tone contrasts strongly with that of the other two volumes reviewed here, but it enables Meighan to get to grips with many of the contradictions inherent in contemporary schooling and develop his theme of how learning should address the rhythms and pace of children themselves. The style and format

also challenges the somewhat legalistic nature of many of the frameworks designed to promote children's rights. Meighan's thesis links with Lansdown's view, in the Franklin book, relating to her examination of progress towards the implementation of children's rights, that:

> *Indeed the whole approach to schools needs to be rethought in the light of social, economic and technological change. School is not synonymous with education. There is a great deal to change, it will take time and require more resources. (p 57)*

Meighan focuses on dimensions such as the principles of learning as an enjoyable experience, the importance of informal education, the enhancing of active participation by young people and education as a respectful set of processes in which learners and educators interact. In key respects all three books draw attention to the pivotal role of formal education as a site of struggle between the state, parents, children and teachers over the purpose, climate and content. A number of chapters in Franklin's volume also draw attention to the deficiencies in an education system moving inexorably towards 'ready wrapped' teaching and lessons. For example, Jeffs argues that attempts to develop structures such as Children's Rights Commissioners to promote the rights of children will simply be superficial unless fundamental issues such as the right of students to influence the curriculum and the retention of compulsory attendance are addressed. In a similar vein he trenchantly argues that in a climate where teachers are demoralised and written off, children's rights are also negatively affected and the whole notion of rights is hijacked into highly tokenistic formulae which are clearly seen through by participants

> *Meaningful engagement must extend beyond the play therapy of schools councils and consultative groups discussing the design of school uniforms, menus and choosing prefects into opportunities to shape the context and delivery of the learning experiences. (p 53)*

On the one hand, there is potential within the framework of children's rights to explore key issues in relation to human rights and well being however much of the discussion is framed around representing the rights of children and working on their behalf. Within Children's Rights and Education, a clear tension exists between those who believe children are unfinished and lacking competence and others who view the establishment of children's rights to self expression as key to changing perspectives towards young people.

All these books are worth reading but for different reasons. An updated exploration of alternative education is particularly needed at a time of general disillusionment with formal education and when the alternatives available to children who do not comply are dire. For parents thinking about alternative forms of education Meighan provides useful insights, information about resources and further references. However, although it is readable and thought provoking *Natural Learning* fails to engage with contemporary issues such as gender, race and class to any meaningful extent. Similarly it neglects children's own perspectives in any meaningful way and takes for granted one form of family organisation and structure. For community and youth workers and students more may be gained through a rereading of Goodman, Holt or Mackenzie's texts on education.

Of the other two, *Children's Rights in Education* provides important insights into the current state of children's rights internationally and succeeds in raising a range of important questions of interest to practitioners working with children across different fields. It would be useful for those seeking to develop better awareness of the legal and political machinations in establishing children's rights agendas in exploring key underlying themes and would be a useful reference for work in this area. However it was less successful in addressing issues of how children's rights empower children themselves and those working with them to participate and challenge the overarching challenges they are faced with. In this respect it represents a statement of intent rather than an account of how the children's rights agenda is making significant changes in the condition of children experiencing poverty, hunger, war and the threat of violence. It is important the agenda for children's rights does not simply become another 'industry' in which children's own voices become tokenistic. Thus a more critical approach to the issues and to the UNCRC would have helped set the children's rights agenda within the wider context.

The *New Handbook of Children's Rights* should be on the bookshelves of those working with and for children as a reference point, as a guide and as a source of ammunition in working with and for children. It would be of particular use on training courses for practitioners working with young people. It provides a broad and critical introduction to the area and contextualises the advantages and disadvantages of this approach.

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REVIEWS

Martin Mills
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Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001
ISBN 0335205844 (pbk)
£16.99
pp 169

Carl Parsons

This book is part of the *Education Boys, Learning Gender* series and is a really useful, hard hitting and evidence-based contribution to that list. The empirical focus is upon two schools in Queensland, Australia and much of the policy documentation also relates to the Australian context. It is both a theoretical and practical book covering well a range of literature and feminist theory, policy discussions and documentation and experience in the schools. The extracts of interviews with boys are quite hard-hitting and worrying.

Male violence in school, and domestic violence perpetrated by males later, are matters that require addressing at numerous levels; school are only one of these. Those wandering the city streets when England beat Germany 5-1 would have been shocked at the extravagance of male physical exuberance and its acceptance by the older citizenry. Should we be surprised at the organised uproar from Irish parents about a school programme *Exploring Masculinities?* Threaded through our society, and wittingly and unwittingly reproduced in schools, there is a view of maleness which is to do with strength, leading, dominating and sometimes violence.

Mills takes on the theorising about, and investigation of, masculinities on a suitably broad front. He talks about a 'pro-feminist masculinity politics ... and exit politics... (that) encourages men to exit from those politics that endorse privileged positioning within existing gendered relations'. He looks hard at what makes and sustains the patriarchal gender order and that how, in western societies, schools are major institutions 'where the masculinization of what is valorized' is to be found. There are a number of neologisms - 'the violencing of masculinity and the masculinization of violence' (title of chapter two) which irritate - but forgivably.

There are very great difficulties in changing fundamental behaviours and attitudes rather than the mere surface manifestation of these. We are much better at surface adjustments! Mills' fundamental position is that, conventionally in modern society, violence is a signifier of masculinity, endorsed by major public institutions. The school, which plays its part in sustaining the 'patriarchal gender order' can act to challenge it.

Mills deals with sport and with work as the province of men where even the space around appears to be designated as male territory. An interesting perspective on the dominance of boys in science, and the attempt to provide equal opportunities in that area rather than 'different' opportunities, re-enforces the masculinist ways of seeing the world. The point here, as elsewhere in the book, is that rather than try to change the gendered groups, or even the categories of activity, we change the value ascribed to them.

Sexual harassment, he wisely acknowledges, does not begin in secondary school but is present in interactions at the primary stage of schooling. Power over women becomes increasingly a signifier of masculinity. There is also the exercise of power over other men and most of us will know of the hustling and jostling for position which is stronger amongst boys than girls at secondary school.

It is some way through the book before Mills sets out his core goal. This is, 'to explore the means by which dominant masculinities and their dependency on male violence can be disrupted in order to create spaces for male subject positions that challenge normalised ways of being a boy, or a man'. So he seeks to show that male violence within the patriarchal gender order is a social and political project and not a natural product of masculinity. Interesting to consider the way some have suggested that women are as violent as men, which trivialises the extent of violence to which women are subjected by men. A questionnaire survey we conducted regarding attitudes to violence against women by men found that the item 'it is okay to hit a wife or partner ... if she has slept with someone else' was one which both girls and boys (but especially boys) find hardest to reject.

The colour and illustration in Mills' book comes from the interviews with boys. We get extensive coverage of the views of a whole range of young men in two schools. At the end of each chapter he suggests a number of exercises which people in schools may carry out to assess the extent of violence, overbearing masculinities, what is valued in school. He advocates talking to the pupils to get their views, to get a better understanding of the way violence and its integral link with socialised masculinities is embedded in school life. He notes that addressing these issues is left to personal development subjects such as Human Relationships Education or Personal and Social Education and these are 'often devalued within the school curriculum' (p 83). He is optimistic, however, about the power of even one-off programmes implemented in this part of the curriculum to bring about change but he advocates that they should become part of the broader school community (p 101).

Mills examines a range of strategies with regard to pedagogy, whether to bring men in to address boys, privileging access by girls. He concludes with ten messages for schools and many of us will find these useful because we might have encountered problems to which he eludes. Take the 'reject the competing victim syndrome'; this is the one about backlash politics where it is argued that the feminist agendas have been too successful, girls' interests are being prioritised and women are getting the most out of life with the least effort. Mills' book is, for educators, a delight for the whole range of ideas that he engages with. Finally his reference to Denborough about education of the young being seen as the first response to a global problem yet being a let out, even an abdication of adults' responsibilities for change, is a good one.

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Helena Helve and Claire Wallace (eds)
Youth, Citizenship and Empowerment
Ashgate, 2001
ISBN 0754616460
£45 (hbk)
pp 346

Mark Cieslik

This book is based on papers presented at a Finnish youth conference held in 1998 and explores many of the issues that currently occupy youth researchers in contemporary societies. The concepts of citizenship and empowerment are used to explore the inclusion and exclusion of young people in various societal contexts and this comprises the main theme that organises the various sections of the book.

Introductory chapters by the editors discuss some of the policy and theoretical issues around the use of citizenship and empowerment in youth studies. In particular the impact of globalisation on the lives of young people is examined, notably patterns of migration and policy responses to this as well as the role of transnational organisations. There are sections which document examples of where young people make positive contributions (i.e. through the notion of active citizenship) to their local communities via volunteering for example. Also there are chapters illustrating the experiences

of more marginalised young people whose sense of citizenship is shaped through economic and cultural exclusion in various aspects of their lives. There are further sections examining the values, attitudes and lifestyles of young people in the context of debates around risk society and globalisation as well as a final section that explores the possibilities of new forms of policy and practice with marginalised young people.

This reader found many chapters which offered valuable and interesting insights into the lives of young people in various parts of the world. The Everatt chapter in particular offered a fascinating account of the changing experiences of young South Africans in recent years. The author suggests that the media and the powerful in South African society have played a key role in constructing young people as new consumers in stark contrast to their earlier role as freedom fighters. The earlier promise of a politically conscious and active youth helping to create a new South Africa it seems has been replaced by one of young people as passive politically marginalised consumers.

A very different yet engaging chapter by Horelli compared three different societies (France, Switzerland and Finland) in respect to the different forms of participation of young people in community development initiatives detailing why some programmes were more successful than others in involving young people. Chapters by Hilden and Virtanen respectively reported on research into the emergence of racist gangs in Finland and how these are related to economic recession and also immigration during the 1990s. In light of the social unrest in several English towns during 2002 and the recent resurgence of the Far Right in France, these accounts seem particularly relevant to contemporary debates about youth identity, citizenship and social exclusion.

The book also contains chapters which document research into whether the conditions of risk society (such as vulnerability to unemployment and insecurity of relationships) have led to changes in the attitudes and values amongst young people as suggested by the de-traditionalisation thesis. On the whole the empirical data, the authors suggest points to the interesting conclusion that 'traditional values' still have a continuing relevance for young people today.

There are some downsides to this volume. As with most large edited collections the contributions are a bit uneven- with some being very short and needing theoretical development whilst others are lengthy chapters which include extensive reviews of the relevant literature. A number of

the chapters, though discussing issues around risk and globalisation tend to neglect the implications these discourses have for theoretical models in youth studies. Thus several chapters still refer uncritically to the use of subcultural theory today unaware it seems of recent debates around youth cultures in contemporary societies (on this see for example, Miles, 2000, Bennett, 2000 and Cieslik, 2001, Cieslik and Pollock, 2002).

Nevertheless this reader was encouraged by the range of issues covered and the sophistication of the debates. It is heartening to see so much interesting and important research being undertaken by researchers in so many different countries around the world. A key strength of the volume is how we can learn so much about young people and youth research generally as well as in our own countries (wherever that may be) by reading about these issues in other societies. This is a volume therefore which will appeal to all readers interested in the latest developments in youth research.

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Mary Davis
Fashioning a New World: A History of the Woodcraft Folk
Loughborough: Holyoake Books 2000
ISBN 0-85195-278-X
pp 140

Sue Robertson

I bought this book from the author at the Woodcraft Folk 2001 International Camp. It was a glorious day and all around me young people were entertaining themselves and each other as well as learning about issues as diverse as the Nestle Baby Milk Campaign and how to make a friendship bracelet. I was keen to learn more.

The Woodcraft Folk were formed in 1925 by Leslie Paul who broke away from an organization called the Kibbo Kift Kindred. He was only 17 years old and the Headman of the Kibbo Kift Kindred, John Hargrave who had a very autocratic style of leadership, would not recognize the group if Leslie Paul was the headman.

Mary Davis was commissioned by the Folk to write this history with the intention that it was published during their 75th anniversary year. She has produced a fascinating account which attempts 'an historical evaluation of the folk in its context as a very neglected part of the labour movement' (p.7). The Woodcraft Folk is now the only surviving independent organisation for young people with a socialist and labour movement orientation in Britain. Davis has opted to put the Woodcraft Folk in a political and historical context rather than focus on describing its 'arcane rituals', many of which were originally based on North American Indian traditions, and have now been discontinued. Often however I found myself wishing for more description of what happened in the Woodcraft Folk groups, including the rituals! But that was not Mary Davis' project.

Very little has been written about the relationship between organized labour and youth so most of Davis' sources are primary. She has uncovered a rich strand of material, most of which has yet to be archived. Fortunately she includes some of this material as an appendix. That the Woodcraft Folk survived so long is almost despite the organized labour movement which, in contrast with European organizations, has failed to develop a youth movement. However the ideological job of winning young minds has always been recognized as a priority by the ruling class and Davis begins by looking at the common origins of the Woodcraft Folk and the Scouts. She shows how a combination of imperial ideology, eugenics and racism, allied with a fear that the Empire was being threatened by both a decline in the birth rate and the poor physical condition of the working class, led to the development of the Scouts. A mass youth organisation established to preach a strongly anti-socialist and pro-imperialist message.

The concept of adolescence was being developed around this time and the Scouts formation in 1908 was influenced by the work of Hall, especially his recapitulation theory. This held that the developmental process of childhood and adolescence mirrors the development of society from a savage to a civilized state. It underpinned, as Davis shows, the theory and practice of both the Scouts and the Woodcraft Folk despite their differing political philosophies. The other common root shared by both is a

model of outdoor life developed by Ernest Seton who founded in the USA in 1902 an organization called the Woodcraft Indians. However, Seton was anti-war and fell out with the Scouts over Baden-Powell's pro-war stance in 1914. The Kibbo Kift Kindred was founded in 1920 by one of his disciples, John Hargrave. Concentrating on 'back to nature', a simple life and physical fitness it attracted the support of progressives like HG Wells. Leslie Paul's breakaway organization was supported by the Royal Arsenal Coop Society and had a distinctive socialist ideology. His choice of the name Woodcraft reflected the influence of Seton, whilst Folk indicated an affinity to contemporary Germanic youth movements.

Davis states that the new movement had three tasks; to organize groups with an educational programme; to attract cooperative youth to woodcraft ideals; and 'rally support for the new organization in the cooperative and socialist movement' (p 32). It was from the beginning a democratic, co-educational and egalitarian organization, based on the working class and motivated by a socialist vision of the future. So that its activities whilst similar in many respects to the Scouts e.g. the concentration on camping, were directed towards a very different purpose from that of any other young peoples organization. Paul was influenced by William Morris who is credited with the Creed still used at every meeting of the Woodcraft Folk;

> *This shall be for a bond between us,*
> *That we are of one blood you and I*
> *That we have cried peace to all*
> *And claimed kinship with every living thing*
> *That we hate war and sloth and greed*
> *And love fellowship*
> *And that we shall go singing to the fashioning*
> *Of a new world.*

Perhaps rather archaic now, one new Woodcraft member once very seriously asked me why we hated sloths! However it still embodies the movement for many and states its philosophy clearly.

After describing the early years Davis moves on to look at how they carried out the tasks set by the founders. She feels that despite succeeding well in its first aim the Woodcraft Folk never really fulfilled the other two.

The rest of the book is split into chapters looking at relations with the Cooperative Movement, the Labour Movement and at the role pacifism and

internationalism have played within it. These are fascinating accounts but I sometimes found them confusing as events are mentioned under different chapters. Therefore I found it difficult to follow the story chronologically. She catalogues the history of Woodcraft's relationships with the Cooperative movement which formed its own youth organization and only gave minimal funding to the Folk which it often considered politically subversive. In fact the Cooperative movement only officially recognized the Woodcraft Folk as the national cooperative children's organization in 1969 after its own youth organization was wound up.

Davis examines the question of why there was not more support from the Labour movement, given the socialist orientation of the Folk and its adult leadership. The main reason seems to be a fear that it would not be able to control it and would therefore encounter the same problems it consistently had with regards to its own unruly youth organisation. The Labour Party has promoted the Folk to members at various times but the pacifism of the organisation, many leading members were conscientious objectors during both world wars, along with the Folk's contacts with Communist youth organizations during the Cold War, generated an arms length approach.

Davis devotes a substantial portion of the book to looking at the Folk's international relations especially with the Red Falcon Movement. This has always been a priority for the Woodcraft Folk and the international camps that have resulted have consistently been successful. The 2001 camp demonstrated this bringing 4,000 young people together from all over the world.

I was interested to read Davis' views on the relationship between the Folk and the wider youth service. National organizers of the Woodcraft have been consistently involved in the youth service both locally and nationally. For example Leslie Paul was a member of the Albemarle Committee and in 1978 the National Organizer was criticized for being too involved in the youth service. The Woodcraft Folk have long championed the cause of the statutory youth service and supported local youth committees. However, one of the conditions for receiving funding was that groups had a non- political status. Therefore when Conservative Central Office in 1975 distributed a circular smearing the Folk as Communists this produced a flurry of unwelcome interest in the organisation. Some Conservative authorities responded by refusing to give grant aid to the Folk. However a year later it received its first national headquarters grant from the DES.

Membership rose throughout the 1970s and there were extended debates about the clash between the old 'ritualistic' culture and the 'modern values' of new recruits - many members were born into it whereas newer recruits were often attracted by 'its principles of equality, peace, international friendship, feminism and anti-racism' (p 111). This clash may have reflected a drift towards a more middle class membership. During the 1980's Davis argues the Folk positioned itself as an integral part of the youth service in order to better offer young people an alternative to the Scouts and Guides.

In her conclusion Davis asks whether the Folk should aspire to be a mass youth organisation and if it does will it lose the core principles which have kept it alive for 75 years? She finishes with an epilogue that includes extracts from an interview given by Leslie Paul in 1975. She suggests that for Paul the key to the survival of the Folk lay in its 'otherness' its capacity 'to close ranks against the dominant culture thereby creating an alternative counter cultural group loyalty' (p 120). Certainly the Woodcraft Folk still inspires that commitment from members of all ages and remains a vibrant democratic organisation that debates its principles long and hard. Even if those debates may now centre more on vegetarianism and environmentalism than Communism. Whilst the Coop is perhaps now viewed more as a funder than a movement.

With this book Mary Davis has given us a history of the Woodcraft Folk as a part of the Labour movement and as an organization based on principles of socialism and pacifism. What does not emerge from this study is a picture of the experience of being a member, now or in the past. As such the reader with little direct experience of the organisation might fail to realise the extent to which it has always been a uniquely young person centred group with a distinctive educational ethos. That however is another story waiting to be told.

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Julia Wardhaugh
Sub City: Young People, Homelessness and Crime
Ashgate, 2000
ISBN 1 85972 510 4
pp 151

Tracey Hodgson

In *Sub City: Young People, Homelessness and Crime* Wardhaugh explores seven centuries of legal discourse in relation to homelessness. As an introduction we are provided with a succinct chronology of legislation in relation to homelessness. The prologue presents the lives of six homeless people in their own words. Chapters then follow on the themes of; 'From Vagabondage to Homelessness'; 'Representing Homelessness as Crime'; 'The Unaccommodated Woman'; 'Homelessness and Victimisation'; and 'Regulating Homeless Spaces'.

For those who themselves have experienced homelessness or via people they know or work with, and feel the relief of having a home, a safe place to return to this book offers a detailed account of predominant views. Views ideologically constructed by those in power and by a morally superior ruling class and government. It shows the 'hardening of political, legal and moral positions' (p 101) that has taken place and the prevailing attitude of a not in my back yard syndrome, discussed briefly in chapter six, and dubbed 'nimbyism'.

The first chapter looks at how we research homelessness. Wardhaugh writes of the *'privileged position of "researchers of homelessness" ...of having a safe and comfortable home to which to return'*. It is a feeling seldom explored amongst practitioners, but one undoubtedly shared by many. The reader is given an insight into the perplexities of historical research methods.

Chapter two, From Vagabondage to Homelessness, is a detailed discussion of the legislative and literary discourses of homelessness. The subtitle *From Holy Poverty to Idle Beggars* conveys a feel for the argument. The chapter explores the regulation of vagrancy, and its movement between an *understanding of homelessness as a social issue to its definition as a law and order problem* (p 33). As Brier notes elsewhere *vagrancy is perhaps the classic crime of status...Offenders were arrested, not because of their actions, but because of their position in society* (1985 p xxii). Wardhaugh discusses the accepted dishonesty of vagabonds throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and the periodic swoops

and national searches of the time that are all too reflective of *modern attempts to clear the streets of the contemporary vagrant: the homeless person who begs* (p 37). Endless policies that aim only to reduce levels of visible homeless it seems only serve to compound the homelessness state.

The next chapter *Representing Homelessness and Crime* traces the historic legislative responses to the vagrant and the tramp. By adopting a broad perspective the author is able to focus attention upon recurrent themes, characteristics, contradictions and commonalties. Wardhaugh draws upon evidence from the Elizabethan Rogue pamphlets, the canting dictionaries, moving from romance to philanthropy, through social realism to post modern fiction. As always there is a need to acknowledge that *both the press and the law..., can be equally misleading and unreliable guides to the actual behaviour of contemporary people* (p 49). This chapter succeeds in providing a clear chronological discussion of the cyclic laws impacting on the historical vagabond and in turn on those homeless today.

Unaccomodated Woman is a refreshing, though somewhat glancing, analysis of the meaning of home as something other than a roof. The discussion relates to personal experiences and understanding. Wardhaugh acknowledges that '"home" and "homelessness"...refer to complex and shifting experiences and identities' (p 76). The chapter explores the gendered meanings of home and homelessness. It also looks at the social and spatial ordering of the home in relation to the construction of identity. 'Home and order' details a phenomenological perspective '"home" or "inside" is equated with security, certainty, order, family and femaleness' (p 78). This is set in contrast to 'home as prison' from where many need to escape.

Chapter five's exploration of Homelessness and Victimisation highlights the absence of the homeless victim in three primary areas; popular consciousness, the criminal justice system and academic theory. The homeless were only given the right to vote in 2001. Those who are homeless effectively become 'non citizens'. Wardhaugh states 'The homeless are socially and economically excluded from society' (p 90). They are 'designated, scapegoated and shadow victims' (p 91). This is in face of the fact that by the very nature of their position they are at risk of multiple and revengeful abuse and assaults. In its discussion of victimology and the risks of double jeopardy links between child abuse and homelessness are drawn upon. Unfortunately, as Wardhaugh notes, 'state sanctions fall more heavily on the victim' (p 90). Indeed triple jeopardy applies when there is a 'risk of further victimisation by removal into care' (p 90).

Chapter six, *Regulating Homeless Spaces,* offers a 'socio-spatial' perspective and a discussion of the liminal status the homeless occupy in terms of time and space. It delivers a frank view of recent legislative initiatives such as The Rough Sleepers Initiative which she argues 'reflected the official discourse of homelessness, in part that rooflessness=real homelessness' (p 41). Wardhaugh also explores the 'intensification...of politicisation and criminalisation of street homelessness'. Which continued in the early 1990s when 'it was asserted that no-one need any longer sleep rough in London' (p 101). A view that served to 'demonise all street people' (p 101).

Overall, *Sub City: Young People, Homelessness and Crime* provides an insight into the historical basis for more contemporary attitudes towards the homeless. It is a descriptive, thorough, historical, literary, and legislative account of the relationship of crime to homelessness. However it does not focus on an analysis of young people specifically in relation to homelessness and crime as the title suggests.

For those fighting against homelessness in all its guises - Wardhaugh lists; *'hostel dwellers, squatters, new age travellers and the street homeless'* (p 18) - it provides a strange kind of support. Not least in its understanding of the battle which needs to be fought to combat true homelessness. In quoting Major and Blair in their condemning view that 'it is right to be intolerant of people homeless on the streets' Wardhaugh reminds us of how unhelpful the prevailing official orthodoxy is. For homelessness in the twenty first century remains *an unwanted reminder of poverty amidst affluence* (p 49). The book paints a bleak and cyclic picture.

Tracey Hodgson *until recently worked with young homeless people.*

REVIEWS

Stuart Waiton
Scared of the Kids?
Curfews, crime and the regulation of young people
Sheffield Hallam University School of Cultural Studies
ISBN 0 86339 929 0
£9.95
pp 175

Dod Forrest

In Britain today we all live and work within walking distance of a surveillance camera. Most workplaces are fitted with burglar alarms requiring workers to punch a code into a key pad to gain access. Virtually every area has a poster advertising a neighbourhood watch scheme. The newsagent invariably has a billboard headlining a particular crime. Memos on security, safety and risk assessments fill the filing cabinets in our offices. On the way home we will pass a warden or policeman on patrol. This is an anxious and mistrustful society and child safety in this context is a central plank of social policy today.

Scared of the Kids is a book that focuses on crime, the fear of crime and the growing 'safety industry'. This is an important book that could have been a great book. It offers a chilling reminder of the power and irrationality of the fear of crime. The book looks at curfews, crime and the regulation of young people in this respect. It is based on a series of interviews conducted with children and young people who experienced the Child Safety Initiative or what became known as the Hamilton Curfew.

The book tells the tale of how in one small neighbourhood of Scotland within the Strathclyde Police Authority there was a policy in the late 1990s that sought to sweep young people off the streets before darkness fell. Waiton, a community worker, journalist, researcher and PhD student tells us briefly how the research project which underpins the book emerged from his concern with the stop and search policy adopted by Strathclyde police at this time.

I found some aspects of the structure of the book mildly irritating. An introduction to the book is given by Mayer Hillman, obviously a man who needs no introduction - for none is given. To those of us new to the subject in hand, he remains a mysterious contributor, not even given a mention in the acknowledgements. The latter sections of the book tend to drift away from the main themes of curfews, crime and regulation, in the process straying into a debate that focuses on adults and intergenerational

communication. In contrast the central chapters, especially chapter 6 *Regulation, Regulation, Regulation* are enthralling and hugely informative.

In my opinion, the book is an important addition to our knowledge of contemporary criminal justice policy; a policy of social control wrapped up in an ideology of child safety. The author also presents some very useful insights into young people's attitudes to police, safety and policing. It explodes a number of myths, not least that young people are always anti-police and anti-authoritarian. The author also peels away the New Labour rhetoric on crime and anti-social behaviour to reveal a depth of conservatism. A rather obscure criticism of 'left realist criminologists', in particular Jock Young and his efforts to radicalise crime prevention, by turning it into a working class issue also get a severe 'clip round the ear'. In a nutshell, Waiton convincingly argues that a peculiar paradox exists in contemporary society- actual crime is falling while the fear of crime is on the increase.

The core of this book is contained in chapter 6 and it supports Waiton's thesis that: '...the traditional view from the 50's on, of rebellious or anti authoritarian youth, breaking free of parental and external authority no longer fits' (p 98). It is in this section of the book that we get a feel for some of those young people who hang about on the streets. These young people don't like being 'moved on' - this much we all know, but who would have thought that they also think there should be more effective policing and 'moving on' of 'the druggies' and 'the rowdies' just round the corner. Waiton points out that over half of the young people interviewed from in and around Hillhouse (a neighbourhood of Hamilton) supported the curfew - 75% of those interviewed outside the curfew area agreed with it, and one third of all the young people interviewed opposed the curfew not for its authoritarianism but because it wasn't authoritarian enough.

On reflection however and to end on perhaps a note of caution, the research was based on two small samples of children and young people. The data was slight in that it drew on only one interview of 32 primary school children in a classroom setting although this was supplemented by their diary keeping. A further 26 Secondary School pupils were interviewed once in a classroom setting. They were not asked to keep a diary, an omission noted with regret by the researchers. No observational records of street life were documented. However, these data were extensively supported by a substantial review of literature and a useful bibliography completes the study.

In a concluding if ironic confirmation that a pervasive anxiety surrounds the impact on adults of this generation of young people we discover that the author is also 'scared of the kids' when he reflects on the findings of his study:

> *Children's Agencies who, in opposing the Hamilton Curfew, have demanded that the police listen to young people, may soon find that this 'listening' process results in even more rules, regulations and laws that restrict the behaviour and activities of young people within communities. If the police 'listen' to many of the young people in Hillhouse, they will discover that...they are largely in favour of 'other' young people being swept of the streets. (p 157)*

A sobering thought but one that is tackled head on by Waiton throughout the book. He argues there is a responsibility on us all to challenge young people after we listen to what they have to say. I think he is correct, to do otherwise would be patronising and in the circumstances of increasing racism in cities like Oldham, for example, possibly an act of criminal neglect.

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John Pitts
The New Politics of Youth Crime: Discipline or Solidarity?
Palgrave, 2001
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£47.50 (hbk)
pp 218

John Muncie

This book is described as the result of two research programmes into child protection social work and youth victimisation in England and France. However in crucial respects it also provides an important up-date to some of the themes introduced in Pitts' influential earlier work - *The Politics of Juvenile Crime* – published in 1988. Here Pitts had concluded that understandings of youth crime are persistently clouded by a recurrent

politicisation whereby the misbehaviour of some of the poorest sectors of society is met by coercion and demonisation rather than tolerance and compassion.

The New Politics of Youth Crime takes up this history with a series of critical reflections on the impact that a UK/USA disciplinary tradition has made on the treatment of young people in the youth justice system, particularly in England and Wales, since the early 1980s. Much of the book provides a sustained and telling critique of the narrow vision, misplaced nostalgia and missed opportunities associated with New Labour administrations from 1997 on. Despite the emergence of 'new' principles of crime prevention, restorative justice, risk management and social inclusion, New Labour has ultimately conspired to promulgate the familiar story that crime, however complex, is to be blamed on the moral failure and indiscipline of culpable individuals, families and communities. Pitts is at his critical best when demolishing the dubious practice initiatives and civil and criminal powers ushered in by the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. He echoes the concerns of numerous academic analysts in his insistence that fast – tracking, cost effectiveness, dejuvenilisation (notably the abolition of doli incapax), pre-emptive intervention and an obsession with cognitive risk factors and evidence-based analysis fail to address the complex interrelated problems of child poverty, urban degeneration, social exclusion, disorder and crime. Refreshingly too the book is written in a fluid and often ironic style in which Pitts' healthy scepticism is allowed to shine (as when the modern ideal type family is said to comprise 'a mum, a dad, 2.4 children, a red setter and a vasectomy' (p 3). The book concludes with a comparative analysis of crime prevention measures of the 1980s and early 1990s, driven by notions of discipline in England and by an ethos of social solidarity in France. Unsurprisingly Pitts is clearly convinced that possibilities for progressive reform lie not in the disciplinary techniques of efficiency and effectiveness but in developing a political commitment to cement new routes to an active citizenship through economic, social and criminal justice policies based on tolerance, mutual respect, inclusivity and entitlement.

The book is a welcome addition to those attempts to tease out the disciplinary underpinnings of New Labour's third way project and to trace its impact on young people. And it is difficult to disagree with the introductory thesis that 'youth crime' and youth justice are less issues in themselves and more the products of governmental attempts to 'manage the tensions

between political ideology, economic reality and electoral viability' (p 2). This clearly resonates with the climate of media and political hysteria about mobile phone thefts that has informed a spate of knee jerk policies and practices (new bail restrictions, fast track courts, surveillance in nurseries and schools, secure foster homes, removing child benefit from, or jailing, parents of truanting children and so on) that surfaced in the months preceding the writing of this review. The politics of law and order routinely subvert rational analysis. Yet there also appears something of an ongoing tension in this argument. By locating youth crime as the end result of such growing forces as neighbourhood destabilisation, free market individualisation and relative deprivation, Pitts necessarily adopts a realist position that, beyond all political constructions, crime 'will probably increase because the pressures towards criminality will intensify' (p 155). Yet this is not what crime surveys suggest. Crime has been going down in most western jurisdictions for the past decade.

Pitts restricts his analysis largely to the level of politics and policy. This enables us to see a broad picture but also might be in danger of missing some of the nuances and spaces for resistance, haphazard implementation, non-compliance and negotiation that are opened up within a youth justice system that is clearly contradictory in itself. A rising tide of authoritarianism and system expansion, for example, will always sit uneasily alongside demands for managerial cost effectiveness. Implementation of policy may not always mirror the intentions of policy makers, as the refusal of any local authority to implement child curfews and the low take up of anti-social behaviour orders seem to testify. The import of techniques of restorative justice may not undermine an otherwise retributive system but they do offer some possibilities for more creative spaces. Above all the attribution of a sole disciplinary rationale to contemporary English youth justice masks the fact that the system has no coherent philosophy and is driven as much by short term pragmatism as it is by a sole concern to subjugate and control.

Nevertheless this book is an essential counter to those who claim that we are witnessing a bright new dawn in youth justice. It is also a telling reminder that the problems facing young people cannot be addressed by criminal justice based interventions. Our children and our future deserve better than that.

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Tim Chapman
Time to Grow: A Comprehensive Programme for People Working with Young Offenders and Young People at Risk
Russell House Publishing, 2000
ISBN 1-898924-62-7
pp 234

Carole Pugh

Tim Chapman worked for over 25 years in the Probation Service in Northern Ireland, and is currently an independent researcher, trainer and consultant. The book reflects his experience of working with young people who offend or are at risk of offending. The assertion behind it is that young people in trouble 'need time to grow', the programme he advocates is designed to provide this 'time' with the support of adults 'who care enough' to listen and to help with all the difficult questions and choices facing the young people. The programme relies heavily on cognitive behavioural psychology, but also incorporates philosophical, sociological and cultural theory. The assumption behind the model is that the young people have developed behaviours with which to manage the world, that are damaging to themselves and to the wider community, and that with time and support, they can examine these and learn more constructive ways of being. The motivating question behind the exploration of theory and practice is identified as 'Can the process of addressing the causes and consequences of offending with an individual be a vehicle for change which fundamentally benefits the offender, the victim and the community?'

The book is split into 2 main sections. The first is a 'textbook' which summarises theory and research relating to the work. The 'textbook' covers the 3 main areas required for the programme to create opportunities for growth - a nurturing community, a process of learning, and committed purposeful relationships. These areas are then examined, bringing together theory and research around topics such as modernity and its effects on young people's experience of society, practice management, selecting participants, managing risks and balancing priorities to create an effective programme. There is a great breadth of issues and material brought together, addressing topics from policy and management level, through to individual interactions with young people. Working through this part of the book, engaging with the material raises many questions for reflection, as the author asserts:

> *It is important that practitioners read and understand the research, theories and principles which inform these processes. This is because they are based upon dialogue and the leader's way of being, rather than techniques and exercises. (p 141)*

Some of the material is good, well constructed and asks interesting questions of the practitioner and programme design, however, some of the material is less strong, offering 'nice' simple acronyms and sayings, which would benefit from more critical examination. In parts the style of writing is hard to follow, quotes are offered with little in the way of explanation. I found they made sections hard going, as it was difficult to follow the thread of the argument. This section would have benefited from more narrative, analysis and critique and less plain summary of theory and research findings.

The second part is a 'workbook' that outlines the processes involved in the programme. There is a suggested session structure and then an outline of the programme that the group are taken through - creating a climate of trust; expanding young people's possibilities; developing new ways of being; transforming young people's paradigms; learning new skills and practices; breaking down old habits and enabling young people to find their own place in supportive communities. The style of the book changes, initially there are some basic methods and tools suggested, exercises that could be used, and questions that can be helpful, then each section is worked through, addressing individual goals, feelings and behaviours. Each section begins with a checklist for practitioners to run through, ensuring they are focussed on the session ahead of them, this I found helpful. The process then moves through a series of questions to provoke discussion and thought with the young people, designed to address specific issues. The book is aimed at 'professionals not technicians' therefore those looking for a step-by-step manual will be disappointed. The process is designed to be a groupwork programme, although much of it could be adopted to work with individuals. Overall I found this helpful, asking interesting questions, although there are a few points where I would be uncomfortable with the level of depth the young people are asked to reveal within the group.

While the book focuses on constructing a programme for working with those who have offended, or are at risk of offending, the content of both sections have ideas and questions to offer anyone working with young people. The open examination of the purpose and the 'way of being' of

the worker asks questions which prompt reflection. The acceptance that seeking change within young people who are at risk, is asking a lot of the young people, and demands integrity from the worker, and a programme that engages honestly with each participant. The attitude behind the book, that assumes both practitioners and young people are intelligent and capable and that processes of dialogue generate a collective intelligence exceeding individual creativity and problem solving is refreshing.

***Carole Pugh** is a researcher at the University of Luton.*

Howard Parker, Judith Aldridge and Roy Egginton (Eds)
UK Drugs Unlimited: New Research and Policy Lessons on Illicit Drug Use
Palgrave, 2001
ISBN 0 333 91817 7
pp 182

Niall Coggans

This volume, edited by Howard Parker, Judith Aldridge and Roy Egginton - based largely on their own research - presents an interesting overview of current drug use as experienced by large numbers of young people in the UK. But the book is more than a collection of research reports. The research is the basis for a carefully constructed argument for changes in the way that the UK tackles drugs, drug users and drug problems.

The chapters explore key drug issues in the UK. Starting with a comparative picture of the nature and extent of drug use in the UK, which leads to the conclusion that the UK 'has the most drug experienced population in Europe' and in this respect has caught up with the USA. Lessons that have not been learned are highlighted: in particular, that the treatment sector has not been professionalised, modernised or sufficiently encouraged to diversify treatment options.

The way in which young people obtain their drugs is described. Instead of young people being the victims of evil dealers it is evident that young recreational drug users are involved in what could be termed social supply. That is, distribution of recreational drugs at the point of use is frequently through friendship networks at some distance from 'real' dealers. Indeed,

many young drug users do not want to mix with 'real' dealers. There are differences in the ways that heroin users obtain their supplies compared with recreational drug users. The heroin trade is characterised by less informal networks, being more commercially driven and having higher risks. Controlled recreational users, on the other hand, are different: dealing is sorting, based on friendship and trust. The authors note that enforcement is unachievable and observe that the 'war on drugs discourse demands the impossible rather than the feasible and thus fails to deliver either'.

Patterns of drug use and drug pathways in adolescence are assessed and the question asked, are drug users unconventional? While early (cigarette) smoking and early regular drinking were significant predictors of drug trying and use, no simple risk profile distinguishes drug users from drug abstainers. However, at the heavy end of drug use – heroin and cocaine use, as opposed to recreational drug use – the risk factor analysis is more likely to produce the expected results. There is also a good attempt to characterise different types of users.

Some of the problems in relation to drug prevention are discussed and the unfortunate lack of secondary prevention/harm reduction emphasised. Moreover, there is a pressing need to better inform people about the nature and problems of heroin and crack use. Many young people do not properly understand what they are getting into when they start to use heroin. In the club scene young people are very drug experienced and less likely to come to the attention of authorities than poor Class A drug users. In other words, the realities of drug use are different for middle class users, including middle class users of Class A drugs, compared with poor Class A users who are more visible to the authorities through their drug-related behaviour. Thus, while the rhetoric of the drug war is not class based the realities are.

Emphasis is placed on the need for early warning research to inform response strategies. It is surprising that so little is done in this regard. There is a danger that service provision, already under strain, will not be prepared or able to deal with emerging drug problems. Interestingly, the authors note that new young heroin users are from a wider population than traditional risk takers or the socially excluded. With the mean age of heroin onset going down to 15 years compared with around 17 years during the heroin outbreaks in the 1980s, and not predominantly from dysfunctional homes, the treatment models employed for the last 20 years are unlikely to be appropriate. The need to have more effective out reach work is stressed to reach problematic users at the margins of society.

Having laid the groundwork with reference to research, the authors make a powerful case for new ways of responding to drugs and drug users and they discuss the missing elements of the UK strategy. Indeed the authors contend that strategic thinking is largely absent in relation to drugs. In addition to the need to develop harm reduction interventions, there is a need to recognise that (not uncommon) drug use among achieving people exists without the problems associated with the junkie stereotype. There is also a need to monitor and manage drug use more effectively and to forecast patterns of drug use using available tools.

This book pulls together research that may not be well-known outside the drug research community in a way that is accessible to the non-academic reader. The arguments are sound and the failures of policy and practice underlined. It is a book that deserves to be widely read. More importantly, the book deserves to be read without pre-conceived ideas preventing an objective perspective on the issues.

***Niall Coggans** is a member of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.*

Nick Lee
Childhood and Society: Growing up in an age of uncertainty
Open University Press, 2001
ISBN: 0335206085
£16.99 (pbk)
ISBN 0335206093
£50.00 (hbk)
pp 157

Annie Franklin

This book aims to explore questions, such as 'What happens to childhood when the nature of adulthood becomes uncertain?' 'What impact is globalisation having on adult-child relationships?' 'How are we to study growing up today?'

Its premise is that, traditionally, children and adults have been treated as different kinds of person, with adults seen as complete, stable and self-controlling, and children as incomplete, changeable and in need of

control and that this view is not appropriate for the twenty first century [if it ever was!]. Lee argues that 'growing up' can no longer be understood as a movement toward personal completion and stability. He claims that careers, intimate relationships, even identities, are increasingly provisional, bringing into question the division between the mature and immature and thereby differences between adults and children.

Lee takes Qvortup's concept of adults as human beings and children as human becomings and reworks it into a concept that we are all, always, human becomings. He states 'Change and incompleteness have entered adulthood as principles for living that replace stability and completeness'. This, he suggests, has led to the destabilisation of adulthood, 'the implications of which are vitally important for understanding contemporary relationships of authority and power between adults and children'.

The book is divided into three parts, with the first exploring the changing relationships between adults and children. The second - 'Ambiguities of Childhood' - explores social order issues; home, school and the media; and rights and decision-making. The concluding part - 'Human Becomings and Social Research' - is ambitious and looks at childhood and extension, with sections on Derrida, assemblages, and change. In this final part, Lee also suggests there is need for recognition of the immaturity of sociological understanding and a development of new models, such as 'agency as dependency'. The very last section of the concluding part is titled: 'Becoming to an End'.

There are interesting ideas in this book. It is very thought provoking and at times, challenging. But its language is unashamedly academic, which, while there is nothing wrong with that, will limit its appeal to a significant section of the practitioner readership. This is in some ways a great shame, as much of the material used, particularly in part two, would be of interest to a broader readership.

This second part surveys the various 'places' of children in society. Using a variety of historical and geographical examples it examines the physical places society has allotted to children, notably family, home and school. It also explores instances where it has proved difficult to keep children in their 'proper' place and where their 'proper' places have been changing around them.

When large numbers of children spend a good deal of time on city streets; when family homes become places of concentrated

> *consumption and choice; and, when schooling turns from books to information and communication technologies, the nature of childhood becomes ambiguous.*

Lee claims that new ambiguous childhoods are emerging across the globe. He supports this assertion with reference to the lives of street children in the developing world contrasted with attitudes to children and young people in the neighbourhood renewal programme in the UK, linked to Child Safety Orders and Parenting Orders. Lee notes that in all societies it is poorer children who are seen as being out of place and Governments, rather than seeing poverty and social deprivation as cause, see the children themselves as the location of the problem.

He argues that this social ambiguity exposes children to danger which would be best eliminated by redefining children from 'becomings' to 'beings'. However he acknowledges the enormity of this task and the impact it would have on family structure, the pursuit of social order and the 'very legitimacy of the relationship between states and their populations'.

The outmoded places children inhabit in the home and at school are explored ending with a section on child-centred schooling and the influence of ICT, which Lee claims has the ability to increase pupil participation in learning.

The final chapter in part two explores children's voice, rights and decision-making. The chapter examines issues of voice and silence, giving an account of how the silencing of children has occurred and that it is now widely recognised - in principle - as unjust. It looks at the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and at Article 12 in particular and notes the awkward assumptions on which it is based. All of these discussions would be of considerable interest to practitioners.

On the negative side, the writing style is not accessible enough. In particular, Lee's use of the royal 'we' throughout was irritating. I feel it would have been a much easier read if he had written in the first person.

However, the book fulfils its aim to explore childhood and society in an age of uncertainty. It takes a clear theoretical position on childhood and children, about which the reader is in no doubt. It is a very useful contribution to the literature and will, hopefully, be recommended to students on Sociology of Childhood and Youth and Community courses.

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

REVIEWS

Janet Stanley and Chris Goddard
In the Firing Line: Violence and Power in Child Protection Work
John Wiley and Sons, 2002
ISBN 0-471-99885-0
£17.99 (pbk)
pp 224

Keith Pringle

In this review I want to question the high claims made for this book by its publishers - and indeed the somewhat lesser but still considerable claims made for it by the authors themselves. But first it needs to be acknowledged that the book is useful on a number of counts. For instance, it brings together much material in a helpful way about child protection worker stress/trauma and, importantly, defines this as a process rather than a series of events. Moreover, it makes the vital point that violence inside and outside families needs to be seen in its totality – including the frequent co-occurrence of violence visited by men upon both their partners and their children; as well as the violence (or threat of violence) experienced by some child protection workers.

Nevertheless, these achievements do not justify the claim on the book's back cover that describes the volume as 'ground-breaking'. Nor is it at all clear that the more moderate claims of the authors themselves are beyond dispute. These latter claims largely relate to the application of what the authors term 'hostage theory' to the field of child protection. Referring to social workers in this field, they 'suggest that hostage-like behaviour is an important, yet largely unrecognised, dimension in child protection work' (p 154). Such behaviours are identified, by the authors, as including: denial about levels of violence in families; threat of violence to themselves or to colleagues; feelings of helplessness; feelings of isolation. They go on to argue that 'hostage theory proposes a link between hostage-like behaviour on the part of the protective worker and an increased risk of a failure to protect the child who has been maltreated' (p 141). Moreover, the theory it is said provides 'at least a partial explanation of the difficulties inherent in protecting children who have been severely assaulted, abused and neglected' (p 200); and the suggestion is made that 'it may assist us in gaining the deeper understanding that we so urgently require if we are to be more successful in our efforts to protect children from harm' (p 201).

One surely can fully acknowledge that the atmosphere of violence experienced by child protection workers needs to be taken more into account when considering the lack of protection offered by authorities to many children living with violence - and the book is to be commended for making that point strongly. Nevertheless, the broader claims of the authors about the value of 'hostage theory' seem harder to accept on a number of counts. First of all, those behaviours they identify as being 'hostage-like' can be interpreted in a number of other ways without the need of 'hostage theory'. For example, as the authors themselves note, many of the behaviours can be understood using a 'post-traumatic stress disorder' (PTSD) framework. Alternatively, many could be viewed as the outcome of conflicting 'agendas' imposed on child protection workers by, on the one hand, their training as anti-discriminatory activists and on the other hand by their societal role as state agents. Or, again, those behaviours could be seen as the outcome of the conflict between being, on the one hand, 'professional' as defined in many welfare agencies and, on the other hand, being a human being faced with immeasurable human pain. They could be also understood within the concept of loss. And they could of course be seen as resulting from any combination of the above – as well from many other possible explanations.

Moreover, as the authors partially acknowledge (p 120/121), it is at the very least questionable whether a direct comparison can be drawn between terrorist hostages and social workers. The idea of 'hostage theory' as applied to child protection workers is buttressed in the book by use of extensive quantitative evidence. Yet this only adds to doubts about the overall analysis: partly because of the numerous (debatable) assumptions which the authors admit they have built into their quantitative models; but also because these extensive quantitative elaborations are based on data from only 50 child protection workers.

The central question which has to be answered about developing any 'new' analytical model is whether it adds to our ability to make some form of sense about the world or whether it creates more problems in that respect. 'Hostage theory', in the context of this book, does not seem to fare well by such a test. For, it is not clear to what extent profound new insights are offered by the theory. On the other hand, it seems that the theory may potentially carry considerable dangers. Let me offer two examples. First, although it is not inevitable, the theory may lend itself to over-individualistic interpretations of why child protection workers are

traumatised and why some children are ineffectively protected – thereby not providing the requisite acknowledgement of agency, societal and political reasons for this ineffectiveness. Secondly, without wanting to deny the genuine suffering of many child protection workers, the theory may potentially offer a rationale by which the genuine responsibility of some workers for child protection failures can, in some cases, be avoided.

Overall, then, the book is certainly a useful addition to the literature on child protection, but may not fulfil the more extensive claims made for it. Whilst there may be some value in applying 'hostage theory' to the plight of many women and children subject to men's violence in families, the application of the theory to the situation of child protection workers seems less convincing.

Keith Pringle *teaches in the Department of Social Work, University of Sunderland.*

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