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

'A WAR FOR CIVILISATION AS WE KNOW IT':
Some observations on tackling anti-social behaviour

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The Anti-social Behaviour Bill received its Royal Assent on 21 November 2003. The new Act represents the latest attempt by New Labour to tackle that amalgam of behaviour, from spray painting and graffiti, through abusive and noisy behaviour to street begging and environmental decline that has been subsumed under the label 'anti-social'.

The Home Office has called anti-social behaviour 'low level criminal and sub-criminal behaviour' (Home Office, 2003 (a): para.5.17). Just where 'anti-social' behaviour begins and ends and how it is different from criminal behaviour, is a debate that continues. What is no longer at issue in the government's mind is the need to 'do something about it' and Home Secretary David Blunkett is unequivocal that:

> Tackling anti-social behaviour is as much about a clear cultural change as new powers ... I want to end the culture where playing the system and making other people's life a misery is seen as something that goes unpunished.
> (Home Office, 2003)

A range of measures including Parenting Orders, Child Safety Orders and 'curfews' and powers to disperse groups in public places, have been introduced to combat anti-social behaviour. Here we particularly focus on the rise of the Anti-social Behaviour Order (ASBO) as the epitome of our current response to the problem. According to Sir Charles Pollard, acting Chair of the Youth Justice Board, 'juveniles represent nearly 60 per cent of those attracting anti-social behaviour orders' (Pollard, 2003).

This article seeks to outline the development of legal and policy responses to anti-social behaviour – with particular reference to the ASBO - and to question the direction of those responses. The position of welfare as a value under-pinning work with young people, for example, appears to be marginalised by these new developments that seek only to 'crack down' on young people. The Anti-social Behaviour Order (ASBO) available since the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is now increasingly accompanied by publicity given to communities, identifying young people subject to an ASBO, complete with photographs and details of their previous behaviour and the current restrictions on that behaviour. Little thought seems to have gone into the consequences of that publicity (see for example 'Parents cry foul as "anti-social" are named and shamed', The Observer, 12 October 2003).

Other criticisms can be made of government attempts to tackle this 'low-level criminal and sub-criminal behaviour', but the stakes are high. According to Labour MP, Frank Field, we are engaged in 'nothing less than a war for civilisation as we know it' (Field, 2003: 18).

The Origins of a Policy

In the early 1980s, the idea that 'incivilities' and 'social disorder' formed a separate category of behaviour away from criminal behaviour took hold in the USA. The 'broken windows' thesis held that if a broken window in a building is left unrepaired, the other windows will soon be broken. A signal has been sent out that this is an area where 'no one cares' and social controls – formal and informal – have been suitably lowered to invite other disorderly behaviour. A 'tipping point' is passed over and a spiral of decline sets in. The response from the police has to be early intervention to reclaim these areas before they reach the 'tipping point' (Wilson and Kelling, 1982).

The broken windows thesis has evolved over the years into the conventional wisdom of our times:

> *If a window is broken or a wall is covered in graffiti it can contribute to an environment in which crime takes hold, particularly if intervention is not prompt and effective.*
> (Home Office 2003(a): para. 1.8)

In policing terms it was this thesis that gave us the phrase 'zero tolerance' (see also Kelling and Coles, 1996).

As these ideas made their way across the Atlantic, the UK was evolving its own perspective on social disorder. Local authority housing officials in particular started to face up to the problems of disorderly behaviour on housing estates in the early 1990s. Complaints came in to police and housing officials about families and young people causing noise, graffiti and other persistent 'public nuisance'. The phrase 'youth annoyance' was coined to describe this low level, 'sub-criminal' behaviour (Field, 2003: 84-5); ultimately the preferred term would become 'anti-social behaviour'.

At its 1995 annual conference in Harrogate, the Chartered Institute of Housing hosted a fringe meeting to air the need for concerted action against those causing the trouble. A Local Authority Working Group on Anti-social behaviour was formed, which later became the Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group when it opened up to allow Housing Association representatives on to it. This Group mounted an effective lobby with politicians. The Labour Party, then in

Opposition, outlined what it could contribute to future policies (Labour Party, 1995). Meanwhile the incumbent government passed the Noise Act 1996, targeted at one particular form of anti-social behaviour, and the Housing Act 1996 made it easier to manage and evict anti-social tenants. Multi-agency initiatives between police and housing authorities started to appreciate the difficulties involved (Bland and Read, 2000; for a carefully documented account of all these early initiatives and the significance of the Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group as a lobbying force, see Burney, 1999: 86 ff.).

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

Once in power, New Labour lost little time in introducing its Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act contained a series of measures to counter anti-social behaviour including curfews, Parenting Orders, Child Safety Orders and the Anti-social Behaviour Order.

Initially named as Community Safety Orders, (Home Office, 1997) the ASBO was to be a civil order applied for by the police or local authorities in the magistrate's court. The ASBO was a form of civil injunction to prohibit behaviour found to be 'anti-social' and to sometimes restrict a person's movement in a given geographical area where they had acted in an anti-social manner. The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act section 1 contained the relevant law which was implemented from 1 April 1999. The Act defined anti-social behaviour as having:

> .... acted in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself.
> (Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.1 (i)(a))

This definition looks more at the outcome of the behaviour rather than trying to describe that behaviour. If that outcome was met, the court could make an ASBO on someone if it was believed:

> ...that such an order is necessary to protect persons in the local government area in which the harassment, alarm or distress was caused or was likely to be caused from further anti-social acts by him
> (Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.1 (i) (b))

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) was not involved as this was not a criminal prosecution, and no convictions were recorded or punishments imposed; an ASBO was never going to be part of anyone's criminal record, and although it might *restrict* someone's liberty as a civil order, it was not intended to *deprive* any of their liberty as a criminal order might.

As a civil application it was also possible to use 'hearsay' evidence in the magistrates courts, and the Act permitted the use of 'professional witnesses' such as local authority officials; this was one way of getting round the problem of intimidated witnesses. Also as a civil application the burden of proof in court was lower, being only on the 'balance of probabilities' rather than the 'beyond all reasonable doubt' requirement of criminal proceedings.

By late 2003 some 1,330 ASBOs had been made (Blears, 2003). If an ASBO was not complied with, the subject of the Order could be brought back to court and dealt with by criminal proceedings. Penalties ranged from a fine to up to five years in prison (see 'Game Over', *The Guardian* 14 March 2000 for an account of a 14 year old being the first imprisonment for breach of an ASBO).

The campaign group Liberty pointed out the dangers of creating a 'two-tier' criminal justice system whereby 'two people could do the same things, and yet one could receive up to a five year prison sentence while the other will not have broken the law at all' (Liberty u.d.). No longer 'equal under the law' some people would start to experience a separate 'jurisprudence of difference'.

Jack Straw, Home Secretary at the time, was anticipating criticisms of the Bill as he steered it through Parliament; criticisms he said would come from those 'urbane metropolitan lawyers' who never saw the reality of life on council housing estates. Six academic lawyers duly gave their views in a joint article outlining objections based on:

- *the difficulties of defining anti-social behaviour;*
- *the low standards of proof in civil proceedings;*
- *the wide scope of possible prohibitions on behaviour;*
- *the disproportionate character of the penalty for breaching an ASBO; and*
- *the questionable workability of the whole scheme.*
  (Ashworth et al, 1998)

Others later argued that application for an ASBO really ought to be by the more rigorous criminal proceedings requirements, than by civil proceedings. In particular:

- *the imposition of an ASBO will attract publicity and stigma in the same way as a criminal conviction;*
- *prohibitions attached to an ASBO may significantly restrain the defendant's freedom and should be seen as penalties; and*
- *where a defendant is convicted for contravening an ASBO the sentencing court is banned from imposing a conditional discharge (Crime and*

*Disorder Act 1998 s.1(ii)), suggesting that the imposition of the ASBO is
itself seen as a form of conditional discharge on first conviction.*
(Leng et al., 1998)

Later the House of Lords would agree with this line of argument and ruled that
instead of civil proceedings the more rigorous criminal proceedings ought to be
followed by courts when considering the past acts of anti-social behaviour, and
the necessity for an Order should be an 'exercise of judgement' rather than a civil
'balance of probabilities'. (House of Lords (formerly C (a minor) v. Royal Borough
of Kensington and Chelsea (on appeal from a Divisional Court of the QBD; R v
Crown Court at Manchester ex parte McCann (FC) and others (FC), October 2002);
see also McDonald, 2003).

The Police Reform Act 2002, introduced Interim ASBOs and the ability to add an
ASBO on to a criminal conviction and sentence – the so called CRASBO which
avoided the need for two separate hearings. It also allowed Housing Associations
and other registered social landlords, as well as the British Transport Police (BTP)
to apply for ASBOs; the BTP presumably wanted to deal with vandalism on railway
lines and graffiti on rolling stock. The Act also allowed an ASBO's geographical
area to be widened and in future they would be able to cover the whole of
England and Wales if necessary (see Home Office, 2002).

The White Paper 'Respect and Responsibility: taking a stand against Anti-social Behaviour'

In January 2003, the Home Office created its own Anti-social Behaviour Unit and
in March of the same year, the Government sought to extend its powers to deal
with anti-social behaviour with a White Paper outlining the need for yet more
effective policing of noise at night, the abusive use of fireworks, powers to close
'crack houses', prevent the selling of spray paints to people under 18, deal with
fly-tipping, graffiti, fly-posting etc. Various new options were directed specifically
at children and families, including more intensive Parenting Contracts, extended
Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes (ISSP) and a new Individual
Support Order to supplement the ASBO. It was further suggested that Housing
Benefits might be reduced for those considered anti-social (Home Office 2003; see
esp. Chapter Two on young people and families and para. 4.48 on Housing Benefit).

The consultation period for views on the White Paper was very short; published in
early March, responses had to be in by the end of the same month. The campaign
group 'Justice' were amongst those who criticised such haste, believing that 'rush-
ing through more and more legislation, some of it arguably unnecessary, is not the
best way to deal with perceived social problems' (*Justice*, 2003); the Editor of
Childright hoped Parliament would 'steady the government's attempts to rush

through the legislative process such ill thought out policy' (*Childright*, May 2003 :6). 'Justice' calculated that any Bill arising from the White Paper, in the current session, would be the sixth in that session alone affecting criminal justice (*Justice* 2003). A Bill was published almost immediately and was given its second reading in the Commons on 8 April; some thought it was window dressing for local elections taking place in most parts of the country on 1 May.

Snapshots and Action Plans

On 10 September 2003 the Home Office, Anti-social Behaviour Unit undertook to see just how many anti-social reports were received on that one day alone. Fifteen hundred organisations in England and Wales were asked to contribute to this 'snapshot' count, and the result was some 66,107 reports collated during the 24 hours. Estimates as to the costs to police and local authorities were put at £13.5 million (Home Office, 2003(b)).

A month later the Home Office launched its £22 million Action Plan to tackle anti-social behaviour. Certain cities were to be trailblazers for intense multi-agency work focusing on nuisance neighbours, abandoned cars and begging, and the aim was to develop best practice for discrimination around the country (Home Office, 2003(c)).

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 based on the March White Paper gave yet more powers to police and other agencies in the fight against anti-social behaviour. The police were given new powers to close premises where drug dealing was going on and local authorities gained powers to more easily evict undesirable tenants by giving them 'demoted tenancies'. Groups of people could be dispersed in 'designated areas' where anti-social behaviour had taken place in the past, and under 16s out after 9pm on their own could be returned home. These dispersal exercises could be enacted by the police or the civilian Community Safety Officers created by the Police Reform Act 2002. Other new powers dealt with noise, graffiti, fly-posting, and fly-tipping; it became an offence to sell paint aerosols to children under 16.

The Act also tried to reinforce parental responsibilities. Parenting Orders were toughened up by removing the restriction that parents could only be asked to attend one counselling session a week, and the possibility of residential courses for parents was brought in. Parenting Orders were now available for parents of children excluded from school, and new Parenting Contracts were introduced. The Parenting Contracts built on the practice of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts or ABC contracts which had spread around the country as preliminary steps toward an ASBO if there was a lack of compliance with them; neither the ABC contracts or the new Parenting Contracts are legal contracts.

Individual Support Orders giving tailored support for those on ASBOs appeared in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 s.322-3 which got its Royal Assent on the same day as the Anti-social Behaviour Act

Discussion

Apart from the early academic misgivings about Anti-social Behaviour Orders (esp. Ashworth et al, 1998), there have also been misgivings from practitioners on the ground about this new direction in social control (see for example Sale, 2001). In October 1999, Home Secretary Jack Straw had felt obliged to write to all local authorities about their lack of enthusiasm and urging them to use the new orders:

> *Certain academics and civil libertarians say the provisions are too sweep-ing and that they are incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Government does not accept that.*
> (Home Office, 1999)

Straw's successor David Blunkett, took a similar line when confronted by criticisms and seeming lethargy:

Above all we need a 'can do' attitude where we simply

> *won't take no for an answer. At every level of our public services we must match the courage and determination of victims and witnesses with an unshakeable resolve to support them to find a solution, and help them claim back their communities.*
> (Home Office, 2003(d))

More starkly, Blunkett's comments were reported as 'professionals working to reduce anti-social behaviour who fail to use new powers afforded to them by Ministers should be sacked' ('Blunkett: "Use new powers or face sack"', *Community Care*, 16-20 October 2003).

Even the Prime Minister pitched in:

> *I want to make one very simple point in this speech. To the police, housing officers, local authorities – we've listened, we've given you the powers, and it's time to use them... it's not acceptable for these powers to be used in some parts of the country and not others.*
> (Blair, 2003)

We need to explore further the source of these misgivings and the hesitancy of professionals. We do so under the following three headings.

1. The Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour

What exactly is anti-social behaviour has always been a contested area. The use of terms like 'sub-criminal', 'low-level disorder' and 'public nuisance' has led others to point out that this can actually also be 'non-criminal' behaviour and law enforcement is being taken into areas that it should not be going. A basic principle of criminal law is that no one can be accused of an act that is not recognised as a crime and that an individual is innocent until proved guilty. The picture is further confused by the fact that 'anti-social behaviour' has, in practice, often turned out to be criminal behaviour and is now recognised as such with the introduction of the ability to add an ASBO on to a criminal sentence (Police Reform Act 2002 s64 amending the Crime and Disorder Act 1998).

This criminalisation of previously non-criminal behaviour has been noted elsewhere in recent years. Child Safety Orders enable the police to deal with other non-criminal behaviour by children under the age of 10; non-criminal because the age of criminal responsibility is 10 (Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.11-12). Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) target children of similar age 'at risk' of crime ('Children of Eight to be targeted as future criminals', *Daily Telegraph*, 24 Oct. 2002). Labour MP Frank Field almost discounts the very need for an age of criminal responsibility believing the law should be changed 'so that by merely committing certain designated acts, a person was deemed old enough to be held accountable for those actions' (Field, 2003: 92)

The involvement of the police in dealing with truancy in the form of 'truancy sweeps' through town centres is a further example. Truancy in itself is not a criminal offence but police engagement with it was formalised in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.16 as an aid to Local Education Authorities.

At this point we might return to the so-called ABC Contracts in working with anti-social behaviour. These Acceptable Behaviour Contracts - which are actually not legal contracts at all - are drawn up between families, children and enforcement agencies as a means to try and impose something that sounds 'focused' on to a given - non-criminal - behaviour pattern. Failure to abide by an ABC is cited as a useful evidential stepping stone to a full ASBO (see Home Office 2000, Appendix G).

The use of these contracts - that are not contracts - is not new and they have been tried in other areas (see for example Corden and Preston-Shoot, 1987). The 1988 School Standards and Framework Act, s.110 introduced 'Home-School Agreements' that parents were expected to sign, covering such matters as school responsibilities, parental responsibilities and school expectations of pupils; the Act also pointed out that it was not compulsory for parents to sign the Agreement. As we have seen, the

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 has now introduced Parenting Contracts between parents, young people and the authorities. All of these have been attempts to impose a form of pseudo-'legality' on situations without the need to implement the actual law.

In terms of the legal definition of anti-social behaviour the new 2003 Act has also offered a new definition, which seemingly lowers further the standard of what constitutes such behaviour. The National Association for Youth Justice (NAYJ) pointed this out in their observations on the Bill.

The new definition of anti-social behaviour is to be found in the Anti-social Behaviour Act which adds a new section 153A to the 1996 Housing Act allowing injunctions to be sought by social landlords when there was conduct which:

(a) *is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person, and,*

(b) *which directly or indirectly relates to or alters the housing management func-tions of a relevant landlord.*
(Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 s.13)

This is a considerable lowering of the standards originally outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.1 that someone has:

Acted in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself.
(Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.1)

The NAYJ saw this as a clear dilution of the definition and wondered if this was the beginning of 'a campaign to reduce the threshold of the definition of anti-social behaviour' and that with now two potentially competing legal definitions would the 'end result (not be) a general "levelling down" of the definition to the less rigorous criteria' (NAYJ 2003: 6-7).

2. The 'Disappearance' of welfare
Practitioners engaged in work with young people have traditionally accorded a 'welfare' element to that work. The current drive to crack-down on all youth crime and anti-social behaviour has increasingly marginalised the role of welfare in favour of a more punitive approach. The Probation Service has already experienced this with its move to 'punishment in the community' and an emphasis on 'enforcement' that according to some, made probation 'little more than a waiting room for prison' (Hedderman and Hough, 2000).

With much of the origins of work against anti-social behaviour coming from housing officials and the police, supplemented by politicians like John Major who wanted

'a little less understanding and a little more condemnation', and later by theorists who sought to make welfare benefits conditional upon behaviour (see below), it is not so surprising that welfare has been pushed to one side. Indeed, some would blame the welfare non-judgemental approach as contributing to the 'rise' of anti-social behaviour and this led the Blair government to 'abandon long established taboos on judgementalism and on discussions of personal behaviour' (Deacon, 2002: 105).

Early signs of New Labour's intentions came with the Crime and Disorder Act's outline of the aims of the youth justice system that was to simply 'prevent offending by children and young persons' (1998 Act s.37). No mention here of a welfare component despite the existing law from the 1933 Children and Young Persons Act – still current law – 'that every court dealing with a child or young person ... shall have regard to the welfare of the child or young person' (s.44(i)).

Further evidence of the marginalisation of welfare came from the Government's surprise that it had been acting illegally for over a decade in ignoring the requirements of the Children Act 1989 when it came to children and young people who found themselves in the prison estate of Young Offender Institutes. For some 2-3,000 children each year the Children Act and its requirement that 'the child's welfare shall be paramount' (s.1) had simply been disapplied and Prison Service Order 4950 had confirmed that belief. The Howard League campaign group successfully challenged that position in November 2002 and the courts held that it was just 'wrong in law' ('Court upholds rights of jailed youngsters', *Guardian*, 30 November 2002).

In 2002 the Home Office took a large bite out of a welfare budget for its own ends to reduce crime. The Children's Fund had been set up only 18 months earlier to fund new projects working with 5-13 year olds and their families suffering the consequences of poverty. Partnerships between statutory and voluntary agencies could bid for funding in a range of imaginative ways. An initial £380 million was made available for the 40 most deprived areas in the country and the plan was to go nationwide by 2004 (DfEE, 2001)

Within twelve months the Government's 2002 Spending Review had taken 25% of this money and given it to the Home Office. The money ostensibly stayed with the Children's Fund, but in future 25% of any funding to partnerships had to be earmarked for projects that would be reducing crime. A 'menu' was produced of just what projects could be counted as achieving this end (CYPU and YJB 2002). The 'On Track' projects, to identify and reduce delinquency amongst 4 to 12-year olds was one such project now subsumed into the Children's Fund (Home Office 2003(a): para. 2.15).

More recently the Government Green Paper on the future of child care services 'Every Child Matters', used a welfare rhetoric:

> ... *we must be ambitious for all children, whoever they are and wherever they live. Creating a society where children are safe and have access to opportunities requires radical reform.*
> (Treasury Dept: 2003: 4)

Unless you are a young person who offends when you have apparently slipped off the agenda and require a different Green Paper altogether (Home Office 2003 (e)).

The implication appears to be that the 'welfare approach' has lost its way and does not 'deliver', and what is needed is something more firm and authoritative because that is what works. Where this retreat from welfare leaves all those youth workers, social workers, probation officers and others is a matter of conjecture. Perhaps they can still carve out space beneath the rhetoric to act within a welfare mode.

3. The increasing use of publicity

One of the innovative features of Anti-social Behaviour Orders has been the use of publicity to throw a spotlight on those made subject to them - including young people. Newspapers are reporting names and some authorities are producing glossy fold-out 'brochures' complete with names, photographs, and maps delimiting areas from which young people may be excluded (see Grier and Thomas 2003 for reproduced examples).

These developments have an alien feel to them for practitioners working with young people, accustomed to the private nature of youth court proceedings and reporting restrictions on the press. The Children and Young Persons Act 1933 s.39 and s.49 confirmed the 'closed' nature of the youth courts with restrictions only being lifted if in 'the public interest'. The rationale has always been to allow young people to 'grow out of crime' and help them live down their possible delinquent acts once they are adults. In the 1960s theories of 'labelling' were developed to show the adverse effects of formalising inappropriate identities.

The Anti-social Behaviour Order, however, goes not to the Youth Court but to the Magistrates Court acting in its civil capacity. The Court is open to the public regardless of the age of the person the ASBO is being applied for and reporting restrictions have to be 'imposed' rather than 'lifted', should the court so choose. The Government through the Home Office has given guidance that it would wish the proceedings to be open rather than closed; choosing its words carefully because the separation of powers means it cannot tell the courts what to do, the guidance is that:

> ... *although the question of reporting restrictions is for the court, the lead agency may need to resist a call from the defence for such restrictions if the effectiveness of the ASBO will largely depend on a wider community knowing the details.*
> (Home Office 2000: para. 15.2)

In this way an 11 year old from Manchester can be named in a national newspaper ('Order bans boy, 11, from entering toyshop', *Guardian*, 4 July 2003), and similarly a teenage gang in Huddersfield ('Teenage "mafia" named and shamed', Daily Mail, 6 May 2003); numerous other young people have been named as recipients of ASBOs. The rationale for this publicity is that people need to know who these anti-social young people are and what restrictions are now on them in order to be able to report them if they are not complying.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that a young person involved in criminal proceedings should be entitled 'to have his or her privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings' (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) Article 40 (2)(b)(vii)). The paradox is that these are not criminal proceedings but civil, yet as a 'lesser' form of court order they allow for more publicity to fall on the recipient.

It is perhaps worth noting that when the Essex police decided to name convicted adults by means of publicity over and beyond the court hearing, a successful application was made to prevent them doing so, citing the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights Article 8 (the 'right to privacy') (R (Ellis) v. Chief Constable of Essex Police (2003) EWHC Admin 1321) It is also true that the Government has steadfastly resisted pressure to get the police to name known sex offenders in a given area so that people can better protect themselves (see e.g. 'Straw refuses to grant public access to sex offenders register but proposes stricter laws', *Independent*, 16 Sept. 2000). At the October 2002 Labour Party Conference David Blunkett held the same line, saying:

> ... *we cannot open the register to the vigilantes who do not understand the difference between 'paediatrician' and 'paedophile'.*
> (Blunkett, 2002)

Blunkett was referring to an incident in South Wales where a doctor's home had been vandalised.

So what is not acceptable for convicted adult offenders is acceptable for young people on ASBOs, who may never have broken any criminal law. Here the fear of human rights violations and vigilantism does not seem to enter the equation. From another – more cynical – perspective it may be that the Government – including

local government - wants this publicity for its own purposes to be 'seen to be doing something' about anti-social behaviour. As the editor of the *Manchester Evening News* has said 'it convinces the law-abiding part of the community that something positive is being done' (Horrocks, 2003). In Oxford even a non-legal Acceptable Behaviour Contract gained publicity, although names were not disclosed ('Estate sceptical of gang's pledge', *Oxford Mail*, Dec. 2002).

The government's stated wish that youth court criminal proceedings for breach of an ASBO be automatically given publicity (Home Office 2003(a): para. 5.25) has now come to some fruition in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 s85) which allows those who brought the original ASBO application into the youth court to see the 'end-game' of their work.

Conclusions

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 is the latest attempt by the government to spin a fine web around young people and their activities. Whether or not local authorities have the resources and the will to implement all the possibilities remains to be seen. Some young people will be so caught up in this web that – as one practitioner put it to us – 'they will only be able to turn left when they leave their front door; if they turn right they could end up in court'.

The promotion of more and more social – as opposed to legal – contracts appears to be proceeding apace. Frank Field sees it as a replacement for the religious contract that once existed to curb behaviour toward socially acceptable ends and foresees a new 'contract-based citizenship' with 'a series of contracts which cover the behaviour of all of us as we negotiate the public realm' (Field, 2003: 82)

One element of this new 'contract-based citizenship' would be the future linking of financial benefits to behaviour. If we can – as we do with the New Deal – have work related conditions attached to drawing benefit, why can we not extend such conditionality to other behaviour? It has been Tony Blair's long-held belief that:

> *(Families) do not have any right to terrorise those around them, be it with violence, racial abuse or noise … if (they) do not fulfil their side of the bargain, particularly after repeated warnings, the contract is broken.*
> (Blair, 1995)

The hints made in the 2003 White Paper (Home Office 2003(a): para 4.48) were followed up by a more comprehensive paper asserting that:

> *… the rights we gain from civil society – including the right to financial support when we need it – should be balanced by responsibilities to behave responsibly towards our fellow citizens.*
> (DWP 2003: para 1)

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Whether reducing income and putting some families into poverty works as a way of changing their behaviour is something of an unknown. For a government that generally espouses that practitioners should only do 'what works' and engage in evidence-based practice, it looks somewhat speculative.

In the meantime policies started out by housing officials and later supported by those who want conditional benefits appear to have no place for welfare. The distinction between committing criminal offences and anti-social behaviour gets ever more blurred. Those who are anti-social are said to be 'offenders' when they may have broken no criminal law, and a whole new layer of civil interventions has now opened up as just a preliminary to going to the criminal courts.

Publicity attendant upon young people who are anti-social and receive Anti-social Behaviour Orders is greater than that accorded those who appear in the Youth Court on straight charges of criminality. The government's logic, however, is more likely to see equivalence achieved by the latter getting publicity rather than any restrictions on the former. Former Home Secretary Jack Straw said as long ago as 1997 that he wanted to open up the 'secret garden' of the Youth Courts to greater public scrutiny (Home Office, 1997). The dangers of an inverse celebrity culture appearing in our inner cities seems to have been lost on our legislators.

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SERVICE USER EVALUATIONS:
Young people, participation and client-centredness

CHRISTINE HORROCKS AND ERIC BLYTH

In this paper we present and discuss a number of primarily ethical issues arising from an independent evaluation of a counselling service for children and young people[1]. The current policy position regarding young people and their right to self-determination is initially located within considerations around social research dilemmas. However, as the evaluation progressed it became clear that such concerns have wider implications that link into the rights of young people to receive 'client-centred' therapy and to participate as users in service evaluations. We move on to explore the less obvious undercurrents of such concerns that may masquerade as ethical but seem to be related to long-standing conceptualisations of age and resultant oppressive power hierarchies.

Delivering a listening Service

Hill and Tisdall (1997) maintain that the 1990s was a time for adults to re-examine their perceptions of children and young people; and existing attitudes toward them. Listening to young people is one aspect of such a re-examination. The concept of listening to young people is constantly discussed and advocated by professionals involved in delivering services to young people. Justifications for giving young people a 'voice' are the accepted principles that young people have rights. These rights are not only related to their basic need for care and protection but include rights to be consulted, to have access to information and to have their '... voice heard in matters that affect them.' (Milner and Carolin, 1999:1) Indeed the Department of Health's recent publication 'Listening, Hearing and Responding' (Department of Health, 2003) forms part of wider government policy that advocates the necessity for an Integrated Children's System where the active participation of young people is seen as central:

> *Participation should go beyond consultations and ensure that children and young people initiate action and make decisions about their care and treatment or day to day decisions about their lives.*
> (Department of Health, 2002:7)

Yet, these may not be the only reasons to listen to young people. Young people, like adults, often live lives that are laden with anxiety and pain and one way of easing such trials would be to talk them through. The British Association for Counselling states that the task of counselling is '... to give the "client" an opportunity to explore, discover and clarify ways of living more satisfyingly and resourcefully.' (British Association for Counselling, 1984:8) Presumably such a task would only

be achieved by listening carefully to what the client, in this case the young person, has to say. Feltham and Dryden (1993) highlight areas of overlap between counselling and other forms of helping, such as everyday friendship, social work and nursing. For young people without access to other forms of helping, having an alternative source of listening and support would seem essential. Toller (1999) argues that the development of counselling and mentoring in schools and helplines such as Childline indicates an increasing acceptance that listening with respect to young people's feelings and experiences has a great deal to offer.

Translating ethos into practice

The Counselling Service (hereafter 'the Service') was established in February 1997 and is committed to monitoring and evaluating its practice. The main aim of the Service is to provide a safe, supportive and appropriate environment where young people (usually aged 10yrs-25yrs, however the Service does accept some younger children) feel valued and listened to. This involves the provision of short-term (6-8 sessions) individual support aimed at helping young people find workable solutions to their problems. The Service also aims to be flexible in approach, yet consistent in providing support and safety within an overall framework of anti-oppressive practice. Within this framework, in line with the legal distinction of 'Gillick' competence (see for example Daniels and Jenkins, 2000), the right of the young person to make informed decisions about their personal well-being is upheld.

A young person can be referred to the Service by an agency, or an individual, who considers that they may benefit from the services made available. This might include: social workers (field, residential or education), health visitors, school nurses, police (child protection or domestic violence officers), teachers, probation officers, workers in the youth services, refuges, hostels and voluntary services. The Service also accepts self-referrals or a parent, carer or friend can contact the Service on the young person's behalf. This process of 'self-referral' is an essential manifestation of the Service's ethos of upholding the young person's right to self-determination. Here it is accepted that a young person may seek and receive services without parental knowledge or consent. Indeed young people may be accessing services as a result of difficulties relating to their parents.

The Service aims to see the young person within 14 days of receiving the referral. If a referral is considered urgent the Service aims to be responsive, seeing young people within 2/3 days or, in extreme cases, within hours of the initial contact. Referring individuals/agencies complete a referral form that asks primarily for biographical information which is then shared with the young person. This sharing of information is central to the ethos of the Service which maintains that young people should not feel pressurised in any way to attend counselling sessions. Thus it is of paramount

importance that the attendance of young people for counselling should be entirely voluntary. This is clarified with young people at their initial contact with the Service.

The evaluation process

Although this paper is not intended to give a detailed account of the methodological techniques employed in the evaluation, it is necessary to provide some background information regarding the evaluation process. The primary objective of the Service is to provide supportive services *for* young people. This evaluation focused on assessing the effectiveness of the Service in meeting this central objective. This was achieved by concentrating on issues surrounding the referral process, confidentiality, accessibility, communication and outcomes. The evaluation adopted a multi-methods approach in order to access the views of both service users and referrers. This involved two discrete data collection processes: undertaking semi-structured interviews with users of the Service and a postal questionnaire administered to referrers. The interviews aimed to encourage young people to discuss the referral process and their experiences of the counselling services made available to them. Care was taken to ensure that questions were not 'adult-framed'; rather interviews were designed to allow a relationship to develop between the researcher and the researched. Using interviews as a way of involving service users in the evaluation aimed to encourage young people to express their views in their own way. However we were aware that for some young people responding to interview questions may be overwhelming (Mahon and Glendinning, 1996; Morrow and Richards, 1996). Therefore prior to the interview considerable time was spent getting to know the young people. Young people were assured that there were no right or wrong answers and that they could say 'I don't know' or 'I don't want to answer' at any time.

Does the Service ethos translate into social research practice?

Ethically the evaluation raised a number of issues that needed addressing but there were two principal concerns related to the specific nature of this research: the possibility of crossing boundaries and the issue of parental consent. Such concerns needed to be thought through carefully and involved detailed consultation prior to undertaking the evaluation. Regarding crossing boundaries; it was acknowledged that the young people would be attending counselling for specific reasons, many of which would be painful and private. It was therefore agreed that at no point should the evaluation breach the confidentiality of the counselling relationship. In addition young people should be assured that they would not be required to discuss the reasons they were attending for counselling. Therefore prior to the interview it was explained to the young person that the focus of this 'relaxed conversation' was to see how the Service operated and how they felt things were going. Young people were told that they would not be expected to discuss anything they talked about

with their counsellor. Rather they would be asked about what it was like coming for the first time, how they got on with their counsellor (the Service was eager to explore whether young people felt able to request a change of counsellor if things were not going well), if they felt attending for counselling was useful, and most importantly if they had any suggestions for improving the counselling services made available to them. Only young people who had completed all of their counselling sessions were invited to participate; thus interviews took place at the end of the counselling sessions so as not to interfere with the counselling process.

The second point, parental consent, raised a number of concerns around young people, participation and civil rights. In England the Children Act 1989, the Education Act 1993, the Code of Practice (DfE, 1994) the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and more recent developments around the Children's National Service Framework (Department of Health, 2003) have all introduced requirements that young people be given the opportunity to contribute to decision making about their future interests. Thus Lloyd-Smith and Tarr (2000:60) say that 'on the face of it' there is an acceptance of an ethical imperative where young people have the basic right to be heard. Therefore, the decision to include young people in an evaluation of services delivered to meet *their* needs would seem beyond question. However, all the young people interviewed were under eighteen years of age with the majority being under sixteen (the youngest being eight years of age). This raises the issue of parental responsibility and the obvious question: who has the right to consent to participation? A key issue for the evaluation was whether parental consent should be sought for any young people who might consent to participate. Furthermore, if it was decided to seek parental consent could/would this be waived in certain circumstances?

The consideration of whether parental consent should need to be sought at all places the emphasis on young people as active citizens who have the right to choose and take action independent from their parents. Again, we emphasise that the Service ethos enables young people to access services as autonomous individuals. However, Alderson (1995) suggests that the 'safest course, though it can be repressive, is to ask for parental consent, this being a cautious approach where the protection of the researcher from litigation is of real concern' (p22). This pragmatic and potentially repressive 'safest course' while being philosophically problematic might be 'good enough' in the majority of research with young people. By 'good enough' we suggest that such an approach may have no detrimental effects either for the participants or the research outcomes. For this particular research there appeared to be a number of serious possible consequences. Such consequences relate to one of the basic principals inherent in the ethos of the Service, that of confidentiality. Young people are able to self-refer, and therefore may be attending

counselling, choosing not to include their parents in either the process, or the sharing of information. This therefore left us with mounting considerations:

- As researchers we were aware of the need to respect the Service's stated ethos/framework of anti-oppressive practice whereby young people are supported and respected as active in their own lives.

- In line with Alderson's 'safest course' did we, as researchers, prefer to seek the validation and 'safety' of parental consent?

- To be considered were the pressing interests of those young people attending for counselling whose parents may not have been privy to this information. Did these young people have the right to be included in an evaluation of services delivered and accessed to meet their needs?

- Underlying these considerations was a concern regarding the representativeness of the sample if one group of service users were to be excluded due to the non-accessibility of parental consent.

Participation: working toward a compromise
We looked to the literature for guidance that might help us to undertake an evaluation that was in line with the Service ethos and that might assuage some of our concerns as researchers. Jenkins (1993) offers four constructions of childhood: young people as possessions, young people as subjects, young people as participants, young people as citizens. The construction of young people as the property of parents or other adults with no rights independent of them would not be one that we would have wanted to subscribe to. Nor would we have wanted to cast young people in the role of subject where what is best for them is determined by and enforced by adults. Young people as participants where they are consulted, involved and listened to seemed much nearer to what we wanted to achieve. Yet we were aware that young people as citizens, where the child or young person is seen as active in their own lives, takes the notion of participation further. In this construction young people have the right to choose and to take action independently of parents and adults; as in the case of accessing the Service.

It was decided that in line with the ethos of anti-oppressive practice undertaken at the Service, and in order to respect the right of young people to have their views heard, 'some' young people could take part without parental consent. Therefore in such instances where parental consent could not be sought the young person's counsellor was required to give their consent, thus acting *in loco parentis*. This consent was based upon the counsellor's view that participation in the evaluation would not harm the young person. However, parental/counsellor consent was not seen to be given 'on behalf' on the young person. A detailed leaflet was produced

to inform the young people about the evaluation and counsellors were asked to carefully explain and discuss the evaluation process with the young person prior to the young person giving his/her consent to participate. Before commencing the interview the aims of the evaluation and the way in which their contribution would be used was again carefully explained by the researcher and the young person's informed consent sought.

We recognise that this compromise, in relation to parental consent, gives young people participation rights and does nothing in particular to further any citizenship project for young people. As researchers we were forced to acknowledge that we had indeed taken Alderson's (1995) 'safest course'. We were aware that this was indeed a safest course that possibly provided us as researchers with protection while at the same time being arguably repressive with regard to the overall autonomy of young people. However, Morrow (1999), while not aiming to renounce the view that children are active social agents, prompts a move away from polarised arguments. Citing Hutchby and Moran-Ellis she draws attention to the view that,

> ...we have to take care to avoid the kind of relativism which would deny the essential difference of childhood as opposed to adulthood and thus risk failing to see the often very real consequences of the power relationship between adults and children.

(Hutchby and Moran-Ellis, 1998:17)

Morrow advocates taking account of children's different competencies, social and cultural backgrounds and experiences. It might be argued that the young people who we were requesting to participate in our research were among the most vulnerable. Many young people may have been attending the Service due to having no access to 'other forms of helping'. Thus in view of the power imbalance (adult - young person, researcher – participant) and the potential vulnerability of the young people it was appropriate to seek not only the consent of the young person but also to have an adult involved with, and contributing to, the consent process. Therefore, such a view is not to be located within notions of all children as vulnerable, rather it is supportive of an approach that acknowledges difference aiming to enhance and support the inclusion and participation of young people.

With regard to seeking ethical approval, with the implementation of the *Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care* (Department of Health, 2001) it is acknowledged that research is an essential aspect of ensuring modern and effective health and social care services. However, the framework aims to develop high quality research that promotes good research practice. We would take the position that in order to promote good research practice and thus gain ethical

approval we had to reach some kind of resolution that was acceptable and workable for all parties: the young people, the Service, parents who were aware that young people were receiving counselling and we the researchers who were answerable to a research ethics committee. Our view is that the worst possible outcome would have been to deny the young people the opportunity to have their views listened to and have such views incorporated into improving services. Indeed Walker (2001) stresses the need to develop methods for enabling a representative contribution from all those receiving services including young people. Still, even this outcome does raise concerns questioning to what extent young people are being afforded the rights laid down in current legislation. Furthermore to what extent does, and indeed can, the social research process measure up to the standards of the Service ethos?

Providing young people with space to talk: more than a social research issue
We moved on to conduct the service evaluation recognising that we had reached a compromise based to a certain extent on pragmatics as opposed to any ethical and moral resolution. As we began to analyse questionnaire data from referrers we were forced to again consider ethical tensions around listening to children. More specifically these tensions appear to be related to the 'policing of children' (Roche, 1999) whereby they need to be 'protected' and 'controlled'. As Roche states, in this construction children are '... not seen as fully rational beings ... they cannot know their own best interests' (p477).

Confidentiality and client-centredness
In order to maintain the confidentiality of the counselling relationship, all information shared by the young person, when accessing the Service, is deemed confidential within the boundaries of child protection practice. In order to elucidate and maintain this position the 'Service Information' pack states that:

> *Under normal circumstances information shared between young people and counsellors is totally confidential unless child protection issues are involved. No feedback on the counselling process is given to referring agencies/individuals unless the young person specifically requests this and/or gives permission.*

Butler and Williamson (1994), in their research exploring the concerns and worries of young people in the 1990s, found that one of the 'chief reasons' for not sharing information with adults was the fear that the adult would take their problem from them, giving their own interpretation of the young person's account. Butler and Williamson suggest a 'principle' that should be adopted in order to avoid such misrepresentations based on clear and understandable confidentiality contracts forming part of all work agreements and reviews. This principle allows young people

to retain maximum possible choice/autonomy within the working relationship. Therefore, such a clear and unambiguous positioning of the Service, in relation to the important issue of confidentiality, would seem to be not only consistent with the ethos of the Service but also aligned with what young people need, and want to have in place, to access necessary support voluntarily.

In line with Butler and Williamson's 'principle', Geldard and Geldard (1997) discuss the importance of congruence in the counselling relationship whereby the '… child needs to perceive his relationship with the counsellor as trustworthy and the counselling environment safe' (p15). This would relate to being open and honest with young people regarding the nature of the relationship and the boundaries within which such a relationship operates. Indeed Eddi Piper (1999) stresses the importance of clear boundaries and ethical ground rules within the counselling relationship moving on to outline a list of 'rules' or 'agreements' that she shares with the young people and their carers (p37). These agreements explain to young people, in age-appropriate ways, that their thoughts and experiences expressed within the counselling session will not be shared with anyone else. Young people are told about the supervisory arrangement most counsellors enter into but they are also made aware that they will remain anonymous. The boundaries of the relationship are also explained whereby if the counsellor thought that the young person might be in serious danger or 'might get into serious trouble' then this information would need to be shared with someone else. These agreements also include codes of behaviour and the clearly-stated principle that young people do not need to come for counselling if they don't want to attend. All of these recommendations can be located in the Service's overall code of practice and were evident in the findings of the evaluation .

However, Eddi Piper says that parents and agencies are often not happy with these boundaries and that this may be indicative of the way adults perceive young people in that they (the young people) are unable to, and should not be expected to, abide by rules. Toller (1999) also refers to the tensions created by the counselling relationship. She refers to the central tenet of client-centredness as a mark of good practice when counselling adults. However, she acknowledges that this is not always the case when counselling young people due to the way in which parents, teachers, etc often perceive that they have a moral and legal right to set the agenda for counselling and evaluate improvement in relation to their own needs and expectations.

Bearing in mind ideas around client-centredness, and the whole ethos of the Service in relation to confidentiality and the young person's right to self-determination, some interesting issues emerged when analysing the referrers' questionnaire responses. The questionnaire was sent to all those individuals who had made referrals

to the Service during the preceding twelve months. The questionnaire focussed on the referral process exploring issues regarding the giving and receiving of information, the referral process itself and issues in relation to the voluntary attendance of young people. However, the Service was eager to gain an appreciation of how referrers actually viewed the process in relation to their own agency or individual expectations specifically regarding communication and effectiveness. The Service holds the expectation that referrers will continue to have contact with the young person. Therefore it was thought that referrers would be well placed to evaluate the quality of services made available via consultation with the young person.

Predominantly the questionnaire consisted of closed questions and Likert scales; however it was considered expedient to provide ample opportunity for referrers to offer further comment. It was anticipated that this would have the potential to generate extensive qualitative data; while time-consuming, analysis of such data is often invaluable in gaining insight into quantitative ratings. The actual response rate was fairly high at 54% with 105 questionnaires returned. Nine of the returned questionnaires stated that the respondents had not personally made any referrals and thus they felt unable to complete the questionnaire. As the questionnaires were sent only to those agency workers who were known to have made a referral it may be inferred that the questionnaires were passed on to new members of staff currently in post. A further 15 questionnaires were returned unopened by referring agencies. The reasons they gave being that staff (to whom the questionnaires were addressed) were no longer in their employ. A total of 81 questionnaires were processed and analysed.

The respondents' evaluation of the overall referral process was highly favourable in terms of providing a welcoming environment, dealing with referrals quickly, maintaining the confidence of the young person and achieving their trust. However, once the referral had been accepted by the Service, many respondents expressed the view that they became 'distanced' from the process. A small number of referrers made further comment stating that they viewed this as a necessary part of the process of enabling young people to attend for counselling. Nevertheless, this was not a sentiment shared by the majority of those making further comments relating to communicating with referring agencies. Referrers were asked to rate effectiveness on a scale of 1 - 4 where 1 = 'poor', 2 = 'satisfactory', 3 = 'good' and 4 = 'excellent'. Less than half of the referrers rated communication as 'good' or 'excellent' with 23% recording a rating of 'poor'. While acknowledging that communication in the referral stage appears to have been unproblematic; based upon highly favourable responses, these findings seemed unexpected. Emerging from the thematic analysis of referrers' further comments were two explicit concerns:

i. *they wanted to know if young people had been attending, and*

ii. *while recognising the confidentiality of the counselling process, they would have welcomed some information regarding the outcomes for young people.*

One referrer's comment effectively summarises the concerns expressed by a large number of respondents:

> *We make a referral but are not always told by the Service when they have picked up the referral. I have no idea about the outcomes of the referral once made - i.e. were issues successfully dealt with? Did young person complete programme?*

The issue of confidentiality discussed earlier would seem to be of primary importance here with communication regarding the Service aims being somewhat confused. A number of referrers clearly hold expectations which are not in keeping with the Service's position regarding maintaining the full confidentiality and thus client-centredness of the referral. Nevertheless, this position may seem appropriate; in that agencies would understandably need to assess the effectiveness of client referrals. Yet interestingly 54% of respondents stated that the Service had been 'good' or 'excellent' in meeting the expectations of the referring agency. A further 21% gave a rating of 'satisfactory'. This might be interpreted to show that referrers felt themselves able to evaluate the effectiveness of services without having direct assistance from the Service.

Conclusions

As Edwards and Alldred (1999) point out '... research does not enter into a vacuum. Social researchers go into a field where pre-existing social processes and understanding are already in play' (p277). This was evident in the code of practice that operationalised the Service ethos: voluntary attendance, confidentiality and self-referral. We were very conscious of this ethos and the high standards of participatory rights and client-centredness it upheld. Arguably there is often a tendency for social researchers to focus upon consent, empowerment and participation. We would most probably have placed ourselves in this domain when planning and executing the evaluation. However with hindsight what emerged was more a desire to respect the 'essential difference' of children and young people while respecting their rights.

The apparent unease with a client-centred approach, and the expectation that counselling services for young people would be open to the scrutiny and monitoring of referrers, seems to be underpinned by a 'not-yet-fully-formedness' (Roche, 1999) construction with possible consequences that may hinder the recognition of young people as social actors and self-determining individuals. The process of gaining ethical approval for an evaluation of a service for young people required compromise and detailed negotiation with a range of 'gatekeepers'. Yet, as Toller

(1999) explains; the view of a child as an individual with his/her own feelings and wishes cannot be taken for granted amongst those adults who hold responsibility for and have power over young people. This observation is not aimed at making a harsh judgment; rather it reports upon the current confusion and complexity around affording young people participatory and indeed citizenship rights while at the same time fulfilling a child protection and child welfare agenda. With the formalising of research practice set out in the Research Governance Framework it seems fair and appropriate to consider what the values and knowledge base might be of those adults who will be in a position to enable young people to speak out with regard to service delivery and beyond.

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Notes

1   While recognising that the terms 'children' and 'young people' are socially constructed, denoting different phases in the life course, for convenience we have used the inclusive term 'young people' throughout this paper as a collective term for both younger children and older young people.

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DECONSTRUCTING THE 'UNPLANNED' PREGNANCY:
Social exclusion and sexual health strategies in Scotland

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With the development of the Social Exclusion Unit, the 1997 New Labour government committed themselves to a process of reintegrating and increasing the participation of marginalised groups within mainstream society. Their *Report on Teenage Pregnancy* (SEU, 1999a) was a major development, reflecting a political and social agenda aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancies. One way that the government has attempted to achieve its goals has been through disseminating social and political discourse outlining the social problems associated with teenage pregnancy and young motherhood. This has resulted in a kind of 'moral panic' surrounding young motherhood, which is reflected in social inclusion strategies that are aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancy. Of particular relevance to this paper is the Scottish Executive's attempt to decrease the social exclusion of young women at risk of unplanned pregnancies through the development of sexual health education, services, and policies. Based on findings from research examining the experiences of twenty young mothers living in Greater Pilton, Edinburgh, this article will argue that current sexual health education initiatives and programmes that have been promoted by the Scottish Executive have thus far failed to reflect the complexities surrounding teenage pregnancy. As a result, it will also be argued that this may result in exacerbating, rather than alleviating, young mothers' experiences of social exclusion.

The Context

The social positioning of mothering has been both 'revered and denigrated over the centuries' (Greaves et al, 2002:3). At times, motherhood has been viewed as requiring some form of regulation and surveillance (Smart, 1992). This is reflected in social welfare in the UK through the development of social policies and programmes that have been aimed at the regulation of motherhood and the control of mothers (Spensky, 1992; Jamieson, 1998). The social and political attitudes presented by the UK government over last fifteen years have identified teenage pregnancy and young motherhood in particular, as both a cause and example of social exclusion (SEU, 1999a).

Recent statistics demonstrate that 71 per 1000 young women in Scotland between 16-19 years became pregnant in 2001 of whom, 41.2% gave birth (ISD Online). The most recent English teenage pregnancy statistics from the same age cohort are slightly lower with 62.2 out of 1000 of 15-19 year olds becoming pregnant and 24.5 out of 1000 conceptions resulting in a birth (Office for National Statistics, 2002). Although Scottish statistics indicate that teenage pregnancy rates in Scotland

have changed very little over the past 15 years , since 1997 the New Labour government has highlighted teenage pregnancy as a nationally growing concern in Scotland, England and Wales (SEU, 1999a; Scottish Office, 1999a). This has resulted in the development of a number of national and regional programmes aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancy and encouraging young mothers to increase their participation in education and training programmes (SEU, 1999a; SEU, 1999b; Scottish Office, 1999a). In Scotland, a group drawn from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors, led by the Minister for Health, has been set up to monitor progress on the implementation of the White Paper and to help ensure that health remains high on the agenda at national and local levels (Scottish Office, 1999a). In England, programmes aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancy are evidenced within the remit of the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) on Teenage Pregnancy. The IAG advises the government and monitors the overall success of the teenage pregnancy strategy, a cross-governmental strategy that aims to reduce pregnancy and increase participation of teenage parents in education, training and work (Department of Health, press release 2002). However, as this article will argue, often times, the ways in which pregnant teenagers and young mothers are represented in government reports, strategies and programmes, appear to contribute to the social problem discourse on young motherhood.

Teenage Pregnancy and Young Motherhood as a Social Problem

The social problem discourse surrounding teenage pregnancy and young motherhood can be examined within British politics in both the recent past as well as today. Over the past ten years, politicians have participated in a regeneration of the social problem discourse surrounding teenage and single motherhood through the accusation that young mothers have children as a way to secure public housing (Rafferty, 1993). This is particularly evident in Murray's (1990) underclass thesis, which is often associated with pregnant teenagers, and young or lone mothers.

Originally the 'underclass' was a term that was used to describe the economically marginalised but it has since been co-opted by others, in particular Murray (1990) as a moral category. In turn, the British 'underclass' are generally identified as 'poorly qualified, white, working class young people' (Levitas, 1998) with young or lone mothers being a main component of this population (Murray, 1990). As Levitas (1998) argues:

> young women's delinquency manifests itself in their sexual and reproductive behaviour, the imputed irresponsibility of lone parenthood. The two are connected through the assumption that lone parents and single mothers provide inadequate parenting, with both forms of delinquency attributed to a failure of socialization, especially into the work ethic and a belief in marriage (p.19).

The 'underclass' view of young and/or lone mothers as being promiscuous, irresponsible and a threat to nuclear family values, is a gendered one (Mann and Roseneil, 1994).

The UK Conservative government in the 1990s morally implicated young mothers as being sexually 'selfish and exploitative' whilst blaming young mothers for being a drain on society due to their dependency on state benefits (Wallbank, 2001:60). Continuing the Conservative government's view of teenage pregnancy, the Labour government expressed concern regarding Britain having the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Western Europe (SEU, 1999a). As such, the social problem discourse concerning teenage pregnancy is highly visible within the Social Exclusion Unit's *Report on Teenage Pregnancy* (1999a) and in the Scottish Executive's White Paper on Health (Scottish Office, 1999b) both of which propose strategies aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancy.

Young motherhood and teenage pregnancy are also presented as social problems through evidence emerging from studies which indicate that poverty, lack of educational and employment opportunities, and low self-worth are factors linked to becoming a young mother (Combs-Orme, 1993; Kiernan, 1995; Emler, 2001). Concerns about why young women should not become pregnant or have a baby due to increased health risks have been well documented (SEU, 1999a) and include: lower weight babies and higher infant mortality rates (Botting, 1998), increased risk of post-natal depression compared to older mothers (Wilson, 1995), and the high risk of turning young women from being 'fresh faced 16-year-olds' to 'impoverished-looking clients of the state' (McRobbie, 2000:165). This corresponds with the current focus on teenage pregnancy and young motherhood which is rooted in a discourse of irresponsibility that is seen as resulting in the never-ending problems that face the lives of young mothers and their children. One consequence of these studies has been their use as evidence to support a view of young motherhood as not only a moral problem, but as an increasingly social and economic concern as well (Rutman, 2002). The main responses to these issues reflect either 'interventionist' or 'preventative' programmes (Sex Education Forum, 1994; Scottish Office, 1999a; Teenage Pregnancy Unit, 2000; Scottish Executive, 2001), even though this has yet to proved to be an effective way of decreasing teenage pregnancy (Brown and Eisenberg; 1995). A breadth of associated literature not only focuses on issues such as how to decrease teenage pregnancy rates, but also aims to investigate and interrogate the sexual behaviour and knowledge of working class, black, and other ethnic minority young women and mothers. Hence young mothers' experiences of pregnancy and parenthood are framed within a discourse that portrays young motherhood as a 'social problem' resulting from 'deviant' behaviour (O'Brien, 1999).

The social problem discourse surrounding young motherhood has resulted in two competing ways in which teenage pregnancy has been addressed in the UK. First, young women from working-class or poor backgrounds are often seen as victims of their circumstances such as poverty and low educational attainment (Hendessi and Rashid, 2002; Kiernan, 1997). This implies that increasing training and education opportunities for young women will decrease their chances of pregnancy and motherhood (SEU, 1999a; SEU, 1999b; Scottish Office, 1999b; Scottish Executive, 2001; Scottish Executive, 2002). A second and more dominant view suggests that individual young women behave irresponsibly. Thus the means of decreasing teenage pregnancy is to encourage and support changes in sexual behaviour. The second view predominates in the New Labour government's social inclusion reports in both Westminster and the Scottish Executive, which contain strategies that are aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancy through increasing sexual health education based programmes and services (Scottish Education Forum, 1994, SEU, 1999a, Scottish Office, 1999a, Scottish Executive, 2001).

In a direct challenge to the social problem discourse surrounding young motherhood, it has been argued that research on and about teenage pregnancy and young motherhood has mainly been based on white, middle-class ideas about a young woman's readiness and ability to be a mother (Phoenix, 1991; Macintyre and Cunningham-Burley, 1993; Davies, 2001; Rutman et al, 2002). Moreover, it has also been suggested that the assumptions surrounding the negative influence that young age has on a young mother's behaviour and choices lack the understanding and analysis of the circumstances in which these mothers live (Furstenberg et al, 1987; Phoenix, 1991; Macintyre and Cunningham-Burley, 1993; Davies, 2001). Corresponding with this perspective, this article will argue that the current sexual health strategies in Scotland that have been aimed at decreasing unplanned pregnancy fail to reflect the various trajectories which result in 'unplanned' teenage pregnancy.

Teenage Pregnancy, Young Mothers and Social Exclusion

The Labour government defines social exclusion as 'broadly covering those people who do not have the means, material or otherwise, to participate in social, economic, political and cultural life' (Blair, 1998). However, the term 'social exclusion' is continually being contested, changing according to what Levitas (1998) has identified as three competing discourses of social exclusion. These discourses have been labelled as RED, which is a discourse of redistribution in which social exclusion is linked to poverty; MUD, which is a moral underclass discourse that focuses on 'underclass' pathology'; and SID, which is a social integrationist discourse that views inclusion as 'primarily a labour market attachment'. Although proponents of New Labour would view its political philosophy as reflecting a RED model of

inclusion, it has been debated as to whether or not this is evident in social exclusion practice (Levitas, 1998). Critics of New Labour have argued that SID discourses are most predominant within the policies emerging from the Labour government's social exclusion unit. This is because they appear to emphasise education, training and paid work as routes to inclusion, rather than redistribution of income and other barriers to exclusion such as race, class, gender and sexuality (Lister, 1998; Lister, 1997; Levitas, 1998; Oppenheim, 1998).

In the UK, issues of social exclusion and poverty are devolved responsibilities. As a result, the Social Exclusion Unit in London does not formally address these issues within a Scottish context. Nevertheless, its aims are reflected within the New Labour government in Scotland through the 'Scottish Social Inclusion Strategy' (Scottish Office, 1999a), which, since May 1997, has set up a range of programmes in order to increase social inclusion. In doing so, the Scottish Executive has produced The Social Inclusion Strategy document and the Social Inclusion Network in order to develop a 'vision' of a Scotland in which social exclusion will be decreased. Although the Scottish Executive has a remit to develop social inclusion policies and programmes that are relevant to the lives of people living in Scotland, it appears to reflect the aims and objectives put forth by Westminster and the Social Exclusion Unit. This can be seen through the Scottish Executive's attempts at increasing labour market participation through their development of the 'New Deal' programmes, and through funding initiatives such as the Lone Parent Child Care Grant (LPCCG) that will support lone parents in accessing higher education. Of particular relevance to this article, are the Scottish Executive's social exclusion strategies that are aimed at highlighting the ways in which teenage pregnancy is a barrier to social inclusion, and the sexual health education strategies that have subsequently been developed.

Although the Scottish Executive appears to reflect Westminster's' social and political views concerning the connection between social exclusion and teenage pregnancy, it could also be argued that there are inconsistencies in the way in which reducing teenage pregnancy is to be achieved in Scotland. Most notably, this can be seen in the lack of formal sexual health policy that would ensure access to sexual health education and information services to all young people. In 1999, the Scottish Office published their plans for the development of a sexual health strategy in Scotland. Their aims included: to decrease unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs); to enhance provision of sexual health services; and to promote a broad understanding of sexual health and sexual relationships (Scottish Office, 1999a). Three years later, this initiative was more fully documented in the Scottish Executive's report *Health in Scotland* (Scottish Executive, 2002) that outlined

the Scottish Executive's intention to appoint a multi-interest reference group, led by the Public Health Institute of Scotland (PHIS), to guide the development of a national sexual health strategy. However, rather than being fully addressed through the *Health in Scotland* report (Scottish Executive Online, 2003), the health of young people, including the issue of teenage pregnancy, is now addressed within the Scottish Executive's Annual Report on Social Justice (Scottish Executive, 2002). The aims remain similar to those put forth in earlier documents in that the 'expert' group continues to be set up to improve the sexual health of Scotland's young people through focusing on the continued need to improve sex education for young people and to decrease unwanted and unplanned teenage pregnancies. Almost four years after the Scottish Executive stated their commitment to decreasing teenage pregnancy and STIs, sexual health professionals in Scotland have been speaking out about their frustration over the lack of any formal sexual health strategy in Scotland (*Sunday Herald*, 17 August, 2003). Meanwhile, the Scottish Executive appears to have failed to formalise the suggestions recommended in the *Report on the Working Group on Sex Education in Scottish Schools* (Scottish Executive, 2000).

Inconsistencies are also present within the Scottish Executive funded 'Healthy Respect' in Edinburgh and the Lothians, set up in 2000 to 'foster the responsible sexual behaviour on the part of Scotland's young people with emphasis on the avoidance of unwanted teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases' (Scottish Office, 1999a). This project evolved out of the White Paper produced in 1999, *Towards a Healthier Scotland*, which set a target for reducing the pregnancy rate among 13-15 year olds by 20% between 1995 and 2010. To achieve this target, the Scottish Executive provided £3million over 3 years to Healthy Respect, a demonstration project run by a multi-agency partnership led by Lothian Health. The Healthy Respect project has expressed a commitment to including parents in this process through the Parent's Project, which aims to encourage and support parents to be involved in the sexual health education of their children. It has been reported that through working in partnership with local agencies, Healthy Respect has consulted with parents and foster parents in specific areas of Lothian, which have informed its future work. It has also been reported that parents have been very positive about Healthy Respect as a source of information for themselves and their children (NHS Scotland, 2001). However, the interviews with the young mothers in the study informing this article indicate that this has not been their experience . This highlights another limitation of the Scottish Executive's commitment to increasing social inclusion; that being the failure to proactively include the voices of young mothers in the development of sexual health strategies. This is also evident in the initial plans of the Scottish Executive's sexual health strategy as the

membership of the 'expert' group involved in designing this strategy fails to include the presence of young mothers, and more generally, any young people at all. Although community based consultation has been the hallmark of the Scottish Social Inclusion Strategy, the participation of young mothers, and perhaps young people more generally, seems to have not been integral to the process of developing sexual health education and services (Scottish Office, 1999b).

Drawing on interviews of twenty working-class young mothers, this article highlights the limitations of current Scottish sexual health initiatives and strategies in Edinburgh, and the negative implications that this may have on the Scottish Executive's commitment to addressing social exclusion.

Method

Two methods of research were used in this study. These included: 15 months of participant observation at 'Stepping Stones', a voluntary organisation which provides services to young mothers and their children in Greater Pilton; and in-depth, semi-structured interviews with twenty young mothers from the Greater Pilton community in Edinburgh, Scotland. Fifteen of the young mothers attended Stepping Stones, and five of the young mothers attended a local statutory social work children's centre of which their children's attendance at the centre was compulsory. The young mothers had all given birth to their first child between the ages of 15 and 20 years of age and, at the time of the interview, ranged in age from 15 - 22.

'Finding Out'

I began each interview by asking how the informants had become mothers. This included asking them about their experiences of finding out, and about the circumstances surrounding their pregnancies. One important factor that determined how the news of a pregnancy was experienced, was the type of relationship the young woman was in at the time. Three women displayed concern regarding their pregnancy as it had occurred within the context of an emotionally and/or physically abusive relationship. For Dionne, Donna and Ainsley, news of their pregnancies either followed or resulted in the decision to leave their abusive partners. As such, these three women initially felt 'shocked' and 'fearful' about the prospect of being pregnant and alone, or anxious about raising a child within the context of an abusive relationship.

Cultural issues also played a factor in a young woman's feelings regarding the news of a pregnancy. This was the case for Raina, a young Muslim woman who became pregnant with her first child at the age of seventeen and who was expected to become pregnant by both her family and her husband. Consequently, Raina was unable to assert her wishes not to have a child at this time in her life and, therefore, experienced some difficulty in coming to terms with her pregnancy.

There were two young women whose experiences of 'finding out', was simultaneously experienced as being both shocking and exciting. This was because both of these young women were under the false assumption that they could not become pregnant. This is clearly evident in Stella's narrative about her initial reaction to the news of her pregnancy when she stated:

> *I'm gonnae be a mum, I can't believe it. I was kinda, when I was told I was like 'yes! There's nothing wrong with me, I've conceived a child!' ...yes, I've done it! It was literally a shock. And then after I got past that stage I was like, 'shit (laughs), I've got to tell people now', but it all came together nicely in the end. But it was literally a shock. It was, 'I'm going to have such a big responsibility and I'm gonnae have little time, it needs me 24/7 and I don't know if I can do that.' But I managed it.*

Although Stella's narrative demonstrates a sense of excitement, perhaps even relief, at having become unexpectedly pregnant, what also emerged were both her feelings of shock and an initial questioning of her ability to engage in the responsibilities associated with caring for a baby.

Four young mothers indicated that initial feelings of apprehension about the prospect of becoming a mother were lessened. This may have been due to their description of their relationships with their partners as being both supportive and committed, and because they also felt confident that even if this relationship were to end, emotional support from parents, grandparents, or older siblings would be available. This was the case for Chloe who never questioned the fact that she would receive support from both her partner and her mother:

> *...I knew I was in a stable relationship and I knew that things would be fine, and I knew if things didnae work out I've always got, my mum's the best person in the world, I cannae ask for somebody to give me more support, so I knew that if anything did go wrong she would always be there for me...*

The emotional support extended to the young mothers by family members was also influential in the evolution of feelings about the pregnancy. Such was the case for Veronica, who when asked how she felt upon first finding out about her pregnancy replied 'shocked and scared'. Yet at the same time, she also stated that as soon as she told her dad and 'everyone came round to the idea', her feelings of shock and fear changed to 'excitement' and a feeling of 'being over the moon'. Hence, both Chloe's and Veronica's interviews indicate that emotional support of family members can play an integral part of a process of viewing a teenage pregnancy as a positive occurrence.

Finally, six of the young women interviewed for this study stated that news of their pregnancy was welcomed. This occurred in instances where the pregnancy was actively planned; in situations where a pregnancy wasn't planned but was hoped for; and in situations where the young woman previously had either had a miscarriage or an ectopic pregnancy, and in one case, for a young woman who had lost her first child to cot death.

'Planned' and 'Unplanned' Pregnancies

The young mothers' 'finding out' stories, inevitably led me to ask them whether or not their pregnancies were planned or unplanned. However, the answer to this question was rarely definitive implying that pregnancy amongst teenagers is a much more complex issue than current policy initiatives would suggest. The terms 'planned' and 'unplanned' pregnancy proved to be unrepresentative categories in which to reflect the young women's views of their experiences. Rather, emerging from the interviews were a number of different circumstances in which the young women became pregnant, in addition to the various feelings regarding the discovery of a pregnancy, all of which are equally important in understanding the social and cultural contexts in which teenage pregnancy occurs.

Of the twenty young mothers who were interviewed for this study, there was only one young woman who stated that she became pregnant as a result of her lacking sufficient knowledge of contraception and safer sex practices. Four of the other young mothers, however, became pregnant as a result of failed contraception. For example, Claire's pregnancy occurred just after she decided to stop using the contraceptive pill due to its effect of her moods and before she switched to an alternative method, whereas Debbie became pregnant due to a split condom.

Of particular importance to this research are the experiences of the four young mothers who, although clear in their minds that they did not want to become pregnant, did not engage in regular 'safer sex' practices. In these four instances, the young women felt that they had little power in their relationships rendering them silent when it came to expressing their desire to use contraception. Stella demonstrates how experiencing a sense of powerlessness can lead to engaging in 'unsafe' sex:

> ... I'm not stupid and I know if you have unprotected sex you're gonnae fall pregnant. Em, we were sometimes using condoms and things like that but most of the time we couldn't be bothered. I wouldn't say he was planned but he wasn't sorta, he wasn't, basically I knew it was gonnae happen at some point, it was just a matter of when. But I wasn't doing it because I wanted to have a baby, I was pretty naive at the time as well and I just sorta went along with whatever he said.

Stella's narrative indicates that she did not feel able to assert her wishes and instead, 'went along with whatever [her boyfriend] said', demonstrating her lack of power in that relationship. Yet, Stella also believed that at that time, her naïveté resulted in her *allowing* her partner to make most of the decisions regarding the use of birth control even though she felt clear about not wanting to become pregnant. It also appears that Stella has taken on some of the responsibility for her inability to assert her sexual health needs and thus taken away some of the responsibility from her partner for her pregnancy.

Donna and Dionne's 'decision' to go along with their partners' wishes not to use contraception was made in the context of what they defined as either a physically or emotionally abusive relationship. Accordingly, all sexual decision-making power was in the hands of their partners. Both Donna and Dionne shared the extreme difficulties they experienced in asserting themselves within their relationships, because their partners were regularly violent toward them. As a result, neither of these women had either the confidence or courage to assert their desire to use birth control. For Dionne, this was followed by pressure from her partner to keep the baby rather than consider other options such as abortion. As she explained, 'I was in two minds about whether or not to have a termination or to keep the baby...but he pushed me into keeping the baby'. This demonstrates that not only were Dionne's sexual health choices being determined by her partner, but so too were her maternal and long-term health choices as well. Finally, cultural and ethnic traditions also have an impact on decision-making in relation to pregnancy. Raina's arranged marriage carried with it expectations that she would quickly have a child. She had an arranged marriage at 16 years of age and had her first child at the age of 17.

In contrast, seven young women in this study, although knowledgeable about the consequences of not using contraception, either used birth control irregularly or not at all. Yet, rather than feeling nervous, the majority of these young women were 'secretly hoping' that their 'risky' behaviour would result in a pregnancy or were 'not bothered' about the prospect of becoming pregnant. This was the case for Liz, whose pregnancy occurred whilst using the birth control pill in the knowledge that its effectiveness was decreased as a result of using other medication. She states,

> *I fell pregnant with her on the pill, I was warned because of the medication that I take for my heart condition that the pill might not work up to its full expectations so there was a chance I was going to get pregnant anyway, but when I found out I was over the moon...it was a hope...I thought it was brilliant.*

Liz had never discussed the possibility of having children with her partner at the time but chose to take these risks in the hope that he would be in the relationship long term. Regardless of what Liz's partner may have wanted, she has always maintained that 'it was a hope' that she would start a family at that time because she wanted to have her family while she was still young, whether or not she had a partner to support her in this endeavour. Nicola, on the other hand, had thought about and discussed with her partner the possibility of having a child. Although Nicola's partner expressed his concern about having a child due to the impact it would have on her ability to finish high school, Nicola still chose to stop taking the pill because she 'didn't feel 16' and, in reality, felt 'a lot older than that'. She also felt that she 'could handle having a child so young'. The desire to have a baby coupled with the confidence she had in herself to take on the role of mothering successfully, may have ultimately influenced her decision to stop using contraception and 'let nature take its course'. This group of women, in different ways, were unable to state whether or not their child was planned or unplanned.

Four women in this study actively engaged in a process of trying to become pregnant. Ally actively started trying to conceive as soon as she and her partner moved in together. Yet, when I asked Ally why she had started trying for a baby at this particular time, it became apparent that her decision was strongly influenced by what was happening in her peer group. The other three women in the study who had planned their pregnancies did so within the context of what they viewed to be a stable relationship and, as such, stated that the time just felt 'right'. In turn, the decision that these young women made to become pregnant at this particular time in their lives indicates two things. As Ally suggests, young motherhood was a common occurrence amongst her peer group and, as such, influenced her decision to become pregnant as well. On one hand, the decision to become a young mother may appear to correspond with the 'low expectations' of poor and/or working-class young women so often cited by government (SEU, 1999a). However, it also suggests that in this community, young motherhood may be viewed as a common, acceptable, and fulfilling, transition to adulthood.

Sexual Health Education: Inclusion experienced as Exclusion

The trajectory toward becoming a pregnant teenager and young mother appears to be a more complex issue than is represented in current sexual health initiatives. This highlighted the importance of asking the young mothers to share their experiences of their sexual health education and of sexual health related initiatives in Edinburgh.

The young mothers' interviews indicate that experiences of exclusion from sexual health education are often found in the classroom. I learned about the young mothers' experiences of social exclusion in relation to sexual health education

strategies and practices during two different participant observation sessions. In the first session, Leanne said she was disgusted by the ways in which the government decides how to provide sex education. She stated that in her view, the government keeps putting money into trying to decrease teenage pregnancy in 'all these different yet useless ways'. She also criticised the government for not putting funding into sexual health education tools that went beyond demonstrating the use of contraception. Leanne suggested that what would perhaps be more useful was the funding of 'dolls - the type that you can take home and are computerised to cry anytime, day or night, when they are hungry, need changing, cuddles', because she felt that 'might actually work to decrease pregnancy'. This suggestion echoed a number of the views held by the young mothers in that Leanne highlighted what was viewed as a need for discussion about parenting in the context of the sexual health course.

During a later participant observation session I learned that the young mothers felt it was important to them that both the positive and negative aspects of teenage pregnancy and young motherhood should be included in sexual health classes and community based initiatives. This discussion also highlighted their anger at the way in which teenage pregnancy and young motherhood is portrayed to students and in society more generally, and the way that this is used to instill fear and anxiety amongst sexually active young women and pregnant teenagers. Of particular interest was the young mothers' frustration of not being included in the development of sexual health educational strategies.

The exclusion of young mothers from the delivery of sexual health programmes as both community educators and as policy consultants, became increasingly clear upon observing the young mothers' failed attempts at participating in the 'Healthy Respect' Project in Edinburgh and the Lothians. This is perhaps most clearly reflected through Veronica's experience of being invited to speak to young people about being a young mother at the launch:

> There was a guy that came in (to Stepping Stones) from the 'Healthy Respect Campaign', and he was like asking us our opinions on sex, teenage pregnancy, on how they should have more awareness about the Brook and condoms, that sorta thing... so we went there to launch it but after that it was, they really just used us for the publicity...he says that he could get us into the schools and things like that to talk to the girls and boys to like give them our views sorta thing and they never actually got back to us at all.

As such, what was initially thought to be a potentially empowering experience for Veronica, ultimately resulted in her feeling angry and used. Hence, even if this is not the experience of a young mother herself, she continues to be held up as an

example of the negative consequences associated with teenage pregnancy. As Veronica demonstrates, this generally occurs within someone else's agenda, and one in which young mothers are not asked to contribute, even at their own request. This experience was further confirmed when one of the other young mothers at the launch approached one of the launch organisers about the possibility of supporting the young mothers in participating in the 'Healthy Respect' Project. Our query was met with a laugh and we were told 'don't put the horse before the cart dear'. Although the young mothers were personally invited to share their experiences of pregnancy and motherhood, the sole purpose of this was to warn young people about the dire consequences of sexual deviancy, that being, through having sex 'too young' or through failing to use contraception. These examples demonstrate how young mothers can be simultaneously included and excluded from the delivery of sexual health education and local sexual health initiatives.

Discussion

One glaring issue that appears to have affected all the young mothers who were interviewed for this study is the perception of working-class young women's sexuality. This can be seen through examining mainstream sexual health education provision in the UK that encompasses a 'moral fervour' and pressure to produce young people who, amongst other things, refrain from engaging in 'illicit sexual practices' such as 'promiscuity' (Epstein and Johnson, 1998). By drawing attention to how these 'stigmatized sexual categories' are produced and then policed through schooling, Epstein and Johnson (1998) argue that this is a contributing factor to the current 'moral panic' regarding 'deviant' sexual behaviour. This corresponds with Harding (1998) who has argued that, 'teenage sexuality is represented as problematic in political, moral and medical discourses most especially because of its perceived consequences - notably the spread of disease and pregnancy' (p.117). Consequently, the sexually active young woman, particularly those who are black and/or working-class, is often characterised as either 'sexually deviant' or 'problematic'. Social differences are used to further marginalise and socially exclude young women, pregnant teenagers and young mothers. The young mothers who participated in this study demonstrate that the way in which teenage pregnancy and young motherhood is viewed by the Social Exclusion Unit and the Scottish Executive is in fact very different from the perceptions of the young mothers themselves. Nevertheless, young motherhood continues to be characterised as a position in society that is to be avoided at all cost, reinforcing the need to assume that all teenage pregnancies are both unwanted and unplanned.

Corresponding to the earlier findings of Phoenix and Woollett (1991), the young mothers' interviews demonstrate that far from being unique, the feelings that they

expressed about becoming pregnant are similar to those of older women. Two common themes emerged through the interviews, including the feelings associated with finding out about an unexpected pregnancy and the impact that having emotional support can have on a young woman's feelings about her pregnancy more generally. The interviews with the young indicate that even under adverse circumstances, such as becoming pregnant within the context of an abusive relationship, finding sources of support in the early stages of a pregnancy can have a positive impact on the ways in which they feel about the remainder of their pregnancy and about becoming a young mother. Positive feelings associated with finding out about a pregnancy were also expressed particularly in cases where a young woman believed that she was infertile or questioned her ability to carry a baby to term. This may have been because feelings of relief about being able to conceive may have initially outweighed the negative feelings associated with becoming unexpectedly pregnant. However, perhaps due to the familial support that was offered to these young women at that very early stage of finding out about their pregnancy, they were able to maintain a sense of excitement regarding their impending motherhood. Finally, positive feelings at the discovery of a pregnancy were also experienced by those young women who were 'hoping' to become pregnant regardless of whether or not the pregnancy was expected. In turn, these 'finding out' stories confirm that for some young women, pregnancy is a welcome occurrence regardless of whether or not it is a planned event.

Situating the experiences of pregnant teenagers within the binary categories of 'planned' and 'unplanned' provides a narrow understanding of teenage pregnancy. These categories ultimately fail to provide a useful way in which to develop appropriate sexual health strategies aimed at young women from working class and/or poor communities. Many of the young women in this study who did not consciously plan their pregnancy stated that that their initial reactions to finding out were positive, and in many cases, this was an occurrence that the young women hoped for. This corresponds with Allen and Dowling's (1998) research, which found that although only a quarter of the young mothers they interviewed planned their pregnancy, a much higher proportion had a positive reaction when they became aware they were pregnant. These reactions suggest two things. First, what may appear on the surface to be an 'unplanned' pregnancy is actually a planned event. Second, that for those young women who did not 'actively' plan, but who responded positively to the discovery of their pregnancy, there may have been positive cultural and social factors attached to becoming a mother. This corresponds with research suggesting that although working-class girls are no more sexually active than middle-class girls, they do make different choices when it comes to the use of birth control and

pregnancy (Walkerdine et al, 2001). This highlights the impact and the omission of class differences within sexual health strategies that are focused on attempts to influence sexual and reproductive behaviour.

The young mothers' trajectories toward teenage pregnancy appear to contrast with public opinion and political discourses, which assume that teenage pregnancy is caused by irresponsible and uneducated sexual acts (Rowlingson and McKay, 2002). As previously argued, although there were a number of young mothers in this study who had both an unwanted and unplanned pregnancy, their pregnancies did not result from a lack of knowledge, nor did they result from 'irresponsible' sexual practices. Rather, 'unplanned' pregnancies were the result of a number of different social and emotional factors. This highlights the need for the Scottish Executive to operationalise what is really meant by the term 'unplanned' pregnancy. One positive result of this could be a different way in which to view statistics reflecting the number of unplanned pregnancies in Scotland, thus allowing for a debate as to whether or not Scotland truly does have the highest unplanned pregnancy rate in Western Europe. More importantly, however, the inclusion of the various trajectories toward teenage pregnancy would also highlight the fact that teenage pregnancy occurs as a result of a variety of circumstances and within diverse contexts.

Through highlighting the way in which sex education is delivered in the public sphere of education, it becomes clear that gender, 'race' and class are used to 'other' sexually active young women. At the same time, engaging in sexual activity has traditionally been viewed as a private matter (Woollett and Marshall, 1997), which makes for an obvious contradiction when considered in the context of the moral panic over 'single/young mothers' (Woollett and Marshall, 1997:38). There is a need to provide another view of young working-class women's sexuality, teenage pregnancy and young motherhood that provides a more complex understanding of the term 'unplanned' pregnancy.

Because current Scottish sexual health programmes, initiatives and reports (SEU 1999a) continue to consider a lack of sexual health information as the main cause of 'unplanned' or unwanted pregnancies, framing teenage pregnancy and young motherhood within a social pathology approach to social problems they fail to implement the types of programmes that would be most useful to pregnant teenagers and young mothers. This is a particularly significant oversight in considering earlier research which has evidenced that as many as half of under 16 year olds and two thirds of 16-19 year olds who become pregnant, carry the baby to term and plan to raise the child (Corlyon and McGuire, 1999).

Although it is important to address the issue of 'unwanted' or 'unplanned' pregnancies in sexual health education programmes and initiatives, other aspects of sexual health that are just as, if not more relevant to working-class young women often remain overlooked (Epstein and Johnson, 1998, Walkerdine, et al, 2001). The young mothers whom I interviewed highlighted a number of other issues that were of more relevance to them. These included: lack of confidence or feelings of safety in which to negotiate safer sex practices; a broader understanding regarding the decision making process surrounding young motherhood; a larger focus on support for pregnant teenagers and young mothers; the need to include a focus on parenting as part of sexual health education; and the desire to influence and engage in sexual health initiatives. These findings challenge research which has shown an increase in classroom discussion in the area of personal relationships, sexual development, sexual intercourse, pregnancy and AIDS/STIs aimed at Scottish school children (Currie et al, 1999). This is not surprising considering that it is difficult to get detailed information about the content of these discussions. Moreover, even though the importance of addressing issues such as confidence, self-esteem and gender relations within the sexual health education class has been highlighted by both Westminster and the Scottish Executive (SEU, 1999a; Scottish Office, 1999a; Scottish Executive, 2000), sexual health education remains mainly 'concerned with the consequences of sexual activity such as teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases' (Monk, 1998:241). This presents a conflict between repressing and regulating child sexuality and/or sexual behaviour within sexual health education and policy that hinders the further development of these programmes to include other meaningful aspects of sexual and gender relations. As a result, a number of important issues that are relevant to young women, such as self-esteem, gender relations, violence, and parenting to name but a few, may be omitted within sexual health education and policy.

The young mothers' interviews regarding their experiences of sexual health education also raises questions about the impact that class may have on the messages young women receive regarding their sexual health. This corresponds with concerns put forth by Walkerdine et al (2001) in their argument that,

> It seems that the regulation of femininity works quite differently upon the bodies of working - and middle-class girls. Indeed it is the fecund body of the middle-class girl that has to be regulated at all costs in favour of the predominance of the mind...on the other hand the fecund body of the working-class girl does not represent a threat to bourgeois masculinity but rather contributes to a discourse on welfare scroungers (p.188).

This suggests that there are two different sets of messages at play in society when it comes to approaching the sexual health of middle and working class young women. The first message is about protecting young women's sexuality whilst promoting alternatives to motherhood. This message operates under the assumption that sexual health education strategies within schools and community projects are the route to take in protecting the sexual health of middle class girls in the view that they will have children 'later but not now'. However, this approach is only going to be 'heard' by middle class teenagers who believe that their sexual health is worth protecting. Moreover, it also assumes that all young women feel that they need to be protected from pregnancy because they can see this as protecting their future, that being a future that will at some point include both a career and children. The second message, however, is about protecting the state and is therefore aimed at working class or poor young women. The message here is that young women need to protect themselves from getting pregnant so that they will not continue the cycle of dependency and, thus prevent maintaining a position of reliance on the state for benefit such as income support.

Corresponding with Holland et al (1998), the findings from this study indicate that the strategies aimed at decreasing incidences of unplanned and unwanted teenage pregnancies will need to apply a gender analysis that includes addressing issues of power and violence. A main component of sexual health education needs to be directly aimed at young men by encouraging them to challenge stereotypical notions about gender, relationships, and their own attitudes toward contraception, power and violence. Although the Social Exclusion Unit's report on *Teenage Pregnancy* has highlighted the need for increased sexual health and relationship based education aimed at young men, there appears to be little evidence of an increase of this within sexual health strategies and policies . Research studies that have investigated the experiences of young, unmarried parents have focused almost entirely on young mothers. As a result, little is known about the experiences of young fathers in regard to their views about teenage pregnancy, sexual and reproductive health and relationships, and becoming a young father (Speak et al, 1997). Moreover, although research has shown that young fathers have felt excluded during and after pregnancy, and have little knowledge of their legal rights and sources of support (Speak et al, 1997), young men's views about the role that they have played as a sexual and/or romantic partner in both 'healthy' and 'abusive' relationships is either non-existent or difficult to obtain. Yet, by failing to address these issues within sexual health education, services and policies, knowledge about birth control and STIs will have little impact on preventing teenage pregnancy, lone motherhood, and violence in relationships, and in understanding the social and emotional positioning of young men in regard to teenage pregnancy and

young fatherhood. It is important to state that sexual health practice that does address these issues does exist in some schools and community youth organisations across Scotland. However, what has yet to be developed is sexual health policy aimed at ensuring that this type of sexual health education is viewed as a right. Until such time, the needs and experiences of young women will continue to be excluded from sexual health education, whilst at the same time, unwanted and 'unplanned' teenage pregnancies will continue to be viewed as a consequence of irresponsible or ill-informed behaviour.

Conclusion

Developing strategies aimed at improving the sexual and reproductive health of young people is both important and necessary. However, it is also important to question the effectiveness of the ways in which current social exclusion strategies aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancy have been developed and carried out regarding the sexual health of young women living in working-class communities. Interviews with the young mothers from this study indicate that social exclusion strategies aimed at decreasing teenage pregnancy through increasing sexual health education that focuses primarily on contraception and STIs may not be effective in reducing teenage pregnancies. This is particularly relevant in situations where a young woman is in a violent relationship and does not feel able to assert her sexual health needs and in cases where a young woman consciously chooses not to use contraception in the hope of becoming pregnant. Developing sexual health strategies that exclude the voices of young mothers will result in a failure to recognise the various contexts in which young, working-class women become pregnant. Unless sexual health education programmes address the range of biological, social, emotional and cultural issues associated with teenage pregnancy, poor and working-class young women will continue to experience barriers to accessing effective sexual health information and services. Furthermore, until such time as young mothers, and in fact, young people more generally, are included in debates regarding teenage pregnancy, it is very likely that sexual health strategies and policies (where they exist), will continue to exacerbate rather than alleviate the social exclusion of pregnant teenagers and young mothers.

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HANGING ABOUT:

The Importance of Bus-stop Culture

STEPHEN MOORE

There have been a considerable number of studies dealing with the issue of young people 'hanging about'. However these have largely focused on hanging about in urban areas (Loader, 1996; Anderson, 1994; Burgess, et al; 1988). The activities of rural youth have received far less attention. This may possibly be because of the myth that there are fewer problems in rural areas, or simply that the study of young people has been associated with urban 'problems'. (Phillips and Skinner, 1994; Mathews, 2000). This article seeks to reddress the balance in some small way – though arguably some of the findings of the study could be applied to urban as well as rural areas.

Hanging about, or just 'doing nothing' is the major leisure activity of rural youth, and its importance has been recognised (Crawshaw, 2002; Skelton and Valentine, 1997). However, as Douglas (1992) has pointed out, youth activities are partly shaped and bounded by the local culture to which they belong, which in this case consists of the constraints and opportunities of village life – and these constraints and opportunities are significantly different from urban areas. So, in place of the shopping 'mall', or the fast food outlet, there is the local village shop, the war memorial or the bus stop. Instead of the anonymity offered by the city, there is the network of personal relationships within the village, and finally in place of the more formal modes of control (CCTV, Police, Private Security Guards) operating in the city, there are the more informal dynamics of social control operating in rural areas.

Studies of young people 'hanging about' have tended to fall into two categories. On the one hand, young people are viewed primarily as disruptive to community life and as such are the focus are innumerable policy initiatives which centre on notions of community safety or preventing anti-social behaviour (Brown 1995; Home Office, 2003) On the other hand, many academics in the area of youth studies have tended to stress that young people are, in some way victims of adults and that their behaviour can best be understood as reflecting a lack of power (Anderson 1994; Valentine, 1996; Hartless, 1995).

In this article I argue that in rural communities at least, neither of these extremes is particularly accurate in describing the position of young people. They both suffer from a rather static view of the differing groups which compose 'the community'. Groups within the community exist in relationship with each other and so in any analysis of young people (and of course, there are different groups of young people)

and their place in the community, it is important to analyse the specific dynamics of these relationships.

I suggest therefore that any understanding of young people's actions must be constructed in terms of the *interaction* between them and householders with whom they come into contact. The research I conducted suggests that this interaction normally takes the form of a *fragile balance* between the householders and the young people who 'hang about' near their homes. However, fragile balance is only one possible outcome of the interaction and at any time the situation is liable to *tip* into disorder though balance may also reassert itself in certain circumstances. The idea of tipping was first developed by Bottoms in his study of Sheffield housing estates (Bottoms and Xanthos, 1989). He compared two physically similar social housing developments which were separated by a dual-carriageway. One of the estates had a crime rate three and a half times higher than the other. Bottoms explained this by arguing that the social dynamic of the estate with the higher crime rate was very different from that with the lower rate. In the higher crime rate estate the families and people who might have restrained anti-social behaviour had largely moved out, either being transferred or buying property. The gradual loss of such people had a cumulative effect on the levels of disorder on the estate. Without their restraining influence, those who wanted to commit crime or other anti-social acts increased their activities and remaining residents felt intimidated and failed to speak out. Bottoms argues that at this point, the estate had 'tipped'.

Methodology

The research which informs this article consisted of two main elements, and a supplementary part. The first involved a period of participant observation of young people 'hanging about' in three villages in East Anglia. Towards the completion of this period I conducted a series of interviews with local householders living nearest to where the young people would hang around. The supplementary element consisted of revisiting the villages, almost two years later, to talk to the young people currently hanging about.

The main participant observation element of the research was carried out over six months by three young-looking female researchers who were paid to 'hang about' on a regular basis with young people in three villages in East Anglia. They were completely open about their research role and they answered any questions about the point of the research and what use might be made of it. The researchers engaged in a variety of information-gathering techniques including recording whole evenings' conversations, but most commonly they simply joined in 'hanging about' and then maintained diaries of their evenings out. Important points were noted and raised at fortnightly research meetings.

The decision to use young researchers only was taken after early 'trial runs' of hanging about in and around youth clubs in a number of villages had clearly demonstrated that I (a middle-aged male) obtained considerably different results from discussions when compared to the recordings made by two younger researchers who were able to gain much greater empathy and acceptance from the people attending the youth clubs. What I was being told by the young people was that they enjoyed the clubs and thought they were better than hanging about on the streets – yet the researchers were being told that, though the young people really liked the youth workers, they were not so interested in the clubs' activities as such. Furthermore, there were actually as many young people hanging about outside the youth clubs as taking part inside. These young people were not really interested in talking to me, but they were to the two researchers.

The advantage of using young-looking 'cool' researchers was that they were easily accepted into the youth groups . One researcher, aged 21, was regularly taken for a 17 year old by those hanging about, and seemed to strike the closest rapport with the young people concerned. For safety reasons it was agreed that during the evenings the researchers would always carry mobile phones and that they would not go off individually, but would always stay within sight of each other. Each evening I stayed in a different location in the village, sitting in a car ready to collect them should any trouble occur. However, at no time did they experience any problems.

This sort of research presents a difficulty in obtaining consent from parents. I decided to take the position, now commonly used, of 'assumed consent'. Each young person 'hanging about' – and they were usually the same flexible groups – was given a short statement about the research including my phone number and e-mail address and asked to show this to their parents/guardians. If anyone had objections or wanted further information, they were asked to contact me. I received no phone calls or emails and therefore proceeded on the basis that there were no objections and that consent had been *de facto* given.

Interviews were carried out with householders who lived nearest to the locations where the young people tended to hang about. I visited each household during the early evening to explain who I was and what the purpose of the research was, and either conducted interviews there and then, or arranged to come back during the day. My aim was to avoid engaging in interviews when the young people (and the researchers) were visible outside. The interviews were open-ended and took the form of a conversation about young people in general and about the specific issues in the village. Householders seemed genuinely happy to speak to someone about their concerns and clearly felt that the police and the local authorities were failing to respond to their concerns. I took notes during the interviews and wrote these up afterwards.

After considerable debate with colleagues and the researchers, it was decided not to mention in the interviews that there were researchers hanging about outside with the young people, as it was important that householders should not think any of their views would be passed on to the young people. Similarly, the student researchers did not mention the interviews with householders. Views were not passed on from one group to the other – though the conclusions of the research suggest that this might actually have been a useful exercise, as there is a major problem of communication between the young people and the householders.

Almost two years after the completion of the earlier research, I returned to the villages accompanied by two of my current students (the original researchers had all left the university by this time) and introduced myself to any young people 'hanging about' in the evening. I told them briefly about the earlier research and chatted about some of the issues which had been raised by the research and also what had happened to the young people who used to hang about.

Hanging about, place and action

Any discussion of hanging about must begin by looking at the locations chosen for hanging about. In the three villages studied in this research, young people tended to hang around in stereotypical locations - the war memorial, a central village bus stop and a small green in the high street. The fact that these places are chosen so often that they have become stereotypical, suggests that they must share some characteristics which attract young people more than other locations

The commonly made distinction between place and space, with *space* referring to a geographical area and *place* as a location 'created and open to human interpretation and significance' (Rose 1993), may provide some clues as to why these locations are so often chosen. What 'human interpretation and significance' might young people construct about these particular three locations?

No clear explanation was provided by any of the groups as to why these places were chosen as opposed to anywhere else. When asked typical responses included a shake of the head or shrug of the shoulders or statements such as:

Always have

Just sort of drifted here... (I)... suppose

Some of the young people went there because that was where the previous 'generation' of young people had hung around and they had begun hanging about with them initially until the older generation had 'moved on'.

Cos, Kev, (brother) and his mates was here

Measor and Squires (2000) note in their study of urban youth that there is, to some extent, a shift from one place to another over time, but in my interviews with rural householders, it appears that there had been relatively little change over time in the places traditionally chosen for 'hanging about'. The places chosen seem to be objectively geographically convenient as a meeting point. They were near the village stores, where the young people would pop inside for drinks or snacks (although in one village some of the group had been banned from the local store).

In answer to questions about why they chose to hang about in that particular place, young people indicated that that being so near the shop and the centre of the village provided them with a pleasing sense of power. They were aware that their presence had an intimidating effect upon adults and other youth who don't 'hang around'.

> *Well, I have to... admit - it feels good all them like looking away, or some like staring us out - yeah, like erm, like ...you know being hard or... like that.*

> *You can keep an eye on things ...people.*

The answers to our questions indicated that central locations provide a place both where young people can conveniently gather- at the centre of things – and also where their very presence can generate a pleasing sense of power over an older generation and over other young people viewed as more conformist. This bears out the arguments of those, such as Crawshaw who claims that the street has the potential as a 'site of conflict', where 'adults can perceive young people as threatening' (Crawshaw, 2002). In this case, the adults are those householders living in the area where the young people hang about.

The 'hanging about' behaviour that the researchers witnessed consisted mainly of young people sitting or standing around talking, commenting fairly loudly within earshot on passers-by and gossiping. In one village a minority practised skate-boarding. One very common activity among the young men consisted of mock fights which only once turned into a genuine fight between two youths, when, according to the eventual winner, the loser had gone too far and had to be put back 'in his place'. However, even then the level of violence was relatively minor and the rest of the group intervened as soon as it became apparent that the fighting was real. As well as mock fights, there were numerous general demonstrations of male prowess which involved minor acts of vandalism, shouting, swearing, and loud singing.

Young women tended to form the audience, although they were not passive onlookers, but shouted, did dance steps and joined in the general banter. They

were also active in peacemaking after arguments and threats, though they also engaged in, and provoked arguments themselves on some occasions.

Only minor acts of vandalism occurred when the researchers were with the young people – a car was scratched (see later), bottles chucked in the road, trees broken and a bicycle 'found', played with and dumped.

The age range of the young people varied from about 12 upwards, though the majority of those hanging about were slightly older, falling into the 13-16 age range. It seems that as soon as young men were able to drive a car they tended to hang about less often. This may also coincide with the ability to pass for eighteen and the possibility of going to the pub. This broadly coincides with the findings of Measor and Squires, (2000) in their study of young people in Brighton. The older car drivers who, we were told, had previously hung around, would pull up and engage in conversations with those hanging about – sometimes they stayed, but more likely they would screech off to reappear later in the evening. Eventually, they would drift away from the group altogether as girlfriends, employment and the possibility of going to a local town or the pub all provided alternative avenues of pleasure.

You just grow... sort of ... out of it. Don't you?

Well, yeah – that's all there was, but now I've got the car...

In one village, an older group who owned cars continued to hang about, parking their cars in the car park of the local community centre where they played music, smoked cannabis and passed the time.

One common, possibly routine, activity of all the groups we looked at in the villages was that they smoked cannabis. However, all the groups in the study were careful to do their 'skinning up' and the actual smoking, in places out of the public view – in one village it was done on 'the rec', in another around the back of the bus shelter or around the back of the junior school, and as we have just seen for the older group – in the privacy of their cars. However, this was not because of fear of the police, as the police appeared to have little or no significance in the daily lives of these young people.

Never see them.

Don't do nothing... just tell us off.

Well they might hassle you for a week or something... but then something more importance ...er, important happens and ...that's it.

This contradicts most other urban studies of young people hanging about, who found considerable bitterness at the way the police were perceived to pick on them. (Loader, 1996; Anderson,1994; Measor and Squires, 2000). One possible explanation for this is small number of police officers available in rural areas where the population in rural areas is spread across significant distances making routine patrols to every village almost impossible. If police officers are called out to an incident, it can take anything up to an hour to arrive given the distances which have to be travelled. Any one accused of anti-social behaviour has ample time to go home.

However, if the police were absent from the thoughts of rural young people, the presumed presence of watching adults was more of a hindrance. Activities were curtailed by the possibility of being seen - though quite what sanctions could occur never seemed to be clear in the discussions between the young people and the researchers.

> *You never know who's looking... you got to be... (a) ...bit ...careful*

> *Them... (name of family) you know, keep an eye... watch... on us – er... you know, like busybodies*

The unclear possibility that the 'adult watchers' might talk to their parents or make other public complaints against them, seemed enough to make the majority of those 'hanging about' seek to curtail the more extreme or 'mad' behaviour of other members. Extreme, illegal or disorderly behaviour was much more likely to occur in places which were hidden from the public gaze and which are regarded as private places out of adult control. So cannabis use occurs at the corner of the 'rec' (recreation ground), a scout hut at the edge of the rec was set alight and a village hall had its windows smashed. Yet the meeting place for 'hanging about' only ever suffered from spray-painting with 'autographs' and 'trademarks'. What emerged was of a level of self-policing linked to place and the unclear idea of surveillance by adults.

It was evident to the researchers that there was a gender dynamic at work with females much more likely to limit extreme or 'mad' behaviour than males. Therefore, generally, but not always, the more females hanging about, the lower the level of 'mad behaviour' and the greater the control exerted. Arguably, much of the male disorderly behaviour was, in effect, to 'show off' to females. The power of young women to limit behaviour was therefore considerable, if they wanted.

Categorising Behaviour – 'mad' and 'having fun'

The young people studied, distinguished between what they defined as 'mad' actions and 'just having fun'. 'Just having fun' covered all the routine activities described above, and was the routine content of 'hanging about'. However, 'mad

behaviour' went beyond this and typically involved theft, serious vandalism and violence against people without a 'good' reason.

> *We don't... we keep clear of them* (the 'Carpenter' family - a family with a reputation for violence) *...they're mad, seriously mad.*

> *Ever since* ...(a piece of driving which left one girl seriously injured) *we just like say 'no' – they're mad isn't* ...

> *Yeah, you have to be mad to go in his car.*

From the conversations and observations of the young people by the researchers, this distinction between 'mad' behaviour and 'having fun' is a very significant component in determining the behaviour of the groups.

What was noticeable to the researchers was that there was a limit to extreme behaviour, which was apparent to the young people, though rather less so to local adults. The mechanism for limiting extremes seems to be that some members – usually the majority, limit the extent of publicly challenging 'mad' or extreme behaviour, based on a quite complex assessment which has two elements:

The first component stresses what are reasonable limits to behaviour in *their* eyes, and then this is moderated by the second component of what *they* think that the *householders* would think was unreasonable behaviour. The outcome is a decision whether or not to define behaviour as 'mad' and consequently to challenge it. A good example of this is when two youths, in high spirits, began to vandalise a garden. The other members of the group expressed their unease by saying that they were bored there and wanted to move on somewhere else for a while and then they actually moved away themselves, leaving the two members of the group isolated and without an audience.

What emerges is a picture of a level of self-policing by the young people which occurs in a way that is not clear to outsiders (and perhaps not even to the young people themselves). This self-policing is not bounded by clear or unambiguous rules, but instead is erratic and dependent upon circumstances. However, despite this lack of clarity or consistency self-policing does exist.

The Views of the Householders
In the interviews with householders in the three villages, it soon became apparent that there were very different definitions *between* householders of what constituted acceptable behaviour. Responses to groups of young people 'hanging about' ranged along a continuum from the *sympathetic* involving an acceptance that there was nothing for local youth to do, to *censuring* whereby the mere presence of the young people was seen as cause for complaint.

The sympathetic:

We were all young once... live and let live, that's my motto.

When I... I mean, if you go out... if you make the effort to talk to them, they're not all bad – well, some... are actually quite polite. I fell over about a year back, right outside. They pick... they helped me up and got my back – was I alright and all that.

I blame the council... I mean what have they got? How can you... like, blame them. Well honestly, c'mon you tell me... Mind you some of them would be a pain no matter what the council... facilities there were.

The censurers:

At the other end of the scale were people who simply regarded the youth groups as a nuisance. They felt that their presence ruined the village, and had a marked impact on their lives.

These laddos are real trouble – if I had my way they'd all be banned... from all this trouble they cause.

The police don't do anything. Nothing. Just ...I'm sick and tired of them. ...I've got them there every night. Shouting, swearing and all sorts. And if I ask them to... to... keep the noise down or whatever. The language!

They're a load of fucking shits. That's all I want to say. Yes, write it down. No ... they are...

No matter where they fell on the continuum, virtually all the householders felt intimidated by the presence of the young people hanging about. None, including the sympathetic group, felt confident in confronting the young people or even in attempting to engage them in discussion. However, this did not mean that they would never confront them and during the time of our research there were disputes between the young people and some householders who were most affected by their activities. These would invariably be aggressive encounters in which the householder – having reached a personal 'breaking point' would storm out to demand silence, or that a particular activity would stop.

Of course, these actions had a significant effect on the attitudes of the young people towards householders, and this 'extreme' behaviour on the side of the householder was generally regarded as 'unreasonable' by the young people who would then categorise the householder as a 'weirdo', 'geek' or worse.

That one (Mr P.) is a real cunt. You can't do nothing, ...serious like ...nothing without him fucking whinging.

Oh, them – weirdos. Like we were just mucking around, and Jamie fell over the fence... no harm like, just went over into some flowers. Next minute, he's out... fucking this and fucking that... 'scuse my language, like... but you know.

Householders who complain, despite the attempts of the young people to be fair (within the constraints of 'just having fun' and acting 'mad'), are regarded as behaving 'out-of-order' and are fair game for harassment. The only limit would be the extent to which the young people were afraid of the complainant or of the consequences of their actions – for example, if the police were called in.

The dynamics of the balance

What emerged from the research is that in many villagers, there appears to be a *fragile balance* between the young people and the householders. This balance may be unexpressed and may not be clear to either the householders or the young people - but this balance exists. What seems clear though is that the majority of those 'hanging about' are, in the appropriate circumstances, prepared to limit the excesses of those relatively few 'mad' youths who wanted to go beyond the unclear and fluid boundaries which are accepted by this majority.

Householders are aware that their relationship to the young people who hang about is partially a result of an interaction. They are aware too that how they behave influences the activities of the young people. However, because of the complex and erratic nature of the self-policing by the young people, and just as important, the lack of communication between the two groups of people, the strategies which the householders adopt to limit the activities of the young people will often fail.

For example, some householders dealt with the issue of young people hanging about by being 'friendly' to them. The underlying belief (or hope) was that they would not be 'picked on' if the young people were well disposed towards them. This strategy was not necessarily successful. If there was a bit of 'fun' to be had and it happened to be near or outside the house of one of the people who tried to be friendly, then impulse would overwhelm any awareness of the identity of the householder.

Similarly, the strategy of confrontation meant, on one occasion, being targeted to have a car 'keyed' (gouged along the side with a key), but on another occasion the young people may feel that it is not worth the possible confrontation.

So far I have argued that there are checks and balances in the relationship between those hanging about and local householders. On the one hand, the constraining

comments of the majority of young people – particularly females- were based upon a presumption of what was reasonable behaviour. This concept of 'reasonable behaviour' was in turn based on a fluid mix of their own ideas of reasonable and their perception of what the householders would think (and perhaps do). However, there is no guarantee that the balance will be maintained. It is fragile and can be disturbed at any time,

Factors which affect the balance include:

For householders:

Gone too far this time: the young people may have caused too great a disturbance so that the householder's threshold of tolerance is breached

Panic: over time in the villages the young people hanging about may be blamed for all acts of vandalism or minor thefts – even if they did not commit all of them. (One of the things that the young people complained about was unfairly being 'copped for everything.')

New arrivals: new householders arriving in the village may have different expectations of behaviour than those who lived there for a while.

For the young people:

'Out of order': This is a very important concept for the young people in the study. If for some reason, in the eyes of the young people 'unreasonable' and 'extreme'' demands are made by householders (for example calling the police) which made the youth feel that they were being picked on, this in turn could lead to retaliation and harassment.

Membership of the group is transient – people drift in and out, and consequently the internal dynamics of the group can change. Significantly, the definition of what is 'out of order' varies too. This has an important effect on the activities of the group.

Routes: Although the place where they hang around my be similar, the young people tend to move around certain parts of the villages. These routes depend upon who the members are and where they live. As routes change, they will come into contact with different householders, with different interactions.

Conclusion and Implication for Practice

The emergence of a fragile balance between young people and householders echoes Janet Foster's study of a London inner city area with a high crime rate (Foster, 1995). Foster argues that the actual levels of crime are not an indicator of

the unease or fear which people live in, more important is the extent of informal control. Thus objectively high levels of crime are not necessarily linked to a high degree of fear of crime.

> *Informal social control is seen as a powerful inhibitor to the commission of crime. However, we still know relatively little about the actual dynamics of informal social control and how strong the link between social control and crime really is.*
> (Foster, 1995: 564)

In this article we uncovered some of the dynamics of informal social control in a rural community, and suggested that there is a complex interaction between householders and young people. But what implications are there for practice?

In policy terms, rather than seeking to find ways to defend the community *against* young people, it could be argued that 'hanging about' should be seen as an inevitable and *positive* aspect of rural life. In certain situations, young people seem able to place controls on the more extreme behaviour of group members, and this can be reinforced on some occasions and weakened on others, by the activities of local householders. This control, like all social control is unclear and occasionally arbitrary (at last to the outsider), but nevertheless exists. Hanging about in public therefore can be a good thing and may well be worth encouraging, as significant deviant behaviour largely takes place outside the view of the public. What can be done to retain young people in the public view will constrain their behaviour.

Bus projects, youth groups and any other organised activity ought to place young people in the centre of the village and strengthen, not weaken the activity of 'hanging about'. For example, the experiments in providing bus shelters for young people to 'hang around' is a good idea – but the location of these are important. Place them in isolated positions away from the public gaze and they may not be attractive to the majority of local young people – indeed they are more likely to be the focus of anti-social behaviour.

Householders should be made aware that they are not powerless and their very presence and 'reasonable' comments can be a restraining influence of extreme behaviour. However, calling the police before making attempts to engage in 'reasonable' discussion is viewed illegitimate in the eyes of the young people and invites future harassment.

Education is therefore needed for adults as well as for the young people, in the needs and aspirations of other age groups in order that the fragile balance can be achieved between the differing needs of young people and householders. Perhaps one useful activity which the youth service can perform is to work with adults in

order to help them understand the true nature and importance of the activity of 'hanging about' – and help them to have the confidence to interact and, if necessary, complain to the young people in ways which they can relate to.

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YOUNG OFFENDERS:

Towards a Radical/Critical Social Work Practice

STEVE ROGOWSKI

Recently I carried out a qualitative study of young offenders looking at their experience of offending and the youth justice system, and comparing this to policy and practice developments over the post-war period (Rogowski, 2000/01; 2002)[1]. In brief, the young people saw offending as related to boredom and material gain, and the move from welfare/treatment to punishment over the post-war period (Gelsthorpe and Morris, 1994) was almost unanimously condemned. In particular the increased emphasis on custody, epitomised by New Labour's flagship Crime and Disorder Act 1998, is seen as an ineffective, even counter-productive way of dealing with the issue. The young people referred to the need for schools to be made more interesting and relevant, for recreational facilities to be improved, and for genuine employment and training opportunities to be made available. In addition they felt parents and carers needed more help, support and resources. And interestingly, all this should be financed by progressive, redistributive taxation. This is certainly out of tune with New Labour's and the Tories' thinking. It is also worth emphasising that rather than seeing the youth justice system as impartial, administering fairness and justice to all, the young people saw it both as focusing on 'people like us', those from deprived areas, and as sexist and racist in its operations. They were concerned with inequality and, despite an element of critical pessimism, overall they felt a more fair and just society would lead to less crime.

But what of social work with young offenders? The young people I saw felt that social work should involve such as advice, guidance and support. However, social workers now operate in Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) which also include representatives of the police, probation, education, and health services among others. There is a focus on, for example, swift administration of justice, punishment, confronting young offenders with their behaviour and reinforcing the responsibilities of parents (Home Office, 1998). Although there may be some conflict between those keen to enforce court orders strictly and consistently and others, such as those social workers who continue to stress the importance of constructive work with young offenders, the overall effect of current youth justice policy and practice is correctional early intervention, deterrence and punishment. The well established diversionary policies and practices of the 1980s have been abandoned (Goldson, 2000). Popular punitiveness (Bottoms, 1995) and the punishment model are now to the fore with the focus being on deficient young offenders and their families. No account is taken of the structural factors of class, 'race' and gender. There is also

an exclusive stress on offending behaviour itself which entails the expectation that young offenders, not their social and economic circumstances, must change (Drakeford and Vanstone, 1996). At the same time, there has been a growth of managerialism (Clarke and Newman, 1997), a focus on bureaucracy, procedures and routines, including targets and performance indicators, which has resulted in a subsequent reduction in the autonomy available to individual social workers. All this amounts to a depressing scenario for those social workers who would be sympathetic to the views and experiences of young offenders cited above. Unfashionable as it may seem in the current economic, political and ideological climate, such social workers continue to draw on critical criminology (for example: Taylor, Walton and Young, 1973; 1975; Scraton and Chadwick, 1991; Swaaningen 1997; Walton and Young 1998; Young, 1999) and the tradition of radical/critical social work[2]. Drawing on Payne (1997), it can be argued that the latter now consists not only of radical social work *per se* (for example, Bailey and Brake, 1975; Corrigan and Leonard, 1978; Brake and Bailey, 1980; Langan and Lee, 1989; Fook, 1993) but also anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive perspectives (Dominelli, 1988; Hanmer and Statham ,1988; Thompson, 1993; Dalrymple and Burke, 1995), as well as empowerment and advocacy (Beresford and Croft, 1986; Rees, 1991; Mullender and Ward, 1991; Adams, 1996).

In short, critical criminology is concerned with the political, economic and ideological structures within which the process of criminalization, especially of vulnerable and marginalised groups like young people, occurs. Crime itself is bound up with the inequalities of wealth and power and can be seen in terms of Bonger's (1969 [1916]) crimes of misery and crimes of greed. Radical/critical social work sees problems as social and structural rather than individual, with inequality and injustice in society arising from people's working class position together with other oppressions based on 'race' and gender.

Bearing the above in mind, as the title indicates, this article attempts to outline a radical/critical social work practice in relation to young offenders. I begin with a critical account of New Labour's approach to social exclusion as far as young people generally are concerned, as well as those who happen to offend. Not least the preoccupation with social exclusion resonates with Young's (1999) notion of the 'exclusive society'[3]. I then look specifically at social work and social exclusion including social work with young offenders drawing on Smith (1998). Finally, I outline what radical/critical social work entails before briefly describing some of my own tentative steps towards a radical/critical practice with young offenders and their families[4]. The possibilities of such a practice today, though more limited and changed are also alluded to.

New Labour and Social Exclusion

The meaning of 'social exclusion' depends upon the interpretation of a range of concepts. These include 'poverty' - deprivation resulting from inadequate financial resources; 'social exclusion' itself - multiple deprivation arising from lack of personal, social, political or financial opportunities; 'underclass' - a static and homogeneous group of people whose behaviour or circumstances set them apart from mainstream society; and 'social inclusion' - the attempt to reintegrate or increase participation of marginalised groups within mainstream society (Barry, 1998). These concepts are contested, being redefined according to left or right ideology and whether the focus is on collective or individual responsibilities. Important in all this is the 'underclass debate' which has been evident for a long time, referring to the presence of a residual, scape-goated 'class' within society; the non-deserving poor and criminal, dangerous, work-shy, idle people. Within this debate there are two broad camps. For instance, Murray (1990) sees the underclass as those who are economically marginal, culturally opposed to mainstream society, and personally culpable. Others, like myself , see underclass members as set apart through structural anomalies arising from globalization and free market economics.

New Labour has embraced the social exclusion notion without reference to the tensions in the meanings associated with the concept. It set up the Social Exclusion Unit in 1997 with a remit of better understanding the causes and consequences of truancy, school exclusion and youth crime, reducing the number of rough sleepers, and developing approaches to bad housing, drugs and, not least, unemployment. A preoccupation with social inclusion and social exclusion can be politically attractive in these terms because it avoids discussion of radical change agendas and encourages compliance with the status quo. There are a number of criticisms of social inclusion as a solution to the problem of marginalisation. First, the emphasis on inclusion through employment ignores the possibility that inclusion means more to people than merely paid employment. Paid employment *per se* may not be the answer to some marginalised groups such as people who cannot work because of disabilities. Attempts to see inclusion as being achieved only through paid work, irrespective of whether such work is appropriate to one's needs, adequately paid or secure, are misguided and misleading. Second, free market economics do not sit easily with social inclusion. The latter demands a more proactive stance towards problems of marginalisation. Greater state involvement is necessary to reduce social exclusion, and the New Right's answer of 'the trickle down effect' is surely discredited as inequality increases.

There are various other problems with New Labour's approach to social inclusion. For example, Jordan (2000) also finds the emphasis on employment to be wanting.

Although there have been reductions in young claimants and increased labour participation by some, such as lone parents, this does not necessarily relate to social inclusion. New Labour has sought to redefine social justice and move the welfare state from one which provides passive support to one that provides active support to help people become employed and hence independent. This has justified holding down benefit rates, pressurizing claimants to take short-term, low paid jobs, and emphasizing their responsibilities because 'work is the only way out of poverty'. Whether this strategy has delivered social inclusion for those now in employment or security for those still outside is questionable. Increases in inequalities suggest that the strategy is failing and at least two factors are relevant here. First, the kinds of jobs created, mainly in service industries, do not provide 'ladders of opportunity'. Instead they trap people in exploited, insecure positions on poverty wages. They are also in more affluent areas, away from areas of deprivation. Second, new programmes for regeneration in poor areas favour private sector initiatives and create little local employment. Moreover, schemes focused on the resident population, New Deals for Communities (SEU 2001) and the work of the Social Exclusion Unit itself, involve issues of control and enforcement. Above all, the emphasis on opportunity as a basis for social justice cannot be sustained if employment is taken as the only yardstick. A more genuine notion of inclusion, a broader concept of engagement and participation, and a far more positive approach to redistribution is needed.

Turning more specifically to young offending, New Labour's youth justice strategy involves the induction of new, younger children into the youth justice system, integrative alternatives to custody give way to community penalties, and thereafter an expanded range of semi-indeterminate custodial penalties may apply (Pitts, 2000). This is a direct continuation of the Tories' populist punitiveness, with various practical and ethical problems emerging (Bailey and Williams, 2000). For example, the introduction of child safety orders and parenting orders brings 10 year olds routinely onto the caseloads of YOTs making it difficult to employ strategies aimed at diverting the less serious offenders away from social work intervention. Meanwhile, the availability of reparation as part of a wide range of court orders and youth offender panels orders works against those accustomed to arguing for minimal intervention - the new arrangements favour early and repeated intervention.

New Labour rightly notes the difficulties faced by many young people such as those included in my study: lack of financial support, inadequate provision for those whose experience of school has been unsatisfactory, barriers impeding certain social groups such as ethnic minorities, and so on (SEU, 1999). But questions have been asked as to whether the focus on social exclusion represents a sea change in policy or simply a discursive reformulation (Colley and Hodkinson, 2001). The

questions relate to New Labour's underpinning analysis of social and economic problems, signified by the rubric of social exclusion, as well as the appropriateness of the policy solutions proposed.

New Labour is concerned with the individual characteristics of young people. Those who are targeted for intervention, including young offenders and others defined as socially excluded, are defined according to a litany of lacks and needs. Their attitudes, values and beliefs, (for example their belief that there are no meaningful jobs), are seen as key factors in reinforcing their non-participation, and are therefore aspects of self-exclusion. The young people are portrayed as deficient, delinquent, or a combination of the two, as are their dysfunctional families and communities.

There are obvious parallels with Murray's (1990) three chief indicators of the underclass; single parent families, criminal behaviour and drug use, and unemployment by young people who chose not to take jobs. Such stress on attitudes, values and behaviours is the hallmark of discourses which place a moral interpretation on social exclusion and pathologizes those considered to be socially excluded (Jeffs and Smith, 1996). Disadvantage is defined as deficit or disease, located in the individual, without acknowledging the social. Furthermore, as Jeffs and Smith (1998) argue that the very category of 'youth' involves a deficit model with policy tending to refer to young people as thugs, (young offenders), users (of drugs and welfare benefits) and as victims. New Labour perpetuates a moralistic interpretation of the problem, locating the causes of social exclusion in the deficits of individuals, and aggregates these individuals as generalised and pathologized social groupings. Yet the term '"social exclusion" offers the possibility of reflecting multi-dimensional aspects of inequality and disadvantage, pertaining to participatory citizenship, democratic rights and wider social bonds that go beyond definitions focussed solely on economic deprivation' (Colley and Hodkinson, 2001: 342). It could be argued that New Labour's failure to engage with these meanings represents a missed opportunity.

Insofar as external causes of social exclusion are identified by New Labour they are represented by statements about the failure of professionals and of educational and other social institutions. This does not acknowledge the deep-rooted, structural factors such as class, 'race' and gender that profoundly affect young people's life chances. It also presents a positive view of current labour market conditions, ignoring the evidence of large-scale structural unemployment created in response to new technologies and globalization (MacDonald 1997; Young 1999). In particular it fails to reflect the consequences of the collapse of the youth labour market and the 'warehousing' and 'cooling out' role that much education, especially post-compulsory education and training has come to play. All in all, in ignoring the structural

dimensions of social exclusion, the analysis also overlooks the intractability of poverty, inequality and social exclusion, and their relative nature.

Social Exclusion, Social Work and Young Offenders

Despite the reservations referred to, social exclusion as a concept can be useful to social work as it helps 'describe and explain the process of disadvantage amongst vulnerable groups... [reflecting]... the diverse needs of these groups... [and helping]... to explain their restricted access to resources and offers social work the scope to intervene more effectively in the delivery of services' (Barry, 1998:8). Social work with young offenders can be an arena for practice that combats social exclusion.

As Smith (1998) comments, and as shown by the young people in my study, young offenders are socially excluded in ways which their status as offenders compounds and complicates. They are affected by truancy and exclusion from school, by being unemployed, poor or homeless, by coming from disrupted or abusive family backgrounds often associated with alcohol and drug use, by being the victims of crime and so forth. Social exclusion predates their offending and goes well beyond non-participation in the labour market. To deal effectively with youth crime in this context, practice must be inclusive and reintegrative which is the opposite of much practice currently in favour.

The clearest form of exclusion is incarceration, and a commitment to 'anti-custodialism' as a social work value (Nellis, 1995) is fundamental to promoting social inclusion. This finds its practical expression in the effective influence of court decisions and in developing genuine alternatives to custody. For example, careless or incompetent reports, not to mention stigmatising and rejecting ones, can contribute directly to social exclusion and there is a moral responsibility to be critically aware of the impact of social work on the youth justice system's operation. Indeed systems management and monitoring strategies continue to be important in terms of minimal intervention, 'down-tariffing' and keeping young people out of the youth justice system (Thorpe et al, 1980; Pitts, 1988; Blagg and Smith, 1989; Smith, 1995). Hand in hand there have to be attempts to help families, local communities and institutions such as schools to 'hold on' to their young people. This requires an essentially developmental approach (Rutherford, 1986). All this may be difficult as a result of the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 but opportunities still remain. For example, as Bailey and Williams state 'It is at least possible that the distinction between a "culture of minimum intervention" and a new culture of "early intervention based on best practice" creates a false dichotomy: the two may not be mutually exclusive in practice' (2000:76).

As for actually working with offenders, despite the 'what works' research (McGuire, 1995)[5] one must go further than, for instance, simply delivering the

programme by following the manual and taking decisive action in the event of unjustifiable absences. Such an approach if pursued to its full rigour will further exclude the already excluded; their status as offenders will become their main or only status and the rights and claims they have on us by virtue of their common citizenship will be increasingly ignored. In fact the 'what works' research is largely silent on the question of the type of help and support offenders with personal and social difficulties need, and it is these issues, contrary to much of current practice that must be addressed. It is necessary to go beyond offending behaviour (Drakeford and Vanstone, 1996) to provide the non-stigmatic elements of social work with young offenders and reduce the likelihood that they will regard contact with social work as an inherently negative and punitive experience. Befriending, along with advice and support in relation to schooling, recreation, welfare rights, housing, employment/training, drugs and alcohol, relationship difficulties and so on is required.

Smith (1998) advocates Braithwaite's (1989) reintegrative shaming and the practices in restorative and relational justice which are informed by it. Restorative justice originated in victim-offender mediation, now involving family group and community conferences mobilised to form a network of care and support for both victims and offender. The aim is to reach resolution of the conflict represented by the offence which allows both parties to re-assume their everyday social identities instead of retaining their statuses of victim and offender. Although shame can be exclusionary and stigmatising, induced by bullying, for example, the shame advocated here is simply that inherent in the encounter of the offender with the victim. The importance of relationships is also stressed, of understanding the offence in the context of the offender's relations with their victims, families and wider social networks. And there are close affinities with the 'ethic of care' which is characteristic of feminine approaches to moral dilemmas, in contrast with the 'ethic of justice' (Heidensohn, 1985). A larger place for the ethic of care in our response to young offenders is an essential element of a more inclusionary strategy

Overall restorative justice aims to restore a safe community in which dialogue and communication replace coercion and violence. This in turn is compatible with critical criminology's 'peacemaking' movement (Pepinsky and Quinney, 1991). The emphasis is on, for example, encouraging dialogue and democracy in conflict mediation, stressing connectedness (to self, others, the material and social environment, the ecological milieu), and advocating social work values of social justice and equality. All this can be counterposed to the current discourse on crime which is overwhelmed by a language of war-making, of attacking the 'yob culture' and of zero tolerance.

The foregoing does amount to a progressive practice in relation to young offenders. Not least it harks back to some of social work's traditional concerns such as the need to empathise, the importance of the quality of relationships, and the emphasis on help and care. Such a practice is certainly a welcome corrective to the current domination of populist punitiveness and managerialism. However, it largely leaves the structural factors of class, 'race' and gender in relation to young offenders untouched. A radical/critical social work practice which addresses these issues is therefore still needed.

Radical/Critical Social Work Theory

Arguably there are now three strands to radical/critical social work: radical social work itself; anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive perspectives; and empowerment and advocacy.

Drawing on Marxist theory, radical social work initially focused on class (Bailey and Brake, 1975). Subsequently, other oppressions arising primarily from 'race' and gender were acknowledged (Langan and Lee, 1989). Although within this perspective social workers have been seen as agents of class control enhancing the oppression by capitalist societies of the working class, more positive views can be taken. For example, social work can also be understood as an agent of change connecting more general bourgeois society with the representatives, and thus the demands, of the working class. Here complex social problems are not reduced to individual psychological ones, the 'blame the victim' approach. Instead notions such as politicisation and conscientisation are to the fore; helping people to perceive and understand the reality of economic, political and social situations and contradictions thereby enabling them, via group and community approaches for example, to take action against the oppressive elements of reality (Friere, 1972; Leonard, 1984). Instead of helping individuals to adjust and cope with their social situation by, for instance, family therapy, the focus is upon helping individuals to change and control the structures within which their lives are framed. Drawn into all this are anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive perspectives, not least in relation to racism and sexism (for example, Dominelli, 1988; Hanmer and Statham, 1988). In relation to racism for example, one must emphasize the need to include the point of view of black communities in delivering services as well as the need for social workers to explore their own racism. Concerning sexism, a women centred practice involves, for example, valuing women, ensuring space for them to get away from caring and being dependent on men, and avoiding using conventional assumptions that women's ordinary behaviour (such as offending) is particularly bad.

More general anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive approaches developed in the 1990s that included all forms of oppression (Thompson, 1993 and Dalrymple and

Burke, 1995 respectively). Such approaches can follow the radical critique of the failings of traditional social work seeing discrimination as not arising from personal prejudice but from the fact that in capitalist societies powerful groups maintain discrimination in society as a way of preserving power.

In looking at empowerment and advocacy, the former seeks to help people gain power over decision making and action in their own lives, while the latter seeks to represent the interests of the powerless to powerful individuals and social structures. As far as an empowerering practice is concerned, the work of Mullender and Ward (1991) is of particular use. They provide a self-directed groupwork approach based on working alongside group members helping them set their own agenda of issues by asking three questions: 'what?' is/are the problem(s), 'why?' the problem(s) exist, and 'how?' should the problem(s) be dealt with.

And as for advocacy this can take place in relation to presenting a young offender's case to youth offender panels or the youth court, with notions such as minimal intervention and 'down tariffing' being to the fore.

Radical/Critical Social Work Practice
In looking at the possibilities of a radical/critical practice, and in turn drawing on some of my own work in relation to young offenders (Rogowski, 1985; 1990; 1992; 1995)[6], such a practice amounts to working 'in and against the state' (London-Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, 1980), not least in terms of questioning dominant ideology/discourses and related social practices.

Working with various groups of young offenders during the 1980s, many included young people who were nearing the end of their educational careers and they were faced with the prospect of unemployment. Instead of explaining to them the benefits of the various youth training schemes and of staying on at school, thereby selling the palliatives on offer, alternatives were explored ustilising the aforementioned politicisation and consciousness raising strategies. For example, the young people's difficulties were examined in terms of the structure and functioning of present society. From this their predicament did not have to be accepted, not least if society was organised differently on more just and equal lines. Possible strategies to become involved in were also raised such as unemployment groups, protest marches and rallies, and if and when jobs were obtained the necessity to become involved with trade unions.

The riots involving young people during the early 1980s in Toxteth, Brixton and elsewhere were also discussed in such groups. Whereas a conventional social work approach would simply vehemently condemn them, a radical approach, again utilising aspects of politicisation and consciousness raising, would examine

them in terms of responses by young people to their oppressive situation and placing them in the context of their increasing powerlessness and marginalisation, in particular for those who are black and working class. If riots give voice to the unheard, this incidentally helps explain the riots of Summer 2001 by poor working class South Asian young people in various towns in Northern England.

Working with a group of parents who were having difficulty with their young people's behaviour provides another example of what a radical approach can involve. Drawing on Mullender and Ward's (1991) key questions, the parents' comments were certainly illuminating. For example, one mother argued 'Thatcher is half to blame because kids mess around with teenagers with no jobs, only YTS, which isn't training only cheap labour - they have nothing to look forward to and no money so they go out and rob' (Rogowski, 1992:48). The parents also repeatedly referred to external factors which influenced the problems they faced. For instance, it was generally felt that young people get into trouble because of boredom and they argued that if they, along with such as the youth service, had adequate resources, then the young people would be less likely to be bored and less likely to get into trouble. They noted that 'there is no chance in present society' of addressing the resource issues, but pointed out that in a truly fair and just society things could be resolved. Such a group provides a further corrective to much of current practice, this time in relation to parenting classes. The obvious point is that such classes focus solely on the faults and inadequacies of the parents themselves, essentially a 'blame the victim' approach.

It goes without saying that following the move to managerialism such a practice as outlined is more difficult to pursue. Social workers have seen their element of discretion in terms of practice eroded and there has been a subjugation of professional values. Managerialism, the focus on bureaucracy, procedures and routines (Thompson, 2000), began under Thatcher and has continued, and even increased under New Labour. The latter has increased the amount of form filling that has to be carried out, and numerous targets and performance indicators have to be met. All of this is far removed from what social workers and clients/service users see as relevant. In addition to all of this, what discretion social workers had has now moved to managers who are simply concerned with whether various procedures and routines are followed and hence targets and performance indicators met. Put simply, the possibilities of engaging in potentially radical/critical groupwork practice has been reduced, not least as far as social workers operating in YOTs are concerned. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the politicisation and consciousness raising strategies cannot be carried out, even if this is now more likely to take place on an individual basis. For example, work with a young offender could focus

on their motivation for offending, rather than simply issues of control and surveillance. It could be pointed out that issues of boredom and material gain would be resolved by ensuring adequate recreational, educational and employment/training opportunities were available to all young people (Rogowski, 2000/1). Discussions could turn to the need for social justice and equality (in terms of opportunities and outcome), and resulting redistributive taxation policies pending fundamental societal transformation, utopian as all this seems at present. In the meantime problems and difficulties as defined by young offenders have to be addressed. These are likely to include educational and recreational issues and welfare rights, for example. They could also be put in touch with groups and organisations which deal with their particular circumstances. It surely goes without saying that continued links with/pressure on the work hierarchy, along with such as councillors and MPs, retains its relevance.

Despite the foregoing it may well be that more potential for engaging in a radical/critical social work practice lies in working in, or with colleagues working in, those organisations and agencies which work alongside but outside of YOTs. There are now a myriad of projects which focus on an array of issues which effect young offenders - drugs, crime prevention, homelessness, education, recreation, community and neighbourhood regeneration and so on. Arguably practitioners, including social workers, working within in these settings will have more scope to use their initiative and hence engage in the type of radical/critical practice advocated in this article. However, even those social workers in YOTs can be involved, perhaps at a distance, for example in terms of suggesting methods and ways of working. As such one could, for instance, follow Skinner (2002) who outlines community and neighbourhood strategies utilising the social action approach (Centre for Social Action, 2000) which in turn draws on self-directed groupwork. It differs from other crime prevention or neighbourhood interventions in several ways. For example, young people and their communities start with an open agenda to determine issues important to them. In addition, professionals are a resource to the group in achieving goals rather than taking a major role themselves, and there is a recognition that young people can think creatively about resources they can own and which take account of neighbourhood needs. From all of this detached youth work is used to make contact with young people, this involving talking and listening to them on their own ground. There is then planning for action work with a group of young people on what are the problems, why they exist and how things can be changed. Put simply this could involve the young people arguing for improved recreation facilities and taking this up with the local council. Ultimately, and I know many will see this as either overly optimistic or naïvely idealistic (or both), it may lead to arguing and fighting for fundamental change in societal arrangements.

Conclusion

As I have pointed out elsewhere (Rogowski, forthcoming), perhaps some of the foregoing seems rather naïve and simplistic, and there are obvious problems and hazards in pursuing what can be seen as a subversive agenda. Some of the problems relate to the move to managerialism, and, as stated, the resulting subjugation of professional values, which means that social workers' use of initiative and discretion is eroded. And the hazards relate to the risks of being disciplined and even dismissed. For instance, if one attempts to pursue some of the strategies as outlined above, such as radical interpretation of the social action approach, it can lead to young people and their communities making demands on, or resisting actions of, local authorities, and hence at the very least the embarrassment of the latter. Yet even Attlee (1920) argued that every social worker was almost certain to also be an agitator. Surely attempts have to be made at developing a radical/critical practice especially as radical/critical social work has always been stronger on theory than practice. Social workers do come into contact with the most serious casualties of society and they have a responsibility, as well as attempting to meet immediate needs, to work towards a future more just and equal society, utopian as this may seem in the current political, economic and ideological climate. Furthermore, as Leonard (1997) notes, feelings of powerless and despair arising from dominance of capitalism/free market economics, individualism and the seeming demise of left politics must be resisted because this fails to take into account the critiques provided by newer social movements, not least the anti-capitalism/globalization protests. Only last year we had children and young people missing school in order to protest about the war on Iraq. Social protest is still possible.

Returning more specifically to a radical/critical social work practice with young offenders it goes without saying it should reflect, first and foremost, that such young people are having to confront problems and difficulties in relation to poverty, homelessnes, disrupted family and care backgrounds and so on. Again the young people in my study would have echoed this view. In short, their needs along with their families and carers were not being met. Their families lived in poverty and the young people's needs in terms of meaningful and relevant education, employment, and leisure and recreational opportunities were not being seriously addressed. As such they ignored such 'opportunities' instead turning to crime and drug use. It is such issues that need to be addressed, based on traditional social work values of, for example, warmth, empathy and respect for persons. All this can be summed up in the way that traditionally supervision and probation orders were made so that young offenders could be advised, assisted and be befriended. In addition though, the problems young offenders have to confront must be seen in

terms of the present structure of society, and all the inequalities of wealth and power that this entails. As such issues of 'race', gender and class have to be addressed. Despite the advent of theoretical perspectives such as poststructuralism, postmodernism and those feminisms that lean towards them, as a critical modernist[7], my view is that it must be remembered that 'the capitalist mode of production sets man against man and "systematically" prioritizes individual self-interest as rational social practice' this in turn helping to explain young offending itself (Taylor, 1982:10). Practice must therefore take this into account, the result being the tentative steps towards a radical/critical social work practice as outlined above. The difficulties in pursuing this have to be acknowledged, but although a stronger emphasis these days on bureacracy, procedures, targets and performance indicators, and managerialism in general means that such radical/critical social work practice is more difficult to pursue and achieve, this does not mean that it is impossible.

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Notes

1   The research involved semi-structured interviews with twenty 14-17 year old 'heavy end'/persistent young offenders, including young women and black young people, drawn from two Social Services Departments in N. W. England. Focus group discussions also took place with some of them and their friends. I also had access to key documents relating to their lives including social work files and police disclosure documents.

2   Many who would have seen themselves in the 'old' radical social work camp (for example, Batsleer and Humphries 2000 and Fook 2002) now prefer the term 'critical', hence my reference to radical/critical social work here and throughout this article.

3   Following Young (1999), the inclusive society coincided with the social democratic consensus of the initial post-war years and embraced the citizen from the cradle to the grave, with deviant others such as young offenders not abhorred or regarded as an external enemy but rather as people who could be socialized, rehabilitated and cured until they became like 'us'. However, from the 1970s onwards, following economic crises, the ideological move to the right and restructuring of the labour markets of the advanced industrial world we have seen the move to an exclusive society, from one based on assimilation and incorporation to one that separates and excludes. The undercurrent is the move from Fordist to post-Fordist modes of production with a qualitative leap in the levels of exclusion following a dramatic shift from manufacturing to service industries and an overall downsizing of the economy. This has resulted in: the reduction of the primary labour market, those in secure employment; the expansion of the secondary market, those in insecure employment; and the creation of an underclass of structurally unemployed, those marginalised, idle or working for poverty wages. This equates with Hutton's (1995) 40:30:30 society and this gradient of inclusion and exclusion has rather obvious implications as far as crime, not least young offending, and punishment are concerned. The chronic relative deprivation amongst the poor gives rise to crime, and precarious anxiety amongst those better off breeds intolerance and punitiveness against the lawbreaker. Crime and punishment, then, stem from the same source, dislocations in the labour market; one which excludes participation as a worker but encourages voraciousness as a consumer, the other from a market which includes but only in a precarious fashion. The latter group tend to gaze downwards becoming dismayed at those they perceive as unfairly advantaged by accruing rewards illicitly, this leading to their intolerance and punitiveness.

4   These sections draw on Rogowski (forthcoming) - see refs.

5   This research demonstrates that by taking constructive action of specific kinds offending behaviour can be reduced. For example, car crime can be addressed by developing outreach services based on self-directed groupwork and social action approaches – see Chapman (1995).

6   It must be emphasised that my work took place some time ago and as such issues in relation to class dominated. Such work today would, of course, see more emphasis on 'race' and gender including the use of anti-racist and anti-sexist strategies.

7   In brief, as far as social and political theory is concerned, and as many readers will have gathered, I draw on such as Marxism, the critical theory of the Frankfurt School and its heir apparent Habermas. It is in keeping with Enlightenment and the resulting modern project aimed at emancipation and ensuring freedom, justice and equality for all. For those who want to pursue such 'weighty' issues a good introduction is provided by Callinicos (1999).

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Classic Texts Revisited

Eduard C. Lindeman
The Meaning of Adult Education
New York: New Republic 1926
*(reprinted Oklahoma Research Center for Continuing
Professional and Higher Education, 1989)*

MARK K. SMITH

Eduard C. Lindeman's (1926a) *The Meaning of Adult Education* is certainly an adult education classic. The book isn't just an 'eloquent statement of genuine historical value', it also has the power to 'illuminate the present and reveal the future' (Kidd 1961: xxvi). In 1982 it was voted one of the most influential book in its field in the USA during the twentieth century (it tied with Malcolm Knowles' *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*) (Stewart 1987: 6). But this is a series about classic youth work texts and *The Meaning of Adult Education* can hardly be claimed to have had a similar impact on UK youth work. Lindeman gets the odd mention in the literature because of his contribution to the development of group work (eg. Matthews 1966), his insistence of the centrality of social philosophy to practice (Smith 1994) and his advocacy of progressive education (Jeffs and Smith 1999). His work features on just one or two training programmes. This relative neglect has entailed a sad loss to the field. As we will see, three elements mark out Lindeman's contribution as being of particular relevance to youth work and underpin the claim of *The Meaning of Adult Education* to be a 'youth work classic'.

First, Lindeman worked as youth worker/organizer for a number of years - and the thinking revealed in the book bears the mark of this. It sits comfortably within some significant strands of youth work both then and in more recent times. Second, Lindeman's concept of adult education can be approached as being less about work with people of a particular age and more about adulthood as an aim. In other words there was a strong crossover with what later became characterized as lifelong education and it articulates well with youth work. Indeed Basil Yeaxlee (1929) the writer of the first book on lifelong education made substantial use of Lindeman's work. Third, *The Meaning of Adult Education* is a fine statement of an orientation to education that is open, convivial and committed. As such, it provides a refreshing antidote to current mechanistic and state-defined UK discourses of youth work, youth development and lifelong learning (Smith 2003).

Before looking at the book, and to appreciate the depth and scale of Lindeman's thought and contribution, we need, as Huey Long (1989: xiv) has argued, to approach it in the light of his biography, intellectual heritage and historical location. There is the danger of 'erroneous attribution' and misrepresentation when this is not done.

Lindeman's heritage and location

Born in 1885, in St Clair, Michigan USA, Eduard Christian Lindeman was the son of German/Danish immigrants. His early work life included spells as a stable cleaner, nurseryman, grave digger, brickyard worker and deliverer of groceries. He also worked in a shipyard and in factories in Detroit. Aged 22 he went to Michigan Agricultural College (later Michigan State University) where his interests widened considerably. He began on a 'sub-freshman' programme (what we might now call an 'access course') and then joined the main programme. At Michigan he became involved in the YMCA, developed a writing society and helped to found the Ethnic-Sociological Society. As his daughter was later to write, his career defied categorization (Leonard 1991: xxiii). He went into agricultural extension work (via the Boys and Girls Clubs and 4-H) essentially as a youth worker and community organizer. Lindeman then joined the teaching staff at the YMCA College of Chicago - a situation that he left after a year as he enraged many of his colleagues with his forward-looking social and theological ideas. After a short, and again problematic, spell at the North Carolina College for Women in Greensboro he joined the New York School of Social Work (later the Columbia University School of Social Work) in 1924 - and stayed there until he retired in 1950. He became closely associated with *New Republic,* served on various commissions, was advisory editor to Mentor Books and was Chair of the American Civil Liberties Union Commission on Academic Freedom (1949).

As well as writing on adult education, Lindeman produced early, pioneering, texts on community and community organization (1921), and on working with groups (1924). He continued to be a strong advocate of group work and community organization and was a significant voice in the establishment of these within the discourse of North American social work during the 1930s. He also wrote about social research (1933 with John Hader), social education (1933) and democratic living (1951a, 1956). Arguably, his exploration of social philosophy kept it 'alive' within social work. Lindeman possessed a 'consistent determination never to separate

human problems from philosophical consideration' and demanded 'that the profession should not separate them' (Konopka 1958: 12). He died in 1953.

As can be seen from the above, Lindeman was able to work across traditional subject borders and disciplines. Long (1989: xviii) comments that he was 'primarily a social worker' (for this read youth worker and community worker) 'turned philosopher and that his view of adult education was influenced accordingly'.

> *Not only could he relate education, social sciences and social*
> *problems to the problems of the day; he could combine concepts*
> *from social sciences with both natural sciences and philosophy. He*
> *was a pioneer on many interlocking fronts – a pioneer social scientist*
> *with an allegiance to both science and to society and its processes,*
> *and also a pioneer in adult education and social philosophy*
> (Leonard 1991: xxiii).

According to Stewart (1987: 4) Lindeman gained the bulk of his intellectual constructs from three principal sources: 'Bedrock philosophical under-pinnings came from John Dewey (within a context earlier defined by William James and Charles Sanders Peirce)'. Other roots can be found in the work of the philosopher/educationalist/theologian Nikolai Grundtvig (the founder of folk high schools in Denmark) and in the thought of Ralph Waldo Emerson. The mix of Emersonianism, romanticism, Jeffersonian agrarianism and pragmatism involved here created conflicts for him especially in the tension between individualism and collectivism (Leonard op cit). However, it was the pragmatism of Dewey that was to provide the central foundation for his approach to adult education.

Lindeman was a friend and colleague of Dewey and shared with him a concern for social justice, a belief in the possibilities of education and human action, and a deep commitment to democracy. Dewey's concern with the emancipation and enlargement of experience fed directly through into *The Meaning of Adult Education*. But that was not all. 'It is generally accurate to say that adult education as articulated by Eduard Lindeman, is a derivative of Deweyan progressive education' (Stewart 1987: 4). It is also important to recognize the contribution of other Progressive writers and activists to the development of Lindeman's thought. This list includes Lester Ward (1906) on the science of society; the social action of settlement pioneers such as Jane Addams (1910); the concern of Mary Parker Follett (with whom he was later to collaborate)

with local democratic renewal (1918); and the explorations of Walter Rauschenbusch (1907) and others around the social gospel.

The flourishing of progressive thinking and organization, and Lindeman's thought in particular, has to be put in the context of the profound changes that were part of the North American experience in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the earlier part of the twentieth. Industrialization, technological advance, the move to the cities and immigration alongside the ideological and religious shifts associated with Darwinism and other developments had a powerful impact. Lindeman's response to these forces shares much with other Progressives such as Dewey, Follett and Addams as they made sense of the movement from 'the small town to the great community' (Quandt 1970). Education was seen as a key lever in and component of, social change.

The making of *The Meaning of Adult Education*

By the time that Lindeman sat down to write *The Meaning of Adult Education* in the mid months of 1926, he had worked as an educator in a variety of settings with young people and adults. He had also found a reasonably convivial academic home at the New York School of Social Work; moved into a large family house, Greystones, in High Bridge, New Jersey (purchased with the financial help of Dorothy Elmhirst - who was one of the founders of the New School for Social Research, New York and in 1926 established Dartington Hall with her husband Leonard - see Young 1982); and had become involved with Herbert Croly and the progressive journal *The New Republic.* He had written some articles on adult education and had already published books on community organization (1921) and groups (1924). There had been some significant development in the formulation of adult education theory and practice, especially in Britain. Perhaps the most visible and significant expression of this was *The 1919 Report* (Ministry of Reconstruction 1919). There was also a growing literature that reflected on contemporary developments (e.g. Mansbridge 1920; Yeaxlee 1920, 1925). In the United States there had been considerable interest in the field of adult education by a select group of philanthropic institutions, the most significant of which was the Carnegie Corporation and a number of other writers were developing their understanding of the field (see, in particular, Martin 1926; Hart 1927).

The moment was right for Lindeman to set out his thinking. He had ideas in abundance that had been 'brewing for years' (Stewart 1987: 2). The ten chapters that constitute the book were written quickly and

buzzed with ideas. Nothing was rewritten. The result was an uneven and quirky book. His ideas, when taken separately, were hardly original. There were obvious gaps in, and issues with, his exposition of adult education (the most important being a failure to properly define or delineate what he meant by adult education). Yet as an act of synthesis and as a popular statement of core assumptions the book broke new ground. As Stewart (1987) has commented, 'As a social philosopher he largely facilitated, rather than invented, adult education theory'.

The Meaning of Adult Education

Lindeman's vision for education was not one bound by classrooms and formal curricula. It involved a concern for the educational possibilities of everyday life; non-vocational ideals; situations not subjects; and people's experience – and it is worth quoting at some length from the opening chapter of the book.

> *A fresh hope is astir. From many quarters comes the call to a new kind of education with its initial assumption affirming that education is life - not merely preparation for an unknown kind of future living. Consequently all static concepts of education which relegate the learning process to the period of youth are abandoned. The whole of life is learning, therefore education can have no endings. This new venture is called adult education not because it is confined to adults but because adulthood, maturity, defines its limits...*

> *Secondly, education conceived as a process coterminous with life revolves about non-vocational ideals. In this world of specialists every one will of necessity learn to do his work, and if education of any variety can assist in this and in the further end of helping the worker to see the meaning of his labor, it will be education of a high order. But adult education more accurately defined begins where vocational education leaves off. Its purpose is to put meaning into the whole of life.*

> *Thirdly, the approach to adult education will be via the route of situations, not subjects. Our academic system has grown in reverse order; subjects and teachers constitute the starting-point, students are secondary. In conventional education the student is required to adjust himself to an established curriculum; in adult education the curriculum is built around the student's needs and interests. Every adult person finds himself in specific situations with respect to his work, his recreation, his family-life, his community-life et*

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cetera - situations which call for adjustments. Adult education begins at this point. Subject matter is brought into the situation, is put to work, when needed. Texts and teachers play a new and secondary rôle in this type of education; they must give way to the primary importance of the learner... The situation-approach to education means that the learning process is at the outset given a setting of reality. Intelligence performs its functions in relation to actualities, not abstractions.

*In the fourth place, the resource of highest value in adult education is the **learner's experience**. If education is life, then life is also education. Too much of learning consists of vicarious substitution of some one else's experience and knowledge. Psychology is teaching us, however, that we learn what we do, and that therefore all genuine education will keep doing and thinking together.*

Authoritative teaching, examinations which preclude original thinking, rigid pedagogical formulae - all of these have no place in adult education. 'Friends educating each other' says Yeaxlee, and perhaps Walt Whitman saw accurately with his fervent democratic vision what the new educational experiment implied when he wrote: 'learn from the simple - teach the wise'. Small groups of aspiring adults who desire to keep their minds fresh and vigorous; who begin to learn by confronting pertinent situations; who dig down into the reservoirs of their experience before resorting to texts and secondary facts; who are led in the discussion by teachers who are also searchers after wisdom and not oracles: this constitutes the setting for adult education, the modern quest for life's meaning. (Lindeman 1926a: 4-7)

Lindeman also added a strong commitment to progressive social action to these qualities. In a later article he provides us with a compelling picture of a committed and action-oriented form of education. It:

is not formal, not conventional, not designed merely for the purpose of cultivating skills, but... something which relates [people] definitely to their community... It has for one of its purposes the improvement of methods of social action... We are people who want change but we want it to be rational, understood. (Lindeman 1951b: 129-130)

In Dewey's (1916) terms this is education that enables people to share in a common life. It also looked for a critical understanding of experiences

and situations. Eduard C. Lindeman saw the potential of collaborative and informal educational processes for people to question taken-for-granted ideas, beliefs, values and behaviours.

Process and method

Lindeman wasn't writing about these matters in abstraction. He had a concern for *praxis*. His early work looked to the process of youth organization and to group work. Such questions of process remained a concern of his in his writing. Working in small groups was central to his understanding of a worthwhile education - indeed it can be argued that the use of small group discussion was a central element in his characterization of the process of adult education. Lindeman was deeply critical of the extent to which a preoccupation with the content of education overbalanced pedagogical thought.

> *Adult education, happily requires neither entrance nor exit examinations. Adult learners attend classes voluntarily and they leave whenever the teaching falls below the standard of interest. What they learn converges upon life, not upon commencement and diploma. The external tokens of learning are removed so that the learning process may stand or fall on its intrinsic merits... And because adult education is free from the yoke of the subject-tradition, its builders are able to experiment boldly even in the sacrosanct sphere of pedagogical method. Indeed, if adult education is to produce a difference of quality in the use of intelligence, its promoters will do well to devote their major concern to method and not content. (Lindeman 1926a: 114)*

The danger here is of overbalancing in the other direction – but Lindeman's conclusion here can be understood within his overall concern with the development of critical and analytical thinking and action. 'Education is a method', he wrote, 'for giving situations a setting, for analyzing complex wholes into manageable, understandable parts, and a method which points out the path of action which, if followed, will bring the circumstance within the area of experiment' (Lindeman 1926a: 115).

Curriculum

Thus far we have reviewed the assumptions that Lindeman saw as underpinning adult education, and the significance and distinctiveness of small group discussion in terms of its method. It is also necessary, when examining his contribution, to attend to what he had to say about the curriculum for adult education. Lindeman, as we have seen, was

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concerned about an over-focus on subject within schooling and formal education. There are, however, particular themes that appeared in his work. He was concerned with cultivating individual freedom - but with due regard for the needs of others. 'We live in freedom', he wrote, 'when we are conscious of a degree of self-direction proportionate to our capacities' (Lindeman 1926a: 50). He also looked to the fostering of collective, democratic action, diversity and difference, and the educative potential of associational life.

> *Adult education specifically aims to train individuals for a more fruitful participation in those smaller collective units which do so much to mould significant experience. (Lindeman 1926a: 38)*

> *Our personalities can be redeemed if we insist upon a proper share in the solution of problems which specifically concern us. This means giving more attention to small groups; it means as much decentralization, diversity and local autonomy as is consistent with order. Indeed, we may well sacrifice order, if enforced externally, for valid difference. Our hopes flow from the simple conviction that diversity is more likely to make life interesting than is conformity, and from the further conviction that active participation in interesting affairs furnishes proper stimulations for intellectual growth. (Lindeman 1926a: 89)*

> *Orthodox education may be a preparation for life but adult education is an agitating instrumentality for changing life. Institutions, groups and organizations come within the scope of continuing, advancing learning insofar as these collective agencies furnish the medium for educational experience. (Lindeman 1926a: 105)*

As Brookfield (1987: 22) has commented, time and again Lindeman argued that both through practical necessity and moral imperative, adult education was a social effort. It was central to the health and maintenance of democracy (Stewart 1987: 171).

Conclusion

Lindeman's vision for adult education was sweeping and uplifting. He identified what he believed to be central assumptions. In doing this he was seeking to assert what he was later to describe as an 'organic' conception of adult education. He wanted to counter the 'mechanistic' school (familiar to us today as the central and dominant paradigm in educational policy and practice). Essentially concerned with the extension and development of existing schooling forms for instrumental ends, such approaches

were, in Lindeman's view naïve, narrow and static (Brookfield 1987: 5). The emphasis on the exploration of situations and experience could have been drawn straight out of Dewey (1910; 1916; 1925).

In his search for a fresh understanding of adult education Lindeman avoided presenting us with a tight definition. He considered that it might be too constraining for enquiry – a position he held throughout the rest of his life. However, we can get a glimpse of his thinking in a paper also written in 1926 where he describes adult education as:

> *A cooperative venture in non-authoritarian, informal learning, the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience; a quest of the mind which digs down to the roots of the preconceptions which formulate our conduct; a technique of learning for adults which makes education coterminous with life and hence elevates living itself to the level of adventurous experiment. (Lindeman 1926b quoted by Stewart 1987: 12-13)*

At one point he was to describe this orientation as 'andragogical' (in a paper written with Martha Anderson and published in 1927). This appears to be the first English-language use of the term (see Stewart 1987: 108-9).

There was a downside to this 'looseness' and the speed with which the book was written. There are some infuriating lacunae and inconsistencies and here I just want to comment on two. First, just what did Lindeman mean when he argued that 'education is life'? As we have seen, Lindeman wanted to reject the notion that education is preparation for life – something that occurs at a particular stage. It arises when people engage with life's situations and is enriched when encouraged and nurtured. But is education life? It might be more accurate to say that education is a process coterminous with all of life rather than it is life (Stewart 1987: 111). Further, while Lindeman offers the promise of a different approach to adult education – one whose limits are set by notions of adulthood rather than age stage – he then retreats back from this by confining attention to the education of adults. He, thus, failed to open up the exploration as a continuing, consistent and lifelong process. It was left to Yeaxlee a couple of years later to take the first steps in this direction.

Second, while it is important to understand education as being fundamentally about furthering human flourishing, and the disposition and ability to live life well, there is a danger in setting 'vocational' against 'adult' education.

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Given the highly instrumental and narrowly economic concerns that drive much policy – then as now – it is not surprising that Lindeman sought to champion the non-vocational. However, a more interesting course in many respects would have been to draw on writers like John Ruskin to question dominant notions of the vocational and to explore how it could be approached in a more uplifting and compatible way.

Eduard C. Lindeman provided us with a powerful account of what is involved in educational activity that looks to enhance human flourishing and to help people to live life well. It is a vision that shares much with later writers like Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire (although there is no direct line between him and them). His work fed straight into the thinking of central figures in adult education such as Malcolm Knowles (see, for example his [1950] book on adult informal education, or his exploration of andragogy [1970; 1980]). Indeed, Knowles regarded Lindeman as his mentor. As for the claim that *The Meaning of Adult Education* can be viewed as a youth work classic, just remember Lindeman's background and context, and substitute 'youth work' for 'adult education' in his assumptions:

1   *Youth work is a process coterminous with all life – not a mere preparation for an unknown kind of living.*

2   *youth work revolves around non-vocational ideals.*

3   *the approach to youth work shall be via the route of situations, not subjects; and*

4   *the resource of the highest value in youth work is the learner's experience.*

Then add in his concern to look to small, decentralized institutions and local relationships; his commitment to both individual freedom and democracy; his interest in discussion and dialogue; and his orientation to social action and the picture is nearly complete. In many respects, Lindeman's vision for adult education is close to Josephine Macalister Brew's view of youth work (1943) and informal education (1946).

The Meaning of Adult Education is one of those books that you want to press into people's hands. 'Read this', you might say to the current crop of English and Welsh youth services policymakers and managers, 'think "youth work" and you might understand what the work is actually about'. However, from the evidence of their activities they have neither the imagination nor the heart to grasp what is being said. Consumed by the language of delivery and targets, focused on curriculum and content,

and bought-off by the promise of funding they have sacrificed both young people's fundamental interests and given into an anti-democratic centralism. Sadly, many workers have also fallen prey to the same dynamics. Luckily hegemony is never complete and, as Lindeman (1926a: 8, 9) argues it will be the case that some will come to reject the 'orthodox and regulated methods'. For they 'want to count for something; they want their experiences to be vivid and meaningful; they want their talents to be utilized; they want to know beauty and joy; and they want all of these realizations of their total personalities to be shared in communities of fellowship'.

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Note

The first chapter of *The Meaning of Adult Education* plus links to articles and other support materials concerning Eduard C. Lindeman can be found in the encyclopaedia of informal education: *www.infed.org/features/lindeman.htm*

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Keith Cranwell

These two books of essays and case studies begin with statements that emphasise the fact that nearly 50% of the world's young people are living in urban areas and that on current projections this will rise to 60% by 2025. The papers in both volumes seek to explore the effects on children's lives of having more children living in urban centres than in rural areas and to question why, despite soon being in a majority, they are marginalized by society. Authors in both books illustrate areas of children's lives that help us to understand how they think about their environment and how they construct ways of dealing with both the normal everyday experiences of young people in the developed world and the extreme issues of third world poverty. In *Youth in Cities* the concern is to evaluate the effectiveness of community development programmes as a means to ameliorate deprivation and remove barriers that affect a child's social development. In *Children in the City* the main thrust of the chapters is to recount research relating to how children socially construct a view of the world and what implications this has for promoting policies to improve cities for children in the developed world.

The international focus of the two volumes draws attention to the way we research the problems of poverty, homelessness, health, childhood and transport in a world where there is a widening gulf between rich and poor countries. A gulf that profoundly impacts upon young people's relationships with adults, their families and the immediate neighbourhoods in which they reside. The cases studies and literature reviews in these two collections provide a wide-ranging commentary on the issues facing children and young people in the city, a wealth of ideas as to how, in different countries,

they are tackling these problems and the theoretical concepts that are informing practice. Each publication raises pertinent questions that may inform the way that we develop policy and practice in the UK. Equally, as examples of international research, each adds to our knowledge of comparative research into young people.

The contributions to *Children in the City* are predominately based on the social constructionist theory of childhood and attempt to understand how children use and experience the urban environment differently to adults. *Youth in Cities* is concerned to research the impact of change and city life on young people's behaviour from a developmental psychologist's perspective. The concerns of *Youth in Cities* are to understand the influence that social mobility and growth of cities has on behaviour and examine what policies and strategies promote effective support systems to manage the risks to children living with the consequences of rapid global urbanisation. Despite the differences of methods between the two collections, they share a view of children and young people that identifies them as actors capable of being a force for change. The case studies in both books try to maintain a balance between theory and practice, to ground discussions in concrete examples that reach out beyond the country from which they have originated. The strength of the case studies in both collections is that they show how ideas are applied to real situations and the nature of the projects they describe for promoting social education will be familiar to most youth and community workers. Where the writers describe everyday circumstances of children's lives the research methodologies suggest how, through simple adaptation new approaches might be adopted to broaden the educational and curriculum processes. In addition, the two works contribute to the study of children and young people as marginalized groups in society and suggest that the treatment of children acts as a barometer for the humanity of the whole society.

Children in the City is part of the *Future of Childhood* series and the papers included in the book develop the perspectives of earlier works. The research papers in *Children in the City* concentrate on children from the developed world. The one chapter that is drawn from a developing nation is an oral history study from the early twentieth century Dutch West Indies by Karen Fog Olwig. This is an investigation of the practice of removing children from their rural family homes to live as domestic servants with families in a town. A study of a complex set of economic, social and cultural relationships that is very different to the rest of the material in the

book. *Children in the City* explores the 'dynamic of everyday life' through understanding what the street represents in term of place identity or how school organisation structures the child's use of the city. Throughout the book the concern is to create methodological frameworks that make our research more sensitive to children so that our listening and hearing of children's voices is more acute to enable actions to be connected with children's understanding of the environment. This collection of research papers challenges the reader to examine different methodological approaches by drawing on data from children's life stories, drawings, photos and diaries to help promote research that can cross the divisions between qualitative and quantitative methods to widen our perception of children's lives in urban landscapes. The research case studies ask us to question the current paradigms of social science and social planning to incorporate the child's voice into our understanding of the world.

Youth in Cities is the outcome of a conference sponsored by the Jacobs Foundation and is the first in their series on Adolescence. The book is arranged into five sections. In the first section the two editors identify the consequences for children's development of the mass social transformation that changing from rural to urban environments has created. In their view young people have been 'disoriented from their developmental tasks' and require society to be able to provide structures that empower young people to overcome the effects deprivation has caused.

The second section identifies how youth can become a force for change. In this part the case study material from South Africa and America focuses on three projects that seek to move our thinking away from seeing young people's behaviour as a problem. Rather these projects begin by taking young people's observations as part of a consultation process that becomes the research for engaging youth in changing their behaviour patterns. It is this reluctance that stalls the development of progressive approaches to research that connect with practitioners.

The third and longest section takes a problem–centred view of urban youth experience looking at the way cities fail to provide the infrastructure to integrate youth into society. By examining a number of projects drawn from Germany, Brazil, Jordan and America the authors argue that unless the work also addresses the problems that reside in the power structure of the respective countries they are merely trying to make a situation more 'technically rational' for policy makers. They focus on the need to tackle

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the key issues of class division and neighbourhood segregation that are commonplace in cities across the world.

Section four looks at the issues of work, life skills and well-being. In this section the literature review of child labour offers ways to examine the question through a critical overview of the shortcomings of existing conceptualisations of the problem. In the paper on the Ugandan experience of social learning one is struck by the enormity of the task some developing countries face as they try to rebuild their society through their young people. The final section is a review by the editors of the main issues raised in the book and ends with a plea that investment in young people must be prioritised.

The developing/developed country dichotomy between the two works highlights the difference in perspective between these texts. Central to the thinking behind the papers in *Youth in Cities* is the importance of the UN Convention on Children's Rights (CRC) as the one treaty that gives hope that child poverty will be tackled in a holistic way. The CRC provides support to promote programmes that seek to deal with the issues of child labour, street children and access to education and is crucial to the empowerment of children whose economic and social situations marginalise them within developing countries. The developed nations' environmental framework of *Children in the City* means that their concern is primarily with the participation clauses of the CRC, which stress consultation with children and young people regarding the types of environment change that will sustain personal growth and development. The revival of Lynch's 1970s Growing up in Cities (GUIC) project in the 1990s as a UNESCO programme appears as a unifying model within both books. The GUIC indicators identify the conditions for a well-regulated community that accommodates data that can be measured qualitatively, such as clean water and the qualitative issues of urban neighbourhoods as identified by the young people. The use of these indicators facilitate cross-national comparisons for addressing the developmental issues of well-being that are central to the issues in *Youth in Cities* and the social constructionist approach in *Children in the City* to a child's sense of place that is the basis for a change agenda to make cities more child-friendly.

Both the books challenge us to think cross-nationally and reconsider approaches to youth in our own society. To illustrate this I have sought to look in-depth at three essays from both books to show where there are

areas of common agreement or that the papers appear to compliment each other. In *Youth in Cities* Mamphela Ramphele's paper asks us to look at commonalities and differences between cultures, not from the perspective of western or non-Western societies but to seek them historically and to consider that issues of social class are of greater importance than differences of geography. Ramphele asserts that in societies where young people feel abandoned and their futures uncertain they accept risk as a matter of fate rather than choice. The greater the opportunity given to youth to manage and control the condition under which they live, the more space the young person has to engage with new knowledge and take on innovations that may change their lives. This theme of risk management is extended in Swart-Kruger and Chawla's paper, in the same volume, which evaluates two initiatives financed through Nelson Mandela's Children's Fund. These projects seek to improve the life chances of street children in South Africa through social education programmes and community development strategies that engage the young people in meaningful learning activities. The street children subjects of these programmes have conventional aspirations but to survive have become locked into destructive relationships in gangs.

The extreme problems of street children may be far removed from the street experiences of UK youth but the different definitions of the way the street expresses identity that arise in *Children in the City* provide an alternative vision of the place it has in young people's lives. Hugh Matthew's discussion of the street as a liminal space offers a view of the street as an area of contested space for young people who use it as a site of identity. Through Matthews micro-analysis of young people's use of the street he presents a theoretical framework that aids understanding of how young people in the East Midlands use ownership of the place as a rite of passage from leaving childhood to assert their sense of themselves as 'nearly adult'.

Children in the City examines the connection between children and young people's lives, their identity and the places they daily inhabit. Where *Youth in Cities* concentrates on the issues of poverty and the way cities no longer produce the conditions for social cohesion *Children in the City* investigates how a child gains knowledge about where they live and the stories that they associate with these places. In *Youth in Cities*, the urban landscape is full of negative expectations about the future that do not offer the conditions for them to complete their socialisation. Conditions that deny them access to a stable society within the city and the prospects of employment.

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Between *Youth in Cities* and *Children in the City* we have two conceptions of children and young people and also two views of the city. Swart–Kruger and Chawla's paper in *Youth in Cities* (p. 34) provides an insight into this problem when they look at the two liberal traditions of rights of Hobbes and Locke. The Hobbesian, individualistic materialist tradition appears to underpin the rationale for support of children and young people from the case studies in *Youth in Cities*. The models of research in *Children in the City* appears to be closer to an analysis derived from Locke that suggests the social construction of childhood and its relationship to place acknowledge the moral justification for children's access to rights in society on a more equal footing.

In *Youth in Cities* the research papers analyse the structures that affect children and young people's access to the conditions that provide for their well-being as developmental issues. Robert White's overview of crime and delinquency illustrates this. His analysis proceeds from looking at the trends in youth crime to an explanation of youthful offending and then sets these in their wider social structure. In *Children in the City* the papers by Morrow and Barraldi on engaging children in participation in neighbourhood planning are examples of the way that enabling children to participate in such exercises shows that they can apply rights that were once considered to be an adult province.

In trying to address two wide-ranging and diverse collections on the topic of children and young people in the city, it is clear that many important points from individual papers will have been overlooked. In an attempt to address issues that show similarity of approach it is clear that some of the original ideas for applying new research techniques that use photos (Kim Rasmussen and Sove Smidt), decision-making diaries (Helga Zeiher), and narrative techniques (Gunnar Hallden) have not been examined from the *Children in the City* collection. Also there are some intriguing insights into the issues concerning space, time and class contained within Hallden's study of how German children structure their out-of-school time. This will be of great interest to those working in authorities who already, or are considering, finishing formal schooling at 14.00hrs and then offering extended school programmes during the remainder of the afternoon.

From the *Youth in City* collection, Heitmeyer's study of the issues of residential segregation in German towns involving migrant workers, raises important questions about our understanding inter-ethnic conflict in cities. The paper by Rhodes et al on social learning programmes in a Jordanian refugee

ghetto and an urban village address issues of adjustment of immigrant populations living between the worlds of tradition and authority and the modern world that requires flexibility and change. McKechnie and Hobbs review of child labour and child work provides an overview of a complex subject, which interrogates some awkward issues that defy simplistic answers. Also there is the intriguing analysis of an American public health approach to combating violence by Prothrow-Stith that provides some interesting ideas for the promotion of inter-agency work in an area which one associates with the justice system.

Both collections have merits that commend them. *Youth in the City* is challenging because it requires practitioners to examine how they might cope with youth work in the most extreme of conditions. *Children in the City* is far more sociological in orientation and asks us, as researchers, to be more imaginative in the methods we employ to study children and to see the world through young people's eyes. The ability to use research that includes children as actors can support actions that incorporate them in making the future rather than socially engineering their futures without their views. Both these books will help policymakers to listen to children, hear what they say and act responsively to meet their needs.

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Reference
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Barry Goldson, Michael Lavalette and Jim McKechnie (eds)
Children, Welfare and the State
Sage Publications, 2002
ISBN 07619 72331
£17.99 (pbk)
pp 224

<div align="right">

Jayne Clough

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Reading *Children, Welfare and the State* is an enjoyable and enlightening experience. The authors aim to cover a range of issues and topics affecting children and young people using historical examples, sociological perspectives and a comprehensive critique of government policy. They succeed in this, producing a well-grounded and concise collection.

The book is targeted at undergraduates and provides the required academic background without over theorising. The subject areas covered include the sociology of childhood, researching childhood, education, crime, child abuse and child protection. Themes that are consistently present throughout are inequality, social class and the rights of children. The clear layout makes it easy to navigate, providing information on the impact of psychology, definitions and different cultural experiences of childhood. The different contributors share an accessible writing style, which easily engages the reader.

Particularly strong chapters include Maitles analysis of inequalities in schools. The issues of class size, attainment and increased pressures on schools and teachers are explored alongside the government's fixation with league tables and labeling schools as 'failing' or 'poor'. His critical conclusion that the education gap will follow the wealth gap is well presented. Similarly Stack and McKechnie are convincing in their arguments for children and young people's employment rights, which are inadequate under current legislation.

The effects of inequality are particularly well documented by Jones, who presents examples of repetitive and unrewarding training schemes and the problems facing damaged young people. Jones presents a scathing analysis of current government policy, suggesting it is 'Diverting attention to so called "failing" schools, local education authorities, social services departments, teachers, doctors and so forth as if these were the problem' (p.117). The subsequent chapter on crime and young people by Goldson provides a fascinating look at the history of juvenile crime in this country. As a useful reminder of how fixed much of our thinking is in this area it

quotes the main causes listed in a 1816 report by the Society for Investigating the Alarming Increase of Juvenile Delinquency in the Metropolis as: 'The improper conduct of parents, children's educational deficits, the lack of suitable employment opportunities for children and the over severity of the criminal code' (p.122).

Parent and young person rights are again brought to attention in Corby's chapter on child abuse and child protection. The excellent background definitions of abuse and examples of high profile cases (Cleveland and the Orkney Islands) explain some of the issues faced by child protection agencies when trying to support families and avoid the hysterical attitude employed by the media during these cases.

The range of up to date material makes the book a great resource for students and professionals looking for a comprehensive sociological outline of the study of childhood. The critical analysis presented by the authors aims to challenge and encourage further thinking from the reader. This is successfully achieved.

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Fred Gray (ed)
Landscapes of Learning: Lifelong Learning in Rural Communities
NIACE Leicester, 2002
ISBN 1 86201 093 5
pp 194

Bob Payne

This publication is to be welcomed by all with any concern for lifelong learning in rural areas. *Landscapes for Learning* begins to plug a gap not only in the literature but also in the sharing of effective practice. It provides a contextual framework for practitioners – yet, in the final analysis, the reader is left with the unsatisfactory feeling that this is an incomplete work and that it fails to give due recognition to a number of important strands which are the real and living stuff of lifelong learning in rural settings.

Its starting point – obvious but necessary to state – is that lifelong learning in rural communities is a neglected but important subject. This is certainly

true, but the question needs to be asked about why this should be the case. Has no-one been looking or is it that no-one cares? In a parallel line of study – work with young people and young adults – there is a rich vein of material in understanding and supporting the learning of young adults, thanks in no small measure to the work of Ray Fabes at De Montfort University in Leicester.

The book is in two parts. Part One – the more important and enlightening section – provides an overview and a contextual framework through four studies:

Gray, the editor, has written a clear and helpful introduction that offers an exploration of the book's key themes. It draws attention to the difficulties of defining 'the rural' without satisfying the reader's curiosity, and might usefully have drawn on the extensive discussions about the nature of 'rurality' in youth work literature. Nonetheless the overview provides a more than useful map for the inquisitive reader.

Ian Davidson's chapter 'Rural society, social change and continuing education: from Wild Wales to the Aga Saga' I found both illuminating and challenging. It is essentially a series of reflections on the rural scene and the role of continuing education in this context – but it also succeeds in making links with the wider world and seeks to locate thinking about rural issues in a global frame of reference.

'Social exclusion and lifelong learning in rural areas' by Peter Ryley provides an important political perspective, setting New Labour's policy objective of a learning society against the backcloth of the impact of Foot and Mouth Disease, the protests in 2000 about fuel prices, and the activities of the Countryside Alliance. It also draws attention to the significant changes that are taking place in the countryside and locates them in a political context. As so often, though, in attempting to draw up some kind of balance sheet of rural loss, it gives insufficient attention to the high costs of building rural infrastructure, whether physical structures or personal services. Nonetheless for me this is the best critique so far of what have proved to be key events in New Labour's unhappy relationship with rural communities.

The fourth study, as its name implies, 'Rural adult education in Britain: a historical survey' by William R Jones, provides an overview of rural adult education from a historical perspective. This account pays due respect to all the early pioneering movements up to the Second World War, providing some fascinating insights along the way. The coverage of the last fifty

years, however, while drawing attention to the declining interest in the countryside and the more urgent focus on urban matters, does little justice to the work of Local Education Authorities. While passing reference is made to their provision, the work of Ray Flude and colleagues in North-east Leicestershire – as one example – goes unacknowledged despite his 1980s FEU publication *Education and Training in a Rural Area*. Other rural local authority adult education services could also provide examples of unsung developmental work.

Part Two consists of a series of case studies. Their geographical spread runs from Wales to the Fenlands and from Scotland through North Yorkshire to Devon and Cornwall. They are all highly readable and provide descriptions and analyses of varied and effective projects. They range from adult guidance and adult learning in Wales to science in East Anglia, to a third-age rural learners' project in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. An oral history project flourished in the Cambridgeshire Fens while a widening participation project was developed on the North Yorkshire Moors. Three projects focused specifically on forms of distance learning – in Devon, in the Highlands and Islands, and in Shropshire.

All, however, are examples of University initiatives. Where are the examples of successful rural projects by other providers? The funding arriving in the sector from the FEFC, and subsequently from the LSC, has not all been directed towards urban deprivation. What we need now is a worm's eye view to complement the view from the ivory tower. We would learn about the many small-scale local projects carried out by LEAs, the FE sector – including Colleges of Agriculture – the WEA and other voluntary organisations. We would learn about District Councils and their local community strategies that increasingly make reference to lifelong learning, about Rural Community Councils and their support to village audits, and about the local initiatives of Councils of Voluntary Services. The re-generation of former industrial villages would feature alongside rural neighbourhood learning centres and computer buses. Informal learning would have its place alongside more structured programmes.

Landscapes of Learning is an excellent read for practitioners and rural organisations alike. An important contribution to our understanding of lifelong learning in a rural setting but it awaits a companion volume focussing on the work of those organisations that are less well endowed but have their noses closer to the good earth.

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REVIEWS

Carole Scott

This book, for me, was a difficult read. It was my problem, for it challenged my Weber-Cohen-Willis-Hobbsian sensibilities over the research methodology most appropriate for gaining an understanding of gang membership. However, considerably humbled by the academic calibre of its authors, such gremlins had to be beaten back.

The volume is co-authored and outlines an impressive 16-year investigation into gang membership in Rochester, New York. It was undertaken as part of the larger Rochester Youth Development Study of antisocial behaviour. It adopted a developmental life-course perspective following 1,000 adolescents, including gang members, through early adult years. It aimed to identify gang members' characteristics, examine the social and psychological forces that lead some adolescents to join a gang while others avoid it, and understand the consequences of gang membership for the developmental adjustment of gang members.

The illegal behaviour of youth gangs has been problematised by US researchers and policy makers since the 1930s. Gang members are responsible for a greater share of serious and violent delinquency, contributing to crime and youth violence, drug selling and gun carrying when they are actively involved with a gang. So, the research confronts what is a worrying social problem in the US, but also contributes to wider debates on youth affiliation and welfare policy.

The research is an exemplar of the scientific method with unique, long-term, application to the task. It also has implications for research design, challenging observational and other comparative methods for their ability to address life-course issue. Adopting a highly quantitative approach researchers compared motives, patterns of behaviour and recurring problems with caregivers, the law, education, peer relations and career paths. Findings indicated that multiple, serious 'developmental deficits' lead to gang

membership and that membership in turn leads to an increase in serious and violent delinquency with lingering problems thereafter

The authors, in claiming that altering behaviour of gang members is pivotal in reducing levels of delinquency and youth violence, recognise a conundrum in that results derived from the evaluation of gang programmes do not point to a way forward. In defending their policy rationale the authors highlight research that eschews suppression programmes, community organisation programmes, and gang outreach or detached worker programmes. These, they argue, actually solidify the gang and maintain gang delinquency.

The central policy recommendations are to use gang membership as a marker to identify new gang members and youths at elevated risk of involvement during their early-years education to help identify those requiring extensive, largely indirect, intercession in order to minimize their delinquency. By way of personal profiling they propose to steer adolescents into programmes that promote pro-social competencies. They warn that effectiveness will take time, resources and commitment, emphasising the importance of adopting only programmes with scientifically-demonstrated effectiveness, yet highlighting the dearth of 'independent evaluation'. Therefore they recommend that increased funding be allocated towards the evaluation of current and future programmes.

Arguably, the research is problematic. First, because a model which tried to pin down causal elements and their different contributions towards gang membership scientifically, including surveys and samples, statistical weighting and delinquency indices when, they hold, gang membership is largely 'fleeting, transient adolescent dalliance' (p.xvii) seems inappropriate. Second, I have worries about the policy implications of distilling such absolutes out of the 'lab' and into schools, for practitioners to apply rather than incorporate and interpret. Furthermore, it was odd that one 'structural antecedent', concerning the high prevalence of gang members with back-ground poverty and low self-esteem (also the more troublesome gangs emerged within low socio-economic neighbourhoods, with low educational outcomes and few prospects for legitimate employment) did seem to be hi-jacked by individual 'developmental deficits'.

One substantive concern relates to the ontological premises under-pinning the research, which reflect certainty of prediction in the early school years, and those implications for the very young child's sense of self-worth. 'Certainty' on paper, firstly in identifying causal factors - all of them - and thus being able to identify a child 'at risk' of joining gangs, make ensuing

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risks of official labelling by ill-equipped teachers and care-workers loom large. Threatening to sign the fate of many young people. This leads to my central concern, relating to the co-authors' desire to understand street-gang dynamics, encapsulated in the tone of their final statement - 'if we are to rid contemporary society of youth crime and violence'. It is research conducted within such simplistic and optimistic discourses aiming to influence educational policy programmes, that worries me most.

In support of the methods adopted the authors' claim, that substantive funding has been spent in 'non-scientific' research without tackling the problems of gangs and gang membership, is valid. However, arguably, there is less justification for privileging quantitative methodology, and looking for behavioural deficits, as the alternative when trying to explain chaotic outcomes. Rather, it seems to me that the research could contribute positively, within a complex rationale, that acknowledges the interaction of structure and individual and group agency, a debate positioning the 'antecedents' for gang membership as structural influences.

In terms of influencing school policy, what is problematic for practitioners is what constitutes a 'gang' and when is gang membership a social problem, and, here they must be informed by good research. The construction of self, and self-worth, develops in terms of 'other' and each other, and many young people form friendship groups – gangs – that do not present as troublesome. Perhaps these are a putative and experimental form of negotiating adult group membership. They are widely acknowledged to be, usually, temporary and transitory, forming, re-forming, evaporating – posing little threat. However, some young people do join anti-social groups, forming highly-organised and violent gangs. Practitioners do need to understand these better, for those gangs and membership of them disrupt normal life patterns, and, in a normative, qualification-obsessed economy, adolescents' life chances. This longitudinal study can make a valuable contribution by revealing enduring elements within the dynamics of the gang. However, it is the very diversity of gangs and gang membership that requires small-scale, observational, qualitative research. We need such research, particularity if we are to understand how a minority of gangs visibilise onto the streets as highly dangerous, providing a climate for serious delinquency and negative outcomes for gang members. Importantly, we might then better understand why most do not do so.

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P.C. Nolan (ed)
20 Years of *Youth & Policy:* A Retrospective
The National Youth Agency, 2003
ISBN 0 86155 283 0
£12.95 (pbk)
pp 297

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Gill Millar

Condensing 20 years of *Youth & Policy* into one volume was an ambitious idea. Since 1982, the journal has emerged quarterly, always containing at least four original articles pertaining in some way to debates on 'youth'. While the development of youth work has always been a major focus for the journal (it remains the most important site for critical debate in the field), it consistently includes contributions from authors from different academic and professional backgrounds, examining other aspects of the concept and construction of 'youth'. Nolan has selected twenty articles to represent both the spread of issues covered, and the development of theory and practice in youth work.

The editor acknowledges in the preamble that the selection process was difficult. Inevitably, regular readers will question the inclusion of some of the articles and the exclusion of others. Such a collection can only really be the outcome of individual choice, and Nolan is to be commended for the attempt to bring together the varied strands of study covered in *Youth & Policy*.

The articles are arranged chronologically, beginning in 1983 and, strangely, ending in 2000, so not quite the full twenty years. Two early contributions (Norman, 1983; Glover and Pickering, 1988) examine images of youth, usually young men, in postwar cinema and British fiction respectively. These articles reflect the influence of cultural studies on conceptualizing youth in the latter half of the 20th century. Critiques of the dominance of this approach in writing about youth are offered in three further articles (Rubinstein, 1992; Hall, 1995; Miles 1995). Rubinstein examines developments in arts work with young people, Hall explores conceptualizations of youth crime and their impact on policy, while Miles seeks the roots of young people's identities through consumer culture.

Several contributions focus on particular issues affecting young people's lives, drawing out themes for consideration by policy makers. These include arts/music (Rubinstein, 1992; Bennett, 1998); drug and alcohol use (Auld, Dorn and South, 1984; Merchant and MacDonald, 1994;

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Morgan, 1997); and consumerism (Miles, 1995). It is interesting to see the changes in the way these issues are conceptualized over the years, alongside changes in policy, particularly in the field of drugs and alcohol.

Roughly half the articles in the collection relate directly to the theory and practice of youth work. Jeffs and Smith (1989) provide a much-needed challenge to the focus on 'issues' as a basis for youth work, still relevant today. The emphasis on 'issues', they argue, can serve to trivialise and individualise fundamental social divisions, and potentially deflect attention from the need to theorise the process of youth work. The same authors follow this with an attempt to provide a clear framework for youth work as a means of informal education (1992). This useful article provides a summary of their joint and individual work on informal education and conversation as an educational tool in the late 1980s and 1990s.

The editorial marking the 10th anniversary of *Youth & Policy* (MacDonald, Banks and Hollands, 1993) reflects on the then current state of youth research, policy and work with young people. The views expressed reflect the politics of the time, when youth work, along with much of the public sector was under direct threat from privatisation policies and severely reduced funding. The field was then struggling to find a role, failing to reach agreement on a youth work curriculum, and retreating further to the fringes of public policy making and provision.

Contributions on youth work from the mid-1990s demonstrate a fragmented field, struggling to find an identity and riven with internal contradictions. Spence (1996) shows women workers moving away from a collective feminist identity to positions that they hope enable them to make space for girls' and young women's work within the established hierarchy. Banks (1996) attempts to locate youth work within a discourse of professionalism, and argues for a code of ethics. Millar (1995) explores the tensions of managing a service based on voluntarism, autonomy and participation. And Davies and Norton (1996) contribute to the debate on one of youth work's most divisive contradictions: the commitment to involve people in youth work from different backgrounds and at different levels, including voluntary and part-time, while developing and maintaining professional entry qualifications.

Since the turn of the century, youth work has been thrust, sometimes it appears, unwillingly, into the public eye. Government policies on tackling social exclusion increasingly see the concept of youth work, if not always the youth service, as having an important contribution to make to young people's inclusion in society and the economy. Sadly, the collection ends

in 2000, so little of the current debates on the new place for youth work within the panoply of young people's services are included.

Philip (2000) explores some of the implications in the current trend for individual mentoring as a means to keep young people engaged. Williamson and Middlemiss (1999) provide a somewhat pessimistic view of the effectiveness of community based provision in tackling long term and structural disaffection amongst young men. The book would have benefited from some more recent contributions to examine how youth work is responding to its new place in the sun.

I was surprised that no contributions were included that drew on the socio-geographical constructs of space and place. *Youth & Policy* has carried a number of articles in recent years that demonstrate how perceptions of public space and places often problematise young people's presence and use of space. This has direct implications for youth policy and youth work, and a contribution from this field would have added another dimension to the book.

These reservations aside, the book does succeed in demonstrating the range and quality of contributions to *Youth & Policy* over the last twenty years. While it is unlikely to become prescribed reading on youth and community courses, I hope it will encourage the casual reader to look further and become a regular *Y&P* reader for the next twenty years!

Gill Millar *is Regional Youth Work Adviser for South West England*

Steve Harrison

In recent years, there has been renewed interest in questions concerning the purpose of education and whose interests it serves. This rather short,

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but none the less insightful book, is a welcome contribution to such debates.

Erricker's starting point is a number of personal reflections on education. He describes how after three decades of being a teacher and parent, he came to a point; 'where my understanding of my place and role in society and my profession became seriously confused [...] My values no longer fitted within the context of the society in which I now found myself to be living but I could not work out exactly what went wrong'.

This new found perspective provided the catalyst for the subsequent examination of the rhetoric surrounding the value of learning and education in general.

Erricker divides his diagnosis of the present state of education into five parts. In the first chapter, he asks the question 'How did we get here?' His historical account identifies two main themes 'the rise of capitalism in the historical period proceeding from the industrial revolution' and 'a largely forgotten history of dissent proceeding from the period of the English Civil War'. In doing so Erricker sets himself an incredible task, regardless of the amount of space he actually gives over to it. What we are therefore left with is a rather potted account of both themes. However, Erricker does make good use of the material he has gathered especially in terms of the role moral sentiment has to play in the promotion of change whilst at the same time maintaining existing economic and societal inequalities. A feature of the rise of the industrial age and the development of capitalism is the growth of new technologies. Great promises are often made with the advent of new technologies. Promises that often have a liberatory air. However these often conceal or ignore the potential for them to be harnessed 'by those in power who seek to dominate rather than liberate'.

It is in this observation that we begin to identify the core of Erricker's argument about learning. This is, that learning should not be seen as intrinsically good, rather that learning has liberatory potential, yet it can also be harnessed to dominate and control.

Education, rather than being seen as a force for liberation (i.e. the eradication of social inequalities through a move toward greater individual liberty and democracy) can equally be understood as a process for maintaining the status quo. Therefore, the relationship between power and knowledge, education and learning, domination and liberation are never far below

the surface of the arguments within this book. In exploring these relationships the author seeks to expose the way in which one set of values are sought to be legitimated and promoted behind the rhetoric of another.

It is through this process that capitalism and democracy become intrinsically linked within the rhetoric behind the current system and this is the main undercurrent of the second chapter 'The Present State of Affairs'. Here Erricker argues that education has been harnessed to serve the free-market economy. He argues that ideas associating democracy with, for example, communitarian agendas, have been dismissed as 'outmoded' - a term he criticises for not being used so much to refer to 'time' but 'mode' or fashion, thus old fashioned is a pejorative requiring no further justification.

Erricker draws heavily from the work of Naomi Klein in furnishing us with examples of how the world of commerce is encroaching upon school life, particularly in the United States. How the relationships between schools and big business, through sponsorship or funding, gives rise to anti-democratic practice and the suppression of dissent.

The prevailing discourse surrounding current educational policy is one of 'modernisation'. To be against modernisation is to be a seen as a wrecker, Luddite or conservative. However particularly in the final two chapters - 'Political spirituality and the denial of "education" and 'The school: prison house of impoverished expectation' - Erricker seeks to evoke a spirit of dissent. In fact his stated aim is to restore 'the will to dissent'. In many ways, this will to dissent is equivalent to a 'rage against the machine'. To oppose the commodification of education, the success of conformity, the lack of ability to accommodate diversity and the myth of opportunity characterises Erricker's landscape. Sadly, for many this will ring true.

Within his conclusion, Erricker seems to offer little by way of a solution to the problems identified within this book. However seek and you shall find Erricker argues:

> *We must remember that our education system is designed to teach us how to observe or gaze on the world. To learn how to see it otherwise - to be critically aware and astute - and to confidently voice what we observe, is something we must learn to do for ourselves. (p. 69)*

The arguments contained within this book represent a critical assault on the ideas promoted to justify our education system (in its current state)

impact of offences upon the victim when working with the young person who has committed the offence. The intention of all these being to challenge the young person's perception of the consequences of their offending behaviour.

However, there is general acceptance amongst restorative justice practitioners that the purposes of the approach are to give victims a greater role in the youth justice system. To seek resolution or restitution about the impact that the offence has had upon the victim and offer the offender the opportunity 'to face up to' the consequences of their actions and move on.

In this study an intervention was classified as a Restorative Conference if a victim attended a face-to-face meeting with the young person who committed the offence and the event was facilitated by a police officer. If the victim choose not to attend, the meeting between young person and police officer was categorised as a Restorative Caution. In both interventions the police used 'scripted' formats. 1,915 (14 per cent) of the 13,980 interventions undertaken between 1998 and 2001 were Restorative Conferences and 12,065 (86 per cent) were Restorative Cautions.

The study is full of useful and detailed research and practice information but for the purposes of the review I will focus on three chapters. First, the second chapter that considers improving Restorative Cautioning via action research. Here the researchers highlight and comment on a key outcome of action research and changes to practice on the basis of the study. Hoyle, Young and Hill had produced an interim report following which some police facilitators reflected upon the findings and changed their style of intervention in order to improve their practice. Some, however, in the light of the same report opted to revert back to a stricter use of the script to avoid further criticism.

Chapter three relates to procedural fairness. An issue regarded by the police as a key component of their restorative justice approach. Although many victims and offenders felt they had been pressured into taking part, the majority expressed themselves satisfied with several components of the restorative process. For example in Restorative Conferencing 89 per cent of offenders and 94 per cent of victims said that they were treated fairly in the meeting. While 62 per cent of offenders and 71 per cent of victims felt their meeting had been well facilitated. Although the researchers went on to comment that if preparation work with victims and offenders had been of a higher quality victims and offenders might

have been more critical of police facilitation. For example one young person had not taken part in any preparation work before he was given a restorative caution when he turned up at his bail date.

Chapter 6 looks at the relationship between the quality of facilitation and satisfactory outcomes. Although for me the key learning was that the researchers appear to have established that stronger forms of restorative processes, such as Conferences, appear to produce better satisfactory outcomes than the weaker variant, cautions. The 'most restorative' process ,Restorative Conferences, is linked to higher rates of self - reported positive outcomes by offenders. 80 per cent of offenders involved in Restorative Conferences thought the process helped them to understand the effects of their behaviour upon victims. As opposed to 56 per cent of the offenders who participated in 'less restorative' Restorative Cautions. In respect of how well the meetings were facilitated, 71 per cent of offenders thought Restorative Conferences were well facilitated. Whereas only 54 per cent of offenders thought Restorative Cautions were. Hoyle, Young and Hill identify another interesting variable. Namely that the quality of process used by police facilitators, for example, 'sticking to the script' was also linked to positive outcomes paticulary if participants were well prepared before the restorative work took place.

All the chapters in this text provide a wealth of restorative justice and action research information to assist in the development of restorative justice practice and services. The study is written in a professional and accessible style. I would confidently recommend it to restorative justice practitioners, managers, researchers and students as an invaluable study.

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