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Focus on youth mentoring
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The National Youth Agency,
Eastgate House,
19-23 Humberstone Road,
Leicester LE5 3GJ.
Tel: 0116 242 7350
Fax: 0116 242 7444
E-mail: nya@nya.org.uk Website: www.nya.org.uk

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CN Proofreaders Tel: 0191 581 2427

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Contents



Youth & Policy
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Special issue on youth mentoring

- Introduction to the special issue on youth mentoring** 5
Kate Philip
- Youth Mentoring: Improving Programmes Through Research-Based Practice** 9
Jean E. Rhodes and Sarah Ryan Lowe
- Youth Mentoring – A Case for Treatment?** 17
Kate Philip
- Youth Mentoring and the Parent-Young Person Relationship:
Considerations for Research and Practice** 33
Pat Dolan, John Canavan and Bernadine Brady
- Understanding youth exclusion: critical moments, social networks
and social capital** 43
Tracy Shildrick and Robert MacDonald
- Obligatory friends, surrogate kin: some questions for mentoring** 55
Lynn Jamieson

Youth & Policy feature article

- Too Grand, Bland and Abstract: The limitations of ‘youth governance’
as an explanatory schema for contemporary governmental responses
to socially deviant young people** 67
John Pitts
- Reviews** 91

Contributors

Kate Philip, Rowan Group University of Aberdeen.

Jean Rhodes is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Sarah Ryan Lowe is at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Pat Dolan is Director of the Child and Family Research Centre, NUI, Galway and Senior Lecturer in the School of Political Science and Sociology.

John Canavan is Associate Director of the Child and Family Research Centre, NUI, Galway.

Bernadine Brady is a Researcher at the Child and Family Research Centre, NUI, Galway.

Tracy Shildrick is convenor of the Youth Research Group at the University of Teesside and Senior Lecturer in Youth Studies and Sociology.

Robert MacDonald is Professor of Sociology at the University of Teesside and teaches and researches about youth issues.

Lynn Jamieson is at the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, University of Edinburgh.

John Pitts University of Bedfordshire

Focus on youth mentoring

Abstracts from articles

Youth Mentoring: Improving Programmes Through Research-Based Practice

Jean E. Rhodes and Sarah Ryan Lowe

Despite growing interest in youth mentoring interventions, the base of evidence on which programme and policy decisions are made remains curiously thin. In this article, the evaluation literature is reviewed and areas that merit additional research are identified. Recent programme evaluations have shed important light onto some of the factors that increase the effectiveness of interventions. Nonetheless, few studies have delved into how variations in the characteristics of youth, mentors, relationships, and programmes affect outcomes. Greater collaboration between mentoring researchers and practitioners in the design and implementation of programmes and evaluations, and the deployment of a broader range of research methods, would result in a more nuanced understanding of this intervention strategy.

Youth Mentoring – A Case for Treatment

Kate Philip

This paper examines key themes and theoretical assumptions which underpin current UK youth mentoring practice. We argue that youth mentoring should be examined in relation to the wider issues of transition for young people. The current emphasis on individual mentoring relationships should be reviewed and refined. We draw on findings from recent research in the UK to explore the potential of different forms of youth mentoring. The paper concludes that there is a need to move away from static models of mentoring which, we argue, can obscure the potential to link mentoring approaches with the diverse needs of different groups of young people. We suggest that a focus on promoting 'mentor rich' environments may be a more fruitful direction for mentoring and contribute to the development of strategies for working with and not on young people.

Youth Mentoring and the Parent-Young Person Relationship: Considerations for Research and Practice

Pat Dolan, John Canavan and Bernadine Brady

Over recent years, youth mentoring has become increasingly popular as an intervention for young people deemed to be in need of support. There is a need, however, to pay attention to the potential impact of mentoring on the parent - youth relationship. Drawing on findings from two Irish studies of young people and parents attending youth projects, this article highlights considerations for research and practice in relation to mentoring and the parent - youth relationship.

Understanding youth exclusion: critical moments, social networks and social capital

Tracy Shildrick and Robert MacDonald

The paper reviews some key findings from research in North East England that was based on young people's accounts of growing up in poor neighbourhoods. The studies were neither

youth policy evaluations nor investigations of the potential of mentoring. In focussing, however, on the role of 'critical moments', social capital and social networks in shaping youth transitions, the paper highlights questions that are relevant to professional work with young people in the context of social exclusion. It identifies two examples of positive professional practice that assisted young adults in turning away from destructive lifestyles and transitions. It concludes, though, that even the proliferation of this sort of best practice would be unable to reverse the longer-term, deeper set processes of collective downward social mobility and economic marginalisation experienced by informants.

Obligatory friends, surrogate kin: some questions for mentoring

Lynn Jamieson

Many personal relationships involve an element of mentoring, albeit that they are often more than that and not reducible to mentoring. This article scrutinises current theorising of and research about friendship and kin relationships for messages for planned mentoring arrangements. Consideration is given to the difficulties of separating out caring for and caring about others and to the appropriateness and risks of likening mentoring to relationships of friendship and kinship.

Introduction to the special issue on youth mentoring

Kate Philip

In recent years, youth mentoring has become an element of youth policy in the UK, a development that few could have foreseen in the early nineteen nineties. The appeal of youth mentoring has run across diverse interests in statutory, voluntary and corporate sectors, an unusual feature for youth interventions. All of this has taken place in and reflects the realities of a fast changing policy environment. The enthusiasm of the current government and the resonance between the language of social inclusion and mentoring, has undoubtedly contributed to the high public profile. It is also clear that many young people who have participated in successful mentoring, have also valued the experience. However the spectacular growth of mentoring schemes across the country in recent years has led to a concern that enthusiasm for the idea has meant that implementation has outpaced research on the value of the concept. The evidence base for mentoring is generally agreed to be weak, with at best a set of very mixed findings and even some evidence that in some circumstances mentoring can be harmful. This demonstrates a pressing need for purposeful and careful analysis of the concept at research, policy and practice levels. As papers in this issue suggest, the term mentoring can hold very different meanings, the theoretical base is often unclear and the boundaries of the concept are equally contested.

For these reasons, a seminar series was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to bring together academics, policy makers and practitioners in the field of youth research to explore discourses around youth mentoring and to examine how these have been translated into policy initiatives with young people. The content of this special issue represents a selection of papers which are based on presentations and discussions at the four seminars and a two day symposium which comprised the series. These collaborative seminars were held in York, Manchester, Edinburgh and Aberdeen throughout 2006-2007. A critical approach was adopted with the aim of developing a sounder theoretical framework for the concept and for practice based on this model. In keeping with this the four seminars brought together researchers, policy makers and practitioners from UK, Ireland and the USA to explore mentoring in relation to the following topics:

- Mentoring in UK Youth and Social Policy
- Youth Mentoring and Social Capital
- Families, Relationships and Social Networks
- Resilience

At each seminar, papers were presented by key speakers and these formed the basis for discussion with the invited audience. A final two day symposium was held to draw together findings from these seminars and to explore how best to take these forward.

Findings from the seminar series suggested that one overarching 'grand' theory may be

elusive for this slippery concept and that there may be more value in examining how related concepts may contribute to better understanding of important themes. For example, how do we make sense of 'the journey travelled' by young people in relation to mentoring processes (Stein, 2007). Such questions have been largely overlooked in research, policy and practice until now. The complex and subtle processes that take place as young people grow up and the fluid and sometimes fleeting influences of strong intergenerational relationships in the lives of young people require detailed investigation, as Shildrick and Macdonald have undertaken in their paper.

The North American experience of youth mentoring has been particularly influential in relation to work in the UK context. However, the transfer of this experience from a setting with a very different tradition of youth work into the context of the UK where the infrastructure and practices of youth work have a strong and vibrant history, demands careful thought. Rhodes and Lowe give a clear and cogent outline of the promise and the challenges of researching mentoring from a North American perspective. The insights from this analysis are thought provoking not just in thinking about how best to take research and theory into practice but also about avoiding some of the pitfalls which have been encountered elsewhere. The use of large datasets and meta-analyses raise a number of overarching questions for youth research but in particular about the most appropriate methods for enhancing understanding of work with young people on this model. Dolan, Brady and Canavan explore how mentoring interacts with other relationships within the social networks of young people and specifically ask how relationships with parents are affected by mentoring. Their paper is based on their work with teenage youth groups and their involvement with the inception of Big Brothers, Big Sisters, a well established American mentoring agency into Ireland. Jamieson provides a theoretical overview on friendships and intimate relationships and explores how this relates to thinking around mentoring as an intervention setting out to supplement young people's social circle. She draws on sociological work which offers an alternative explanation to the concepts of resilience and attachment that are frequently used to underpin thinking on youth mentoring. Philip offers an overview of key themes and questions that have arisen in the development of a new body of mentoring research within the UK. This strand of research begins with the notion of the young person as an active participant in the processes of mentoring.

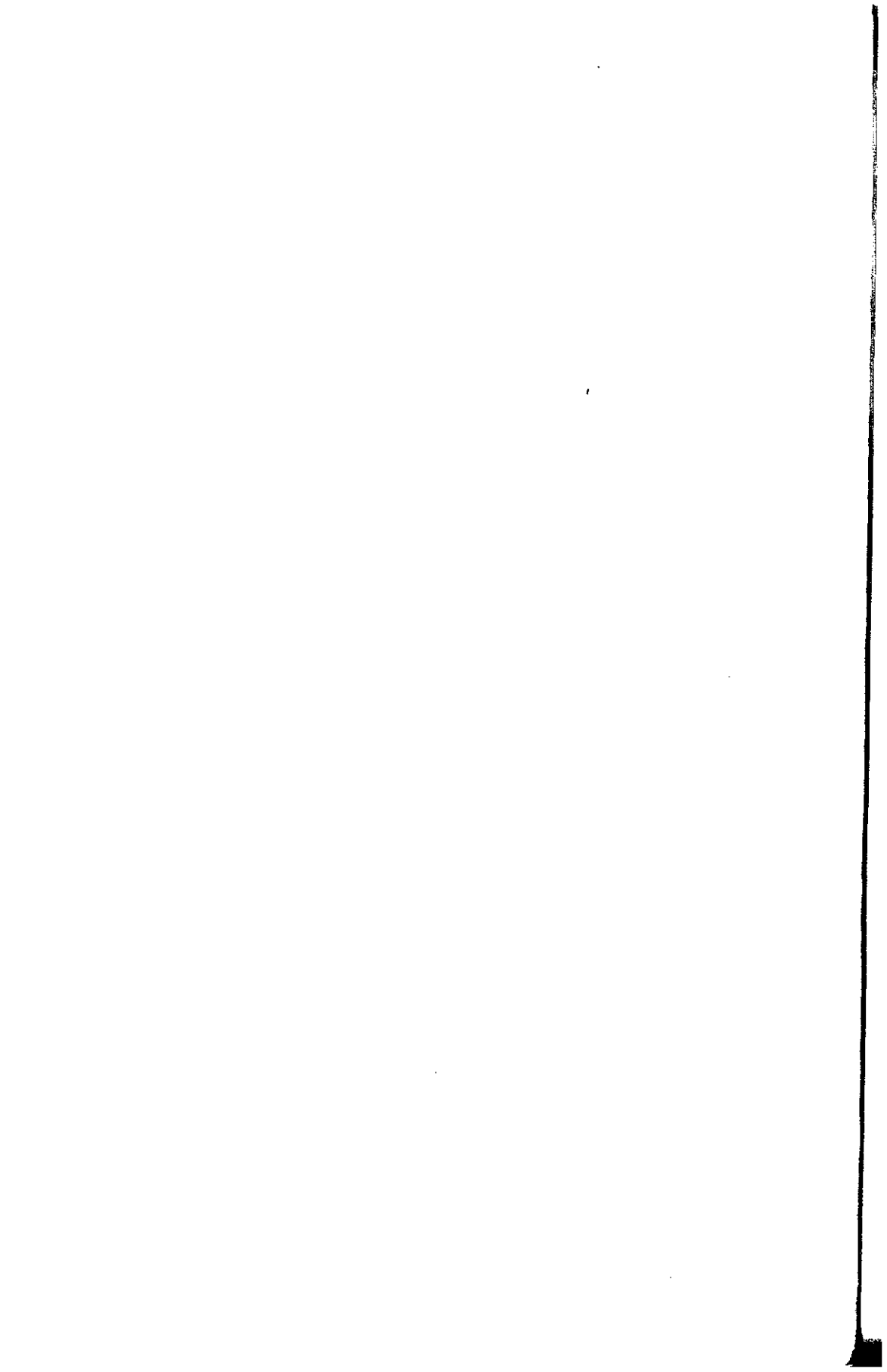
Clearly the papers presented here offer a partial account of the presentations and ensuing debates which took place in the seminar series and which form part of the wider discussions around mentoring in the UK. A large number of questions, many of which concern the aims, methods, assessment and reporting of mentoring have been raised and will form the basis for further investigation. These require examination in relation to wider structural constraints on the lives of young people and current discourses about youth.

A clear finding from the seminar series was the need for account to be taken of how mentoring as a process is already part of the 'toolkit' of many practitioners engaged in youth work, although this is not always made explicit. A more pressing question exists about how to match informal and organic processes of mentoring and those which are artificially engineered. Equally important is the need for rigorous examination of the processes of negative or failed mentoring and the impact of mentoring on the lives of young people over the long term. In turn this demands consideration of the most appropriate, robust and

ethical research designs for research in this field. Further information on the ESRC seminar series can be found on [www.http://abdn.ac.uk/rowangroup/activities](http://abdn.ac.uk/rowangroup/activities).

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Youth Mentoring: Improving Programmes Through Research-Based Practice

Jean E. Rhodes and Sarah Ryan Lowe

Despite growing interest in youth mentoring interventions, the base of evidence on which programme and policy decisions are made remains curiously thin. In this article, the evaluation literature is reviewed and areas that merit additional research are identified. Recent programme evaluations have shed important light onto some of the factors that increase the effectiveness of interventions. Nonetheless, few studies have delved into how variations in the characteristics of youth, mentors, relationships, and programmes affect outcomes. Greater collaboration between mentoring researchers and practitioners in design and implementation of programmes and evaluations, and the deployment of a broader range of research methods, would result in a more nuanced understanding of this intervention strategy.

Keywords: *youth mentoring programmes, evaluation, outcomes, relationships, research.*

Introduction

There is no shortage of information on the topic of youth mentoring. In addition to a growing number of academic books and peer-reviewed journals devoted to the topic, the sheer volume of articles and online reports is enough to numb even the most curious of minds. Yet despite this wealth of information, the base of evaluation findings on which policy and practical decisions rests remains curiously thin. Mentoring strikes deep emotional chords and has attracted powerful constituents who, at some level, look to evaluations to confirm what they intuitively hold to be true. As such, practitioners and policy makers tend to value pure and simple findings that can be used for action. Although it can be difficult to satisfy such appetites while remaining true to the evidence, a more nuanced message need not be the enemy of youth policy. A realistic calculation of what it takes to deliver high quality, effective youth mentoring could, in fact, lead to allocations for programme enrichments that would yield a higher return on investments. Effective (and cost-effective) solutions are in everyone's best interest and premature conclusions built on weak evidence can foster complacency and, ultimately, less effective interventions. So, what do we know about the efficacy of youth mentoring?

Mentoring Programme Evaluations

Evaluations of formal one-to-one mentoring programmes have provided evidence of their success at reducing rates of a range of problem behaviours, academic difficulties,

and psychological disturbances (DeWit et al., 2006; DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; Grossman & Tierney, 1998; Karcher, 2005; Keating, Tomashina, Foster, & Allesandri, 2002; LoSciuto et al., 1996; Portwood, Ayers, Kinnison, Waris, & Wise, 2005). Yet, such evidence is in relatively short supply. Evaluations vary in their ability to rule out confounds, and there exists a constant tension between the real and the ideal. The quality of experimental designs, as well as adherence to study procedures, can easily fall prey to the vicissitudes of meagre, short-term funding streams and glitches in programme implementation. And, when effects are found, their implications are not always clear. With a large enough sample, small effects can show statistical significance, whereas larger effects can be obscured by small samples. Moreover, important outcomes may go unmeasured, or remain undetectable within short intervals. Conversely, positive outcomes assessed immediately, or relatively shortly, after interventions may not persist over time. Other problems include unspecified programme inputs, heavy reliance on self-reports, the use of psychometrically unsound instruments, high attrition, absence of control or comparison groups, inconsistent sampling procedures, and the collection of data at a compressed or single time point. Additionally, a publication bias that favors the selection of studies with significant effects over those showing no effect makes it nearly impossible for practitioners to learn the lessons of unsuccessful programmes and can overstate benefits.

Even when well implemented, evaluations have not been particularly encouraging. Findings from the few evaluations that have been conducted since DuBois et al.'s (2002) meta-analysis do not suggest the strong effects that are central to arguments for investment in mentoring initiatives. In some instances, negative or no effects have been found (e.g., Blechman, et al., 2000), or effects erode to insignificance within only a few months of programme participation (Aseltine et al., 2000). In fact, only one mentoring programme, *Across Ages*, has achieved the status of "model programme" on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Registry of Evidence-based Programmes and Practices (NREPP), an online registry of independently reviewed and rated interventions.

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) was listed on this registry as an "effective programme," a designation that stemmed, in part, from the landmark study of their community-based mentoring programmes (Grossman & Tierney, 1998). The evaluators traced the experiences of youth given access to the programme, as well as a control group, over time. Several widely cited, statistically significant differences in behaviour and academic functioning between the mentored youth and the control group were uncovered after 18 months.

It is important to note, however, that statistical significance does not necessarily indicate practical significance and, in that regard, standardised effect sizes are considered a more useful metric of evaluation (Flay et al., 2005). In statistical terms, effect size represents the degree to which two groups differ (in this case, the mentored group versus the waiting list control group). Although there are no easy conventions for determining practical importance, Cohen's (1988) standards for interpreting effect sizes are as follows: an effect size value of 0.20 is a commonly used benchmark for a "small" effect, 0.50 for a "medium" effect, and 0.80 for a "large" effect. DuBois et al. (2002) calculated two different effect sizes from the BBBS community-based programme evaluation data: the magnitude of change over time (pre-programme versus post-programme estimates) and the post-programme difference between participants in the mentored versus the waiting list groups. These

effect-size estimates were quite small (.02 and .05, respectively), a finding that the authors characterized as "not necessarily consistent with the manner in which results of the large-scale evaluation frequently have been cited by the media as demonstrating a large impact for mentoring relationships" (DuBois et al., 2002, p. 177). Characterisations of the cost-benefit ratios that were derived from these data were also reported in optimistic terms. For instance, researchers recently noted that BBBS yielded a "net monetary benefit" (Aos et al., 2004, p. 131) when, in fact, the benefits exceeded costs by only the narrowest of margins when including both taxpayer and other costs (estimate of \$1.01 benefit for each \$1.00 of cost). When calculated only in terms of taxpayer cost (i.e., excluding volunteer and in-kind contributions), the benefit per dollar was \$3.28 (ibid., 2004).

A recent large randomized evaluation of BBBS's newer, school-based mentoring programme (in which interactions between youth and mentors typically are confined to the school setting and the one-year minimum commitment of mentors is shortened to the 9-month school year) also produced mixed findings (Herrera et al, 2007). At the end of the first school year, youth assigned to receive mentoring showed significant improvements in their academic performance, perceived scholastic efficacy, school misconduct, and attendance relative to a control group of non-mentored youth. These effects, however, were generally small in magnitude; the overall effect sizes for school-related outcomes was .09 and, for non-school related (e.g., behaviors, psychosocial), from .02 to .18. And, when youth were re-assessed a few months into the following school year, the significant findings had for the most part eroded to non-significance.

Despite these somewhat discouraging findings, the fact that mentoring programmes are able to attenuate problems across diverse programme approaches, relationships, and youth is laudable and gives grounds for cautious optimism about the viability of the mentoring interventions. In light of the vast diversity in the quality and duration that exists in the mentoring relationships, however, it would have been unrealistic to expect a relatively loosely structured social programme to produce dramatic, across-the-board reversals of the negative trajectories that are typical of adolescence. Indeed, matches vary considerably in their effectiveness, depending on the characteristics of the individuals involved and the quality of the relationships they form. In fact, when Grossman and Rhodes (2002) reanalyzed the BBBS community-based mentoring data taking the quality and length of relationships into account, wide variations in programme effects emerged. But when all relationships are combined, as was the case in the analyses conducted for national evaluations, positive outcomes are easily masked by the neutral and even negative outcomes associated with less effective mentoring relationships. The challenge is to identify those programme inputs that contribute to better outcomes.

A study that includes a systematic, up-to-date meta-analytic review of the current literature and a thorough test of the moderators would thus represent a significant contribution to the literature. Several well-designed evaluations of multiyear mentoring programmes are underway or completed which, when combined many other smaller evaluations that have been conducted in recent years, will provide a better sense of the mediating variables and their association with outcomes. The inclusion of these additional studies will help practitioners and policy-makers to establish more realistic goals and expectations concerning programme scale, intensity, length and outcomes. At this point, as unsatisfying as it may

sound, Roberts et al.'s (2004) conclusion that, robust research does indicate benefits from mentoring for some young people, for some programmes, in some circumstances, in relation to some outcomes, is probably the closest to a "bottom line" on mentoring that can be reached.

Future Directions

To guide youth policy and practice, additional research on the theory, practice, and effectiveness of youth mentoring is urgently needed. To this end, several recommendations can be made.

Adhere to Established Standards of Evidence

Mentoring fits within the broader field of prevention science and, as such, should more directly align itself with the field's standards of evidence. In particular, prevention scientists have developed a set of criteria for evaluating prevention programmes and policies (Flay et al., 2005). The criteria involve first establishing and conducting rigorous trials, similar to those that have been completed (Herrera et al., 2007) or are underway (Bernstein & Hunt, in progress; Brock, in progress; DeWit et al., in press), and showing "consistent positive effects (without serious iatrogenic effects) and reported at least significant long-term effects." Although the jury is still out regarding the latter stipulations, the new crop of high quality evaluations are likely to significantly advance the field. Assuming effectiveness, however, the report suggests that the interventions meet several additional criteria. This includes having manuals, training, and technical support, evidence of the ability to "go to scale," clear cost information, and monitoring and evaluation tools so that effectiveness can be tested in various settings. The field of mentoring has made notable strides in many of these areas, but a thorough cost-benefit analysis coupled with a more systematic approach to establishing effectiveness and disseminating interventions would better align youth mentoring with the broader field of prevention science.

Along these lines, there is also a need for greater involvement of prevention researchers in all phases of the process of designing, piloting, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating interventions in the area of youth mentoring. New mentoring initiatives should have well developed evaluation systems in place *prior* to implementation. To date, the role of research has been predominantly to evaluate programmes once they have been developed, and often only after they have been widely dispatched to the field. Instead, researchers and practitioners should work together to specify the goals and procedures of the particular approach to mentoring. Where possible, experimental designs should be employed and data from multiple sources and methods should be collected.

Understand Variation

Even the best models are likely to be more helpful in some contexts than others, and for some groups than others. Systematic comparison of practices of differing type and intensity are needed within all relevant programme areas, including recruitment, training, matching, supervision and mentor/mentee activities. Comparing traditional approaches to newer models would help to advance practice. Also necessary is information regarding the core elements of successful mentoring relationships, and how these might vary as a function of

the needs and characteristics of particular youth. Such information has become increasingly important, particularly as programmes are encouraged to serve specialised populations or are implemented in new settings. There is growing evidence, for example, that boys and girls experience and benefit from the mentoring process in different ways, with girls reporting more troubled maternal relationships at baseline and being more affected by relationship disruptions (Rhodes et al, in press). The same may hold true for younger versus older youth and for youth from differing ethnic backgrounds. Similarly, many of the young people served by mentoring programmes have particular needs. They may be in foster care, have learning disabilities, have a parent who is incarcerated, etc. Screening tools that permit greater specification of baseline risk, strengths, and circumstances and strengths of their families are likely to be particularly helpful in this regard.

Finally, mentoring is often included as part of a larger youth development programme that has several different components. Researchers thus need to compare stand-alone mentoring programmes to those that integrate mentoring with other services, and examine the extent to which mentoring adds to the effectiveness of programmes with multiple components (e.g., Blechman, et al., 2000; Taylor, et al., 1999).

Understand Quality and Duration

Although policy makers are increasingly calling for quality mentoring programmes, exactly how quality is defined and measured remains somewhat unclear. Systematically assessing programme quality across a range of relationships (youth-volunteer, youth-staff, volunteer-staff, staff-administration) and relating these to outcomes can provide an empirical rationale for supporting enhancements in mentoring programmes. Moreover, research to date has focused predominantly on the effects of mentoring over a relatively short period of time. The more substantial benefits that may be associated with longer-term relationships have yet to be examined. Another important consideration may be whether relationships are continued for the full duration of whatever expectations were established, even if for only a short period of time (De Ayala & Perry, 2005; Larose, et al 2005). Research on the role of duration and intensity, including the minimum required dosage to achieve various outcomes, the role of expectations, and the effects of long waiting lists is needed.

Assess the Underlying Processes of Mentoring

During programme conceptualization, programme developers should articulate the goals and the theoretical models of change that guide their approach, including the processes that are thought to mediate outcome and their temporal ordering. Indeed, although a relationship between a caring adult and a young person lies at the heart of mentoring, little is known about how such relationships actually influence youth outcomes. By more thoroughly examining relationship processes, researchers can help mentoring programmes develop more effective strategies for training and supervising mentors. Researchers examining these models should investigate relationship processes from both the mentors' and mentees' perspectives with attention to the broader influences of families, schools, and communities. Qualitative research, which provides in-depth descriptions of how relationships develop and why they sometimes fail, as well as longitudinal studies of outcomes, have a vital role to play in theory development (Colley, 2003; Philip, 2003; Sanchez, et al., 2006; Spencer, 2006).

Conclusion

The goal of this review was to investigate the existing evaluation literature on youth mentoring, and determine areas on which researchers should focus to better inform practitioners and policymakers. Recent programme evaluations shed light on interventions currently underway; however, variations (e.g. in methodological, programmematic and youth characteristics) limit cross-study comparisons. Meta-analyses, such as DuBois et al. (2002), overcome many limitations of individual programme evaluations and review articles, and a synthesis of more recent and ongoing studies would be a valuable undertaking. Furthermore, more attention should be paid to moderators of programme impact, such as characteristics of youth, mentors, and programmes. Additional research should investigate how markers of mentoring relationship quality impact on youth outcomes.

To achieve the above suggestions for future research, collaboration between researchers and mentoring practitioners is needed. To better serve mentored youth, such parties should work together to design and implement programme evaluations. Consistency in methodology and measures used would enable a greater extent of cross-programme comparisons, leading to a better understanding of what mentoring approaches work and for whom.

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Youth Mentoring – A Case for Treatment?

Kate Philip

This paper examines key themes and theoretical assumptions which underpin current UK youth mentoring practice. We argue that youth mentoring should be examined in relation to the wider issues of transition for young people. The current emphasis on individual mentoring relationships should be reviewed and refined. We draw on findings from recent research in the UK to explore the potential of different forms of youth mentoring. The paper concludes that there is a need to move away from static models of mentoring which, we argue, can obscure the potential to link mentoring approaches with the diverse needs of different groups of young people. We suggest that a focus on promoting 'mentor rich' environments may be a more fruitful direction for mentoring and contribute to the development of strategies for working with and not on young people.

Keywords: *young people, transitions, mentoring.*

Arguably, well before the 'discovery of adolescence' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, adults have been preoccupied and in many cases panicked by the problems that youth are assumed to pose both for themselves and the wider society (Griffin, 1993). However in the UK, such tensions have become more intense in the early twenty-first century and debates in research, policy and practice fields have increasingly focused on the 'risks' of youth (Thomas, 2007). While there is little new in such 'moral panics' about young people, the linkages to theories of the 'underclass' have had a powerful influence on current UK social policy on young people (Fahmy, 2005).

Although research evidence suggests that social divisions and inequalities continue to structure young people's transitions to adulthood in significant ways (Jones, 2005), it is also the case that additional changes have impacted on the experience of moving from childhood to adulthood. Within the UK these include demographic and employment patterns, the collapse of the youth labour market and a raft of changes in education and social benefits (Fahmy, 2005). Theorists such as Beck (1992) have suggested that changes in social and political frameworks in late modernity have simultaneously brought greater opportunities and greater risks for young people in navigating their way towards adulthood. Giddens (1992) has also argued that such changes may open up potential to renegotiate relationships between adults and young people, in a context where boundaries between these categories are increasingly uncertain. At the same time, better awareness of the ways in which race, class and gender mediate the experiences of young people has extended our understanding of the concepts of youth and transitions (White and Wyn, 2002, Macdonald and Marsh, 2005).

Lifecourse studies have also demonstrated that adulthood, far from being the 'calm waters to be reached after the storm and stress of adolescence' as was frequently the theme in early youth research, is increasingly riven with contradictions and uncertainties such that traditional markers of adulthood are contested and uncertain (Coleman and Hendry, 1999, White and Wyn, 2002).

All of this has raised questions about the nature of support that is appropriate and available for young people as they grow up within this maelstrom of changing patterns of relations. Debate has raged about whether traditional forms of support are capable of meeting these needs. Some support may be fragmented and other forms have been revealed as less supportive than was previously supposed. For examples, for some young people, family support may not be available, may be sporadic or may be rejected. A consistent body of research evidence has demonstrated that young people who have been brought up in local authority care are likely to experience poor outcomes in adulthood in relation to health, employment, education and housing than their peers brought up in more secure and stable environments (Scottish Executive, 2004, SEU, 2005, Clayden and Stein, 2005). However there is increasing evidence that the nuclear family is only one of a range of forms of organisation and that the notion of the 'normal' family conceals complex patterns that may differ across and within different settings and contexts (Griffin, 1993; McKie et al, 2005). For young people from ethnic minorities, the experience of racism from an early age can compound other forms of exclusion and impact on family processes including support (Rogers, 1996). Issues of sexual orientation and disability may confront groups and individuals that are already vulnerable with additional stigma and stereotypical assumptions on the part of those responsible for their wellbeing. Clearly young people's transitions can span the range from 'extended', 'fractured' to 'accelerated' and within this spectrum the negotiation of acceptable and useful support may be highly problematic.

It is into this complex and uncertain context that mentoring has become a feature of the youth policy landscape. It is often framed as a form of support which can enable young people to build relationships with adults. The current UK government has directed a particular focus on mentoring as a means of reintegrating young people who are deemed to have fallen through the safety nets in place to support them as they make their way to adulthood (SEU, 2000).

What is Youth Mentoring?

Youth mentoring itself is a contested concept with a range of meanings and underlying assumptions (Philip and Hendry, 1996; Colley, 2003). Youth mentoring can take place in informal or natural settings, such as within the extended family or neighbourhood networks and has been an enduring feature of different societies over centuries (Freedman, 1993). Much interpretation of this historical mentoring however privileges linear models of young people's transitions (Keller, 2007). For example, as Colley (2002) cogently argues, the myth of Mentor is consistently and often uncritically drawn on to justify mentoring programmes.

Planned mentoring sets out to replicate 'natural' mentoring, through the introduction of an unrelated person into the social network of the person to be mentored (Philip et al, 2004).

The aim of the intervention varies but is usually concerned with providing guidance, advice, support and challenge to the mentee through, usually, an individual relationship. The individual mentor is usually a volunteer and it is assumed that the relationship will also be voluntary, although this has been contested in recent studies (Philip et al, 2004; Clayden and Stein, 2005). Mentoring is often described as a means of building relationships between young people and non related adults that are outwith formal educational roles (Rhodes, 2002). The proliferation of youth mentoring schemes has often taken place in isolation from youth work interventions although the processes of mentoring have drawn extensively on youth work approaches.

Advocates of this approach have claimed that planned mentoring offers a community based form of intervention that can reach out to vulnerable young people. However it is often unclear what is meant by 'community' in this context and this lack of clarity undermines analysis of the concept.

The Appeal of Mentoring

The idea of mentoring has been influential within many different disciplines including health services, academia, schools and the workplace. It has also become a mechanism for enhancing professional development in organisations and businesses and has been associated with approaches aiming to change professional cultures. For example, it has been used as a mechanism for assisting women to break through the glass ceiling, through the use of powerful champions whose familiarity with the hidden agendas of organisations can provide leverage upwards for their mentees (Allen and Eby, 2007). It has also been used in this way for ethnic minorities and other groups who are poorly represented in the workplace (Cummins et al, 2007). Mentoring is also associated with an equally diverse set of interventions which include counselling, role modelling, proctoring, guidance, apprenticeship, advising, coaching and befriending (Spencer and Rhodes, 2005).

Arguably this ubiquity combined with a lack of clarity over the meaning of the term, has contributed to its popularity since the term has become a catch-all and one, which is, on the face of it, easily understood as potentially a 'common sense' solution to the problems of youth. However the corollary of this is that this 'catch all' term bedevils attempts to isolate the key components of mentoring in order to evaluate its potential value or disadvantages (Boaz and Pawson, 2005).

Versions of youth mentoring increasingly form an element of government schemes within the UK, particularly those targeted at vulnerable young people. The proliferation of mentoring schemes in the UK repeats a pattern established in the USA where it is estimated that 2.5 million adults currently participate in mentoring (Spencer, 2006). In the UK, the Mentoring and Befriending Network estimates 6000 individuals are currently involved in some way in mentoring activities (Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, 2007). While these numbers offer very crude statistics which give no indication of the nature of the activity or the sustainability of schemes, they nevertheless serve to highlight the broad reach of the idea of mentoring.

Freedman (1993) has summarised the appeal of mentoring as being that it is simple, inexpensive and appeals across a range of boundaries. It is clear that youth mentoring themes resonate with those favoured by the current UK government. In particular the language of mentoring and New Labour are similar in the emphasis placed on partnership working, socially excluded youth, public/private linkages in provision of public services and one interpretation of social capital. Linked to this, mentoring has been viewed as a key mechanism in working with 'hard to reach' groups with the aim of integrating them into the mainstream (SEU, 2000). In England, governmental support for mentoring interventions is on the increase across a range of departments such as the Department for Work and Pensions, the DFES and Youth Justice. In Scotland considerable support has been given to mentoring schemes and to the strategic body, the Scottish Mentoring Network (SMN) by the former Scottish Executive. SMN acts as an umbrella body, promoting standards, initiating research and offering training and support to mentoring initiatives. The appeal of the concept cuts across a range of interests and sectors bringing in philanthropists, corporate bodies and linked foundations such as Shell/BP, the Laidlaw Foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies and the Hunter Foundation, all of which have provided funding, support and advice to mentoring interventions. In turn many mentoring schemes are based in the voluntary sector and are frequently supported by consortia of interests including corporate, charity and public agencies.

However although there is extensive support across sectors and mentoring is clearly identified as a feature of policies targeted at youth, the level of embeddedness is less clear. A recent review of mentoring in the UK found that many of the projects were based on short term or even pilot funding with few securing core support. As a result many schemes were forced into a cycle of seeking funding before being able to demonstrate clear positive results. This intensity of interest in the concept has been sustained despite evidence of conceptual and empirical weaknesses and continuing uncertainty about the value of this form of intervention (Philip and Spratt, 2007). In the next section we briefly highlight the appeal of mentoring in working with young people who are defined as NEET.

Mentoring has been strongly promoted as a means of engaging young people, particularly those in the adolescent years who are deemed to be disaffected or socially excluded, with the aim of encouraging them into the mainstream. However, research findings have consistently demonstrated that mentoring is rarely successful in reaching out to groups that lie at the margins (Rhodes and Lowe, 2007). Where it has been found most successful is with individuals and groups who are defined to be 'ready to change' or to be on the cusp of becoming 'socially excluded' (Newburn et al, 2005; Tarling et al, 2001).

Underpinning the government agenda is a perception that mentoring has a role to play in relation to preparing young people for the world of employment and the market economy (Colley, 2003). Within this framework, mentoring is often a voluntary additional element to the work of personal advisers. Work within career guidance circles has been closely linked to improving skills and levels of employability and to support young people in the transition between school and employment

Crime prevention is a second area in which mentoring projects have developed particularly under the auspices of the Youth Justice Board (St James Roberts et al, 2005). Mentoring has

also been influential among schemes aiming to reintegrate young people into mainstream communities. Such work has focused on young people who have been in local authority care, young asylum seekers and young people from ethnic minority groups. More general mentoring schemes have focused on helping young people to build up confidence and self esteem within particular communities.

The SEU report, *Bridging the Gap* (2000) brought together research findings on the issues facing young people who were defined as 'socially excluded'. It explored how overlapping inequalities combined to affect young people across the life course. From this a mix of universal and targeted approaches were developed in schemes such as the New Deal and Connexions and these included mentoring as a component. More recently, this approach has focused more heavily on key groups that are deemed to be particularly at risk. As a result, rather than dealing with the general youth population, mentoring resources are directed more heavily toward those representing some kind of problem or defined as 'hard to reach'. This approach lies in contradiction to recent research findings which emphasise that mentoring interventions are less successful with young people who are at the sharp end of disadvantage and disaffection (Newburn et al, 2005; Rhodes and Lowe, 2007).

Mentoring schemes on this model have proliferated in education (Project Chance), criminal justice (Newburn et al, 2005; St James Roberts et al, 2005, Tarling et al, 2001) and crucially employment (Colley, 2003). Within this framework, an ethos of encouraging mentees to adopt more positive attitudes and behaviours to employment is evident. This approach has been criticised for neglecting structural constraints which have condemned some young groups of people to uncertain, poorly paid and dead end jobs. Moreover the category NEET itself has been shown to include a heterogenous group of young people with a diverse set of skills, needs and who face different kinds of challenges. The narrow focus on employability has also obscured understanding of other factors influencing young people's transitions to adulthood.

Problems and Issues in researching youth mentoring

This range of meanings and problems of definition, combine to mean that a systematic evaluation of mentoring faces a minefield of challenges (Boaz and Pawson, 2005). However, the need to tease out the value or at least the distinctive components of the concept is urgent since mentoring, despite the mixed findings from research, is now an established feature of the youth policy landscape. Better understanding of the term may also shed light on the realities of young people's experience in the current context and on the needs for youth interventions which engage with these.

Moreover champions of youth mentoring have, in the past at least, tended to exaggerate the capacity of youth mentoring as a 'silver bullet' capable of solving all the problems of youth (Freedman, 1993, Philip et al, 2004). This has led to a set of very high expectations and arguably, unrealistic claims for mentoring as a 'quick fix' approach. This has been fuelled by somewhat creative interpretations of findings from research as Rhodes and Lowe (2007) have pointed out.

What is clear however is that much of the current emphasis of youth mentoring is about helping young people to adapt to or comply with existing frameworks and institutions (Colley, 2003). Mentoring is also framed as a top down intervention in that a mentor with higher status inducts a mentee into the workings, both explicit and implicit of organisations with the aim of helping them to move up the ladder. Thus the role of the mentor in helping the young person to 'successful adulthood' is understood as inducting her/him into a set of shared values and norms in the adult world. In some settings, the mentor may also have a role in assessing the progress of the mentee and reporting this back to others, which may reinforce the hierarchical nature of the relationship. This highly normative framework for adulthood is clearly at odds with recent research on the fluid, complex and varied transitions made by different groups of young people (Jones, 2005). How mentoring interventions interact with wider social networks, other support relationships and critical perspectives on their social worlds and settings, has until recently, been accorded less priority.

The theoretical base for UK youth mentoring initially drew uncritically on North American studies, many of which were based on developmental paradigms. In addition, the introduction of agencies such as Big Brothers, Big Sisters to the UK context with little concession to the different cultural and social settings, has tended to reinforce this approach (Liabo et al, 2005). Arguably this led to a dominance of approaches which took little account of the influence of structural factors in the framing, operation or analysis of mentoring schemes. A predominantly deficit model of vulnerable young people and their families is also evident in mentoring discourses: certain family forms are deemed to be problematic per se, with for example, young people from single parent families being prioritised as in need of mentoring interventions (BBBS, 2008). The absence of appropriate male role models has also underpinned a number of mentoring schemes such as the Boyhood to Manhood Foundation (Phillip and Spratt, 2007). Thus mentoring may act as compensatory for the absence of appropriate support or as supplementary to existing support in socialising the young person. The emphasis here is firmly on bringing young people up to an acceptable standard, of improving attitudes and beliefs and on changing behaviour.

The frameworks of social capital and resilience are key theories which underpin mentoring interventions in both the USA and UK. However interpretations of these sometimes differ considerably and these are briefly explored below. In addition to these, attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988), social network theory, the ecology of youth (Bronfenbrenner, 1986) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) have been influential. However in this paper we focus on those which have had the strongest influence on UK mentoring for reasons of space.

Resilience

Resilience is concerned with the ability of individuals to do well in spite of facing economic or social disadvantage (Gilligan, 2006). Within a psychological framework, interest in resilience signalled a shift from a focus on young people's failures to a more positive stance which emphasised factors which assisted young people to overcome the challenges that they face and to bounce back from failure. Schoon (2007) has suggested that three dominant strands exist in framing resilience: firstly resilience can be characterised as a chance event which cannot be foreseen; secondly it can be understood as a personality characteristic, which means that it is within the individual's make up. This explanation tends

to blame the victim if they do not demonstrate resilience. Thirdly, resilience is a dynamic process that shapes the individual's adjustment. This definition relates to the context and the way that the person is getting along, and assesses resilience in relation to wider parameters than simply normative adjustment (Schoon, 2007).

The concept is useful in focusing on individual coping strategies in the wider context of social relationships and networks. The enduring presence of a caring and nurturing relationship has been identified as a feature of such resilience (Rutter, 1987). In this scenario, a mentor may help the young person build resilience by helping them to devise coping strategies, by building up self esteem or by offering an alternative explanation of negative feedback from others (Darling, 2005). Successful mentoring relationships may also offer alternatives to 'risky' activities and can reinforce the positive effects of other protective factors by supplementing existing parental support. However Schoon (2007) argues that it is important to be open to the different ways in which young people may demonstrate resilience, as for example, in adopting strategies which may meet with disapproval from adults, but which may be realistic and creative responses to particular circumstances. She further suggests a need for caution in identifying mentoring as a means of overcoming wider structural problems which confront some groups of young people.

However the relationship between resilience and mentoring remains unclear with the enduring question of whether resilient young people are more adept at recruiting mentors or whether mentoring contributes to developing resilience. In addition the interpretation of resilience may be highly subjective and attempts to measure resilience need to take account of this. Finally, while resilience might be demonstrated in one situation, an individual may not be resilient in another: dealing with a multiplicity of challenges may, by sheer scale, overwhelm what had previously been a resilient person.

Social Capital

Social capital in many respects, is in danger of becoming a similar catch all term to that of mentoring in that rather than offering explanations of underlying processes it can act as a 'deficit theory syndrome' (Morrow, 1999) which is drawn on to define particular communities. Nevertheless it is highly influential in discussions of mentoring, and the work of JS Coleman, a key figure in the development of the concept, provides a link between the concept of mentoring and social capital (Coleman, 1989; Freedman, 1993). Putnam (2000) has taken the notion of social capital further to mean a set of resources or attributes inherent in communities. Qualities of trust, reciprocal support, civic engagement, community identity, and social networks are the building blocks of social capital. Framing social capital as a set of resources and connections which can be built up by individuals and by communities, has underpinned much of the US approach to mentoring. Within this framework, mentoring can provide a means of 'bonding' capital by integrating the young person into a community and enabling them to build up strong relationships. More frequently, mentoring is viewed as a means of building bridging capital allowing the young person to move on and move out of restrictive or 'risky' networks and behaviours, and to enter into new social worlds where more opportunities are to be found.

On the other hand Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital is 'a more complex and contextual account of different forms of capital and their interrelationships' (Morrow,

1999). Bourdieu describes social capital as a mechanism for perpetuating the power of elites and restricting rather than opening up access to new opportunities (Portes, 1998). Colley has demonstrated in her study of mentoring within New Beginnings that 'engagement mentoring' may deny the value of young people's own networks and resources in favour of those promoted by the employers. Mentoring then draws mentors and mentees into networks geared to employers' needs. These networks are concentrated at the lower end of the labour market and may offer a very impoverished form of social capital. For both mentors and mentees in this scenario, the mentoring process becomes one of frustration and has to be viewed in relation to distributions of power. In this scenario, what is defined as capital is determined by the employer and the capital of the young person/mentor is of little value. Thus the resources and networks of the young person are devalued and discounted and mentoring becomes irrelevant to dealing with the issues defined as important to the young person.

Findings from UK research

Research into mentoring in the USA has generally taken a developmental perspective on young people and alongside this, a quantitative set of methods has been the norm. The accumulation of large datasets and experimental studies have attempted to provide a firm basis for generalising about mentoring practices. There has also been considerable effort to undertake meta-analyses of studies across programmes (Dubois and Silverthorn, 2005). These findings have provided an important backdrop to mentoring interventions in the UK and have demonstrated a somewhat contradictory picture with wide ranging effects which are nevertheless small in size (Rhodes and Lowe, 2007). Methodological and issues in research design are also evident. Rhodes discusses these issues in more depth elsewhere in this journal edition but it is important to note that the absence of qualitative studies overall, suggests some important gaps in our understanding of mentoring in the US context.

Within the UK, one strand of research has taken a different approach to the analysis of youth mentoring (Philip and Hendry, 1996, Colley, 2003; Clayden and Stein, 2005; Philip et al, 2004). This work has focused on young people as active participants and sought to elicit their perspectives on mentoring processes and to relate these to the wider structural factors in play. These studies have sought to examine the value that young people themselves place on mentoring in their lives alongside accounts given by other actors such as mentors and project staff and to relate these to the wider social context in which mentoring interventions have developed. Frameworks of resilience, social support and social capital have been influential in this strand of research. However a critical approach is evident with, for example, Colley's analysis of mentoring in employment schemes, drawing on the work of Bourdieu to illustrate a more critical approach to the structural features of the contexts in which planned mentoring took place (Colley, 2003).

Where mentoring was successful, it was highly valued by young people and mentors. Colley noted that this was difficult in the context of 'engagement mentoring' due to the structural constraints on both mentors and mentees. Evidence also suggests that parents usually receive the mentoring intervention in a positive light. The most beneficial mentoring relationships included elements of instrumental and expressive aspects, with the relationship viewed as essential to any other benefits.

Findings regarding instrumental outcomes were uneven, with a number of studies reporting no change in levels of offending activity among young people taking part in mentoring or even slightly higher levels than among the non mentored groups (Newburn et al, 2005; St James Roberts et al, 2005).

A clear difficulty in all the studies cited here, is in disentangling the effects of mentoring from those of other interventions or initiatives that the young people were involved in. Shiner et al, (2005) found, for example, that some young people expressed more positive views about other aspects of the intervention than the one to one mentoring. It may be that the synergy between different kinds of intervention may itself be of value, but to date this has rarely been explored. The relative isolation of mentoring interventions from other youth work approaches has led to a somewhat polarised position for these forms of intervention which is paradoxical given that mentoring is designed as a method for enhancing the social networks of young people.

The 'classic' form of planned mentoring which continues to underpin the majority of mentoring interventions, is a process whereby an unrelated adult is introduced to the individual young person by a third party with the aim of forming a trusting relationship (Rhodes, 2002). However, the duration, aims, methods, target groups and forms of relationships themselves vary considerably and continue to bedevil attempts to categorise and evaluate the value of the concept (Boaz and Pawson, 2005; Philip and Spratt, 2007). The emphasis on mentoring as an individual process demonstrates a shift in UK youth policy away from dealing with individuals and groups. This emphasis is clearly in tune with discourses which focus on young people as being in deficit and in need of 'resocialising' into appropriate behaviours and attitudes, as for example within debates around employability. A serious gap in knowledge is evident in how mentoring processes and youth work services interact with each other.

Other forms of mentoring have received less attention to date. However these are evident in findings from research in natural settings, in planned programmes and arguably within other forms of provision (Philip and Spratt, 2007). For example, Philip and Hendry (1996) found in a Scottish study of natural mentoring that relationships defined as successful by young people were not exclusively one to one dyads but took place with peers, friendship groups and sometimes with more than one adult. Such relationships often offered alternative explanations of the difficulties faced by young people and an opportunity to try out new identities and strategies for dealing with the realities of moving towards adulthood.

Philip et al's (2004) exploration of planned mentoring approaches to vulnerable young people similarly concluded that their sample were as likely to identify mentoring as taking place within a diversity of relationships and at different times as within planned mentoring relationships. The 'classic' model was evident in relationships with professionals and para-professionals such as key workers for whom mentoring formed part of their remit. But these allocated mentors were not always chosen as mentors by young people who exercised a degree of selection, sometimes seeking out particular individuals for specific kinds of support.

However in these studies, mentoring by peers was also significant and often based around shared knowledge and experience, as for example, where a peer/friend had been through parental divorce or had experienced the care system. In addition family members such as older siblings, aunts and cousins were often referred to as sources of constructive support in particular situations. Here again, knowledge of the background and context of the young person was an important feature. All these relationships were fluid and subject to shifts and checks suggesting that much more research is required into how such relationships may at some times be sources of distress and at others may offer support and acceptable advice. What characterised successful relationships was a degree of reciprocity, a willingness on the part of the mentor to share their own experiences, an open ended commitment on the part of the mentor and mutual respect. The element of control and negotiation over the relationship was regarded as particularly important. These findings resonate with those of Dolan (2006) in his work with young people from neighbourhood youth projects in Ireland. Dolan found that young people were most likely to seek out support from family members, neighbours and friends in preference to that of professionals, even when relationships were difficult and even abusive. The next most likely sources of support were peers and youth workers who provided safe spaces in which to discuss problems.

Clayden and Stein (2005) examined the long term experiences and outcomes of mentoring for a sample of 15-23 year old young people leaving care using a mix of methods. Some of the young people in the sample were living chaotic lives and had been through a range of care provision. They found that both 'peer' mentoring and 'classic' mentoring were features of this intervention. Accessibility, informality and attention were highly valued. One young woman commented on the value of her peer mentor:

Having her there and knowing she's been through everything I am going through now, you know, it's different like that, I have more respect for her (Stein and Clayden, 2006)

The researchers found that where mentoring relationships were valued by participants, they were described as offering a different kind of relationship to that with other professionals and adults in their lives. Many young people in the sample had dealt with a wide range of professionals moving in and out of their lives. They suggested that mentoring formed a kind of 'professional friendship' which enabled young people to confide in and relate positively to mentors and that this itself contributed to building up an element of consistency in their other relationships. The relationships were characterised by reciprocal and negotiated relationships within which, working with rather than on the young person was viewed as a critical feature. Significantly, the more durable the relationship, the more likely were positive outcomes to be reported by young people. Those mentoring relationships which lasted for more than a year were most likely to have achieved their original goals and to have future plans.

Over three quarters of the sample achieved their goals and over half achieved goals set during the project. However the researchers noted that these objectives often shifted and moved in the course of the relationships as circumstances changed. The study captures well the uneven progress of mentoring relationships and how mentors took account of this, recognising that young people will move backwards as well as forwards in moving towards independence in working towards flexible and negotiated objectives:

Young people were allowed to take steps both backwards and forwards: this is how many young people experience the transition to adulthood, but ironically, care leavers are expected to follow a clear and direct pathway to independence (Clayden and Stein, 2005)

This fluidity echoes Shiner et al's (2005) finding that mentoring relationships did not progress on a linear process but were subject to continuous shifts and changes. They described a process of 'firefighting' in which the mentor attempted to resolve difficulties with the mentee at different points in the duration of the relationship. Philip et al (2004) also found that successful mentoring relationships could be fragile with uneven progress which was often determined by 'turning points' or crises in the lives of the participants.

Endings were described in a number of studies as difficult to negotiate however well mentors had prepared the ground. For some young people, unexpected endings led them to reinterpret the relationship as one which was not meaningful while others were unhappy that the relationship was not one of friendship as they had previously described it. Linked to this was the question of duration: as in US studies, it was clear that the longer the relationship continued, the more likely it was to be described as meaningful and successful.

Rhodes found that short lived or failed relationships had more negative effects than no relationship at all. However knowledge about the dimensions of failed relationships remains elusive. Half the relationships in Stein and Clayden's (2006) study reported negative outcomes, including lack of engagement, missing appointments and unplanned endings. For one fifth of the sample, the mentor had withdrawn and no longer met with the young person.

Discussion

Mentoring is now part of the fabric of youth services, particularly those targeted at particular sections of the youth population. However formal mentoring schemes continue to rely heavily on the 'classic' model of an individual adult to an individual young person. This lies in contrast to the lives of many young people which flow between relationships with individuals and within friendship or peer groups. Evidence that peers, neighbours and family often provide valuable and useful support suggests that mentoring may be more useful if it is linked into such existing networks of support.

It is equally clear that evidence of the instrumental benefits of youth mentoring is scant. Nevertheless expressive benefits are widely cited in current research on youth mentoring with vulnerable populations. A key element of the value placed by young people in this respect, is of being valued by the mentor and of being able to exert some control over the relationship, particularly in negotiating the agenda. Building on the reciprocal aspects of mentoring may be valuable in reinforcing confidence in building and sustaining relationships.

The evidence base suggests very modest benefits from mentoring. It is possible that such benefits could be maximised if they are woven into other approaches which may have a

more reliable pedigree in working with young people. Central to this is the voluntary nature of the relationship since it is clear that mentoring relationships are unlikely to thrive in 'coercive' environments such as those described by Colley (2003).

A further question is the focus on vulnerable populations. It would seem logical that a more universal approach could have benefits in moving away from the stigma of being identified as 'in need of a mentor'. More research is required to explore this dimension of mentoring which has been poorly examined to date.

Overall, youth mentoring is framed as a 'friendly' relationship which transcends professional boundaries. In this respect, the individual adult mentor is introduced as having an interest in young people through the matching process. The role of the mentor in this scenario is to strike up a relationship with the young person, often around a shared interest or hobby. In certain respects the mentor is viewed as a role model who offers a positive influence over the young person. A successful relationship, in this framework, opens up the potential for the mentor to provide guidance, support and direction. It is assumed that the relationship will also strengthen the capacity of the young person to forge other supportive relationships.

Little attention has been paid to how the introduction of an adult mentor interacts with other relationships within the young person's social network or how parents and others respond to the mentoring relationship (Dolan, 2008). Moreover it is unclear whether young people themselves who thrive within mentoring relationships are building on an existing capacity to build and experience supportive relationships. In the language of resilience, it is unclear whether already resilient young people are skilful in recruiting and retaining adult mentors or whether the intervention itself helps to develop resilience in those who are less obviously skilled.

The intervention is presented as non-professional and as community based although it is frequently unclear how 'community', a highly contested term, is understood in relation to mentoring. Shared standards and principles are strongly supported by mentoring organisations, but these are often at odds with the demands placed on individual mentors and mentees. Volunteers are often sought within the same neighbourhood or from similar backgrounds to the young people in the target groups but there is a consensus that community based mentors, particularly males, are scarce and difficult to recruit. Overall mentoring is framed as a voluntary relationship in that both partners are free to move away from the relationship at any point. The voluntary nature of the relationship was one which held appeal for young people in a number of studies. The informal nature of the relationship also meant that young people often felt that they could exert a measure of control over the agenda and this contributed in Philip et al's study, to a view that there was a degree of reciprocity. This was summed up as being 'able to have a laugh' with the mentor, a belief that the mentor gained from knowing the mentee and was willing to share their own experiences.

However Colley (2003) among others has pointed to the ways in which young people and their partners are often 'coerced' into mentoring relationships within some employment schemes where benefits or training places may be dependent on agreement by the young

person to participate in a mentoring relationship. In some instances, mentoring was contingent on staying in the employment scheme which clearly compromised the quality of the interaction if difficulties were encountered in the work setting. Equally within criminal justice mentoring schemes pressures to continue with a relationship in order to avoid returning to court or being incarcerated could exert a powerful influence. Explicit or implicit coercion is highly likely to redefine the relationship for both mentors and mentees and to undermine attempts to build trust.

The need for mentoring strategies which engage with the realities of young people's lived experience is clear. More research is required into the ways in which mentor rich settings can be developed: such settings could provide a 'menu' of choice for young people to develop relationships in a safe climate. Within youth work, the potential exists for young people to meet with adults and with peers and to engage in a range of relationships on a voluntary basis. A clear benefit to this in relation to the research findings reported above, is the opportunity for young people to exert agency in negotiating relationships and to do this within a generic framework in which those who are deemed to be excluded can mix with others without being burdened by such a label.

Another clear need is to help strengthen existing social networks which may be both a source of difficulty and a source of support. It would seem more constructive to find ways to build on these and to integrate the positive aspects of mentoring interventions into work with these networks.

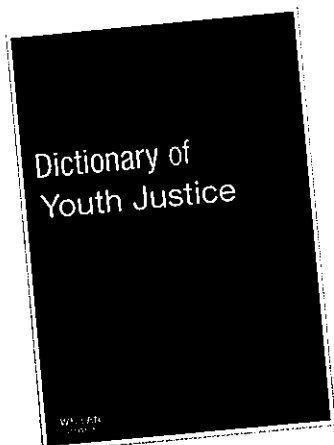
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Youth Mentoring and the Parent-Young Person Relationship: Considerations for Research and Practice

Pat Dolan, John Canavan and Bernadine Brady

Over recent years, youth mentoring has become increasingly popular as an intervention for young people deemed to be in need of support. There is a need, however, to pay attention to the potential impact of mentoring on the parent - youth relationship. Drawing on findings from two Irish studies of young people and parents attending youth projects, this article highlights considerations for research and practice in relation to mentoring and the parent - youth relationship.

Keywords: *youth mentoring, parents, social support, intervention.*

Whereas youth mentoring has been recently promoted as an important form of intervention in helping young people to cope, it is not a new concept (Baker and Maguire 2005). For example, now operating worldwide, the Big Brothers Big Sisters Programme (BBBS) a major mentoring initiative has been in existence since 1904 (Grossman and Rhodes, 2002). In terms of benefit, it has been found to be a proven model of 'friendship' and has been subjected to well-cited high quality randomised control trial research (Tierney et al 1995; Rhodes, 2002). Mentoring has been seen to be associated with positive outcomes for young people including better school attendance and reduced propensity towards risk taking behaviour. However, whereas the mentoring has been viewed as positive for young people and in respect of contexts such as labour market potential (Colley, 2003) the effects of mentoring on social relationships generally (both positive and negative) and in particular between parents and their offspring, has been less scrutinised. Using the recent introduction of Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) mentoring programmes in Ireland as a case study, this paper explores this issue by brief reference to findings from three related studies.

Youth Mentoring in Context and In Ireland

Although there is some emerging evidence that mentoring troubled youth has a positive effect on parent-child relationships the contexts in which it does or does not actually occur needs more specific consideration (Philip, 2003). Thus far, there is a growing body of research on mentoring which focuses on very particular outcomes, for example, mentoring in schools as an activity which enhances academic performance (Slicker and Palmer, 1993) or in the USA, faith based mentoring and possible improvements in a young person's perceived wellbeing and religiosity (Keller, 2005; Dubois and Karcher, 2005). However, like all social interventions for young people, mentoring programmes can only have limited

effect, and overall, it is fair to state that little is known about the downside of mentoring for example, when matches fail or end early (Rhodes, 2002; Philip, 2003; Colley, 2003). While we know the benefits overall to the parent-child relationship when mentoring is 'high quality', conversely, where relationships are poor or fail, little is known about how mentoring either positively or negatively changes the key social support relationship between the young person and his or her parent(s).

Thus, given the well established centrality of the parent-child relationship there is a need to advance the debate on the effects of mentoring programmes such as Big Brothers Big Sisters on parents and young people. With some very brief reference to studies on social support involving adolescents and parents attending Neighbourhood Youth Projects (NYP) and findings from an implementation study on the introduction of BBBS in Ireland in these youth work sites, this paper tentatively explores this issue. This exploration is made all the more relevant given that Ireland is experiencing major economic growth referred to as a 'Celtic Tiger' whereby there is now and will be in the future major spending on mentoring services to support young people at risk. This also occurs in the context of social change whereby the constellation of families in Ireland is going through a major change, for example, a marked increase in one parent families and major changes in the living arrangements for young people, parents and extended family (Task Force on Active Citizenship, 2007). While the increased emphasis on child and family policy initiatives has been broadly welcomed, others have critiqued the tendency of such policy to see children as 'investments' (Featherstone, 2006:5) and to underestimate the multiple meanings which can be attached to family and family practices. It has been argued that, by bringing the private world of the family into the public sphere, children's services increase the state's reach into family life and represent another strand of governance and 'responsibilisation' (Muncie, 2006:773) of children, young people and families. In a period of such rapid social and policy change, therefore, it is imperative to consider how a policy intervention such as youth mentoring can impact on relationships at the core of family life.

Although informal friendships whereby adults, usually relatives, support young people is 'age old' and traditional in Ireland and dates back to the Brehon Laws (Gilligan, 1991) and was particularly prevalent in rural contexts, it is only very recently that any formal or major youth mentoring programme has been established. Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) was introduced to Ireland as a youth mentoring programme by Foroige a national youth work organisation in 2002. Thus far, the programme has focussed on providing youth mentoring as an 'add on' programme to a standard youth work intervention model (Foroige Neighbourhood Youth Projects, NYPs) and has been piloted in three counties in the west of Ireland. Initial formative research on the introduction and implementation of the programme (Brady et al, 2005; Brady and Dolan 2007) has found that overall the service has been received very positively. Young people in receipt of the service (n= 61) have reported high satisfaction with their 'Bigs' and have outlined personal benefits. Similarly, volunteers have reported benefits to their sense of wellbeing and have clearly enjoyed the care giving aspects of offering support and friendship to young people. It is notable that where matches have gone well, parents of young people have indicated improvements in their overall relationships with their children and this is in line with findings from other international studies (Rhodes, 2002; Darling, 2005). Such improvements include parents reporting less daily hassles with the young person. However, it should be noted that

although these successful indicators are consistent with results from other major studies on BBBS (See Tierney et al 1995) in the Irish context this finding is as yet very 'tentative'. For instance, the study did not track cases where matches failed completely or ended very prematurely with support waning from the 'Big to the Little'. Having said this, the BBBS Ireland programme which is expanding as a result of philanthropic support is due to go through a more rigorous evaluation.

Adolescents, their social networks and the role of mentoring

There is strong evidence that as with all other life stages young people have an ongoing need for social support during their adolescence (Cotterell, 1996; Darling 2005). Since the 1970s pioneers of social support network theory such as Weiss (1974) have evidenced the essential value of having ample social support as a buffer to stress and as central to coping. The types and qualities of social support are also well established (Tracy et al, 1994; Cutrona 2000) and typically come in four forms:

- Emotional support
- Advice Support
- Esteem Support
- Concrete support

Apart from the need to have all forms of support present during adolescence (Cotterell, 1996) the sources of support and their relationship with the central network member is also known to be of equal if not more importance. In sum, support for a young person is best provided within relationships which include at least one reliable alliance which provides all forms of support, is close, dependable and where there is reciprocity (Cutrona 2000). The benefits of such social support not only assists development during the teenage years, but also has protective functions (Thompson, 1995) as well as providing compensation for young people who suffer distress and/or loss (Gilligan, 2000; Cutrona and Cole, 2000; Pinkerton and Dolan, 2007).

There is little doubt that parents are the central source of support in a young person's life (Ghate and Hazel, 2002). Despite the over assumption that adolescence is seen as a troublesome time of storm and stress (Feldman and Elliot, 1993) in fact only 10 to 15 percent of young people actually experience adversity to the extent of requiring intervention by professionals. Despite our lack of research on normative adolescence (Coleman and Hendry, 1999), this in itself demonstrates that the vast majority of young people cope well and do so because their natural networks of support including parents (and often as unsung heroes) offer the requisite help they need. In practical terms, young people receive ongoing financial and emotional support from parents and often advice and support from other adults such as grandparents aunts or uncles in order to cope. Whereas many young people shop around for support among their network memberships particularly with friends (Cotterell, 1996) the existence of support from parents remains key to their coping capacity (Cutrona and Cole, 2000).

For young people who experience adversity and have troublesome relationships with parent(s), it should not be assumed that they are not supportive of their parents and close

to them. In turn, parents are generally still key sources of help to their adolescent offspring despite any ongoing difficulties in their relationships. It could be argued that such a false assumption may underpin the rationale for referring a young person onto a mentoring programme like Big Brothers Big Sisters. The following two Irish studies involving young people and parents attending Neighbourhood Youth Projects (also the sites for the BBBS programme) act as brief illustrations. Both studies explored the perceived social support networks of respondents at different times, in the first example, among young people and in the second, in relation to parents.

Neighbourhood Youth Project Study No.1 – Young People

Findings from a tracking study of the social support needs of young people experiencing adversity (with caseness) attending a day care support programme called Neighbourhood Youth Projects in the west of Ireland (n=172) found that, despite the presence of mental health problems among almost one third of respondents and a range of school or behaviour related problems among participants, parents were still seen as the strongest sources of social support and were consistently selected in networks. Although many young people reported strains in their relationships with parents, mothers and fathers were rated as consistent key providers of social support. Whereas mothers were slightly nominated more than fathers and in some cases dads were essentially 'absent', young people remained consistent in their positive perception towards parents. In terms of types of support on offer parents were seen to provide strong support in relation to all types of support, however esteem support from parents was seen as slightly weaker compared to all other three forms of help, including emotional concrete and advice support (Dolan, 2006; Pinkerton and Dolan, 2007). Finally, it is noteworthy that the study also found a statistically significant association between the presence of support from parents and mental health and wellbeing among respondents.

Neighbourhood Youth Project Study No.2 – Parents

Whereas much is known regarding the social support needs of young people, the role and functions they play in respect of providing social support to others such as their parents is less well known. With this in mind, in a point in time study of the social networks of parents of adolescents (n=26) attending a Neighbourhood Youth Project in Galway city (Canavan and Dolan, 2000), their young people were identified by parents as an important source of social support. Using the Social Network Map assessment tool (Tracy et al, 1994) parents were asked to identify who offered support, how much support they could access and the quality of the help on offer to them. It should be noted that the study focused on the primary caregiver known to project staff in the NYP, which was primarily mothers (24 mothers and 2 fathers).

As one would expect, parents reflected on the amount of stress which parenting a young person brings, for example, parents who were generally on a low income referred to the financial support they had to give to their children. However, all parents said that their adolescent offspring provided them with practical help and emotional support, despite

difficulties in their relationship at the time. Importantly parents also rated themselves as remaining 'very close' to their teenager, again despite their ongoing tumultuous relationship. Parents noted that while help from their adolescent offspring was sometimes inconsistent and could wax or wane depending in part on the current functioning of the parent-adolescent relationship, their feelings of closeness toward the young person remained high and was consistent.

Costs and benefits to Young people's Social Networks and relationships with Parents

Thus far as has been briefly illustrated from three related pieces of research, overall, parents of young people perceive the Big Brother Big Sisters mentoring programme in Ireland as positive and a benefit to them and their offspring. Furthermore, young people attending NYPs, the service from which the BBBS programme is delivered, value very highly the emotional and tangible support they receive from their parents and do so despite the ongoing existence of strains in their relationship. Similarly, parents identify their adolescent offspring as an important source of support and select them as central social network members. Although their young people are seen as a source of worry and in some cases the cause of ongoing adversity, parents still retain a perception of closeness to their children. With this in mind, it would seem obvious that in the context of providing a mentoring service, the desire should be to enhance the parent-child relationship through mentoring and to ensure that the introduction of an adult friend in the young person's life does nothing to take from the capacity of the parent as a caregiver.

Despite the known benefits to parents when mentoring works well, more intuitively, it can be seen as involving a range of potential negative effects. For example, the creation of a mentoring match can be seen as introducing an artificial component into a child's social ecology and as a direct consequence, undermining natural helping systems. More specifically, it is easy to imagine how adult-child mentoring approaches could negatively affect child-parent relationships, at their most basic, by reducing time spent in positive activities between a young person and their parents. Indeed, if the focus is on outcomes from mentoring programmes for parents, one could also hypothesise negative consequences in relation to parents' confidence in their parenting ability. However, in truth the extent to which such scenarios apply are unknown.

At a more profound level, it could also be argued that mentoring illuminates the tension between the rights of children and parents. Mentoring assumes the achievement of children's rights by virtue of its protective impacts on children, in the context of immediate risks or risk to their development. Within the context of statutory intervention, this can be seen as appropriate. What is less clear is to what extent mentoring programmes lead de facto to a diminution of parents rights by distorting their roles. In the Irish context with a forthcoming referendum on the rights of children (at the time of writing this paper), this point has particular resonance.

In this paper, we have only considered parents overall and not focused on mothers and fathers separately and perhaps this issue of rights is played out most clearly in relation to

non-resident fathers of children and adolescents who participate in mentoring programmes. We know now that, as Featherstone (2003) puts it 'fathers matter', and a body of research, much of it arising in the US context, has developed to support this position. For example, Pleck and Masciadrelli (2004) identify a range of studies that demonstrate positive outcomes for children from father involvement. Interestingly, findings in recent Irish research demonstrate positive associations between father involvement and outcomes from children (McKeown et al, 2003).

What are the implications for the increasing minority of fathers who do not reside with their children, or for the far smaller minority of fathers, some non-resident, whose children are involved with Irish State child protection services? There is the realisation that social service interventions generally have not been effective at engaging fathers and that this is a significant policy and practice failure (Taylor and Daniel, 2000). In this context, the question is to what extent do services generally and BBBS Ireland could more specifically, support these minority fathers in relation to engagement, accessibility and responsibility, the three empirical dimensions around which father involvement has been approached by researchers (Lamb and Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Similarly to what extent does generativity, the idea of contributing to the ongoing cycle of generations (Christiansen and Palkovitz 2001), feature as an anchor concept for services such as BBBS in their engagement with such fathers.

A fictional situation involving a non-resident father who has a poor relationship with the child's mother gives meaning to the negative possibilities. In the context of limited resources, not a huge amount of time is devoted to engaging the father in relation to the issue of the child's difficult behaviour. A family support or social worker suggest a mentoring programme, an opportunity which is seized upon by the mother who is at her wits end. The child is amenable to the 'match' but, in spite of the best efforts of services to engage him, the father is not consulted about the proposed intervention. A male mentor is matched with the child and begins the relationship-forming, for example, going to see the local football team. In the context of this specific set of circumstances, the possibilities for negative interactions among the child, mother and father, in relation to the father's role is easily imagined.

In this sense, mentoring is akin to the full range of interventions undertaken by social service professionals, insofar as it involves introduction of an external component or force into the lives of those seeking or deemed to be in need of services. The general argument for intervention is that it is in the child or young person's best interests – something more easily argued in the context of reactive interventions geared towards risk, and less easily so in the context of lower risk, community-based preventive interventions. In either case, the issue is that those intervening need to be confident that the situation for a child / young person will be better in the short and long term, as a consequence of the intervention.

When considered in this way linked conceptual and practical concerns emerge relating to mentoring. Conceptually, mentoring models need to encompass fully active roles for parents and intended outcomes for them, both mothers and fathers, and how these relate to the mentors and their activities. This is even made all the more necessary given as has been highlighted here the reciprocal support which parents and young people exchange and even so where relationships are strained or estranged. More specifically, in relation to the issue

of non-resident fathers, they need to show to what extent they support or run the risk of undermining non-resident fathers in relation to their involvement with their children.

If mentoring brings benefits to parents where matches go well, and we are less certain of either the outcomes when there are problems or, hidden 'side effects' for fathers in particular as suggested above, the concept of adding to mentoring extra and compensatory interventions could be considered. In the case of Ireland, BBBS is thus far an 'add on' intervention for youth coupled with the NYP programme. This format has the potential of bringing additional benefits for the mentee. Similarly, it could be suggested that given the requisite resources, a programme to support the parent-child relationship and particularly father-child bond could be utilised. So for example, concurrent to the child receiving the support of a mentor, his/her father could receive a programme which works on parenting skills and methods for ensuring better attachment with his child. Even at an initial pilot phase such a move would help establish the true effects, if any, of adult-child mentoring on parent-child relationships, but also hold the hope of providing additional benefits for all parties.

Conclusion

Despite a growing body of evidence on the value of friendship mentoring to young people and particularly so in relation to those experiencing difficulties, the effects positively and negatively of such relationships on the parent-child bond, are still uncharted waters. Whereas the benefits to parents are known in relation to successful matches, less is known when things go wrong or in relation to longer term outcomes. This may be further compounded in that policymakers and professionals may overlook the supportive role of parents to their young people that often remains crucial despite the presence of a strained relationship. Similarly, the support which young people offer to parents and the closeness of their relationship as perceived by parents may also be underrated in the context of the presence of other problems, for example, in terms of overriding child protection concerns. Thus, apart from the need for more research not just in Ireland as in the case considered here, but also internationally, as mentoring develops as a model to help troubled and troublesome youth, cognisance needs to be retained regarding the importance of parent child relationships generally and father child relationships more specifically. This will ensure not just better outcomes for young people in need but equally important, better sources and resources to enable them to cope.

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Reclaiming Social Purpose in Community Education: The Edinburgh Papers

A symposium was held at the University of Edinburgh in November 2007, involving teaching staff from all the professional qualifying degree programmes in Community Education in Scotland. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a response to the current state of professional practice and to rearticulate a sense of social purpose for community education. A set of short papers was produced for the symposium and amended following it. These have now been published together in a handy booklet which we hope will be useful in making the case for a renewed sense of professional identity and public service.

To receive an electronic version of this publication contact:
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Learning for Democracy: Ten Propositions and Ten Proposals

As a result of extensive discussion and consultation over the past eighteen months, the Learning for Democracy group have now produced an attractive laminated wall chart to put over your desk. It offers an alternative vision of learning for democracy and is intended to stimulate discussion about how community education can contribute to such a vision.

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Understanding youth exclusion: critical moments, social networks and social capital

Tracy Shildrick and Robert MacDonald

The paper reviews some key findings from research in North East England that was based on young people's accounts of growing up in poor neighbourhoods. The studies were neither youth policy evaluations nor investigations of the potential of mentoring. In focussing, however, on the role of 'critical moments', social capital and social networks in shaping youth transitions, the paper highlights questions that are relevant to professional work with young people in the context of social exclusion. It identifies two examples of positive professional practice that assisted young adults in turning away from destructive lifestyles and transitions. It concludes, though, that even the proliferation of this sort of best practice would be unable to reverse the longer-term, deeper set processes of collective downward social mobility and economic marginalisation experienced by informants.

Keywords: *social exclusion, youth transitions, social capital, critical moments.*

Over the past ten years, we have been involved in research that attempts to understand youth transitions in a context of severe social exclusion. Whilst both concepts – 'transition' and 'exclusion' – are ones with which we critically contend, our critique here will be necessarily limited (see Shildrick and MacDonald, 2007; MacDonald and Marsh, 2005). Rather, this paper is directed toward providing a brief overview of some of the central findings and conclusions of our studies.

It is important to stress that our research were not evaluations of policy or practice (of any sort), nor did they have any close interest in mentoring. They were, though, ones that placed young people's own accounts – of growing up in poor neighbourhoods – at the centre of analysis and which sought a broad and longer-term understanding of youth transitions. In this paper we draw attention to sets of findings that might be particularly relevant to an understanding of youth exclusion from the point of view of professional work with young people.

Biography and social structure

A key – and for us continuing – theoretical dilemma is about how best to understand youth exclusion, even when armed with detailed, extensive, first-hand research findings. To be frank, we are still surprised by the volume of policy and academic output that claims to explain the socially disadvantaged and economically marginal positions that some young people find themselves in, by main reference to the (lack of) qualities of those young people

(of suitably high levels of ‘aspiration’ or ‘employability’ or the correct types of human or social capital, for instance).

Less common are explanations from youth policy and research that pay similar attention to the changing social and economic conditions that impact upon young people, and the places in which they live, as they make transitions. In other words, we suggest that at least equally sensible, valid explanations of youth exclusion could be laid out at the macro-level of global socio-economic change and local consequence (with much less recourse to the alleged deficits of youth). In respect of our own studies and research site (Teesside, in the North East of England) this *short answer* would emphasise in particular:

- massive economic restructuring and de-industrialisation in the latter third of the twentieth century;
- the rise of ‘poor work’, government programmes and recurrent unemployment in place of decimated, traditional employment routes to ‘respectable’ working-class adulthood (Brown and Scase, 1991);
- a now taken-for-granted normality of economic marginality for substantial swathes of the contemporary working-class, including its young adults;
- a process of inter-generational, down-ward social mobility whereby limited futures and ‘poor transitions’ became the norm for many working-class young people in places like this;
- finally, in our case, the social damage for individuals, families and neighbourhoods wreaked by new, imported heroin markets and associated criminal economies (Parker et al, 1998).

In other words, we believe an answer to the question ‘what causes the social exclusion of young people in Teesside?’ that operated with these facts is at least as compelling as one that detailed the personal capabilities, decisions and choices of individual young people. Yet these bullet points do not tell the whole story.

Even if economic marginalisation and poverty were standard experiences in youth and outcomes in adulthood (as they were), this does not mean that there isn’t – at the same time – an interesting story to be told of individual differences, personal solutions and striking dissimilarities in youth experience. Thus, we hope not too grandly, our research seeks to fulfil CW Mills famous call for sociological studies that connect ‘personal troubles’ of individual biography with ‘public issues of social structure’ (1970: 14). There is a longer *answer* to our question that necessitates shifting our gaze downwards, from social structure to biography, in order to unravel the more complicated, differentiated and perhaps more useful story – for youth policy intervention and professional practice – revealed by our research. Firstly, though, we need to describe our studies.

The Teesside studies

Our research has explored the life transitions of young adults from some of Britain’s poorest neighbourhoods; in Teesside, North East England¹. As noted, this is a conurbation that has undergone remarkably speedy economic change. Famous for its industrial prowess and

economic success in steel, chemical and heavy engineering industries in the post-war, Fordist period of full-employment, by the end of the century it had become 'one of the most de-industrialised locales in the UK' (Byrne, 1999: 93; Beynon et al, 1994).

Our first two studies – *Snakes and Ladders* (Johnston et al, 2000) and *Disconnected Youth? Growing up in Britain's Poor Neighbourhoods* (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005) – conducted fieldwork between 1998 and 2001. They investigated youth transitions in a context of severe socio-economic deprivation. We undertook research in Teesside wards that were in the top five per cent most deprived nationally, with some ranked amongst the five most deprived wards (from 8,414) in the country (DETR, 2000). Both studies involved periods of participant observation with young people and interviews with professionals who worked with young people or the problems of poor neighbourhoods (e.g. Youth Workers, Benefits Agency staff, New Deal Personal Advisors). At their core, though, they relied on lengthy, detailed, tape-recorded, biographical interviews (Chamberlayne et al, 2002) with 186 young people (82 females and 104 males) aged 15 to 25 years from the predominantly white, (ex) manual working-class population resident here. Our third project, *Poor Transitions* (Webster et al, 2004), sought to follow the fortunes of a proportion of the earlier sample (34 people from 186, 18 females and 16 males) as they reached their mid-to-late twenties, in 2003. In each study, sample recruitment was purposive and theoretically oriented toward capturing as diverse a set of experiences of transition as possible.

We draw here upon all three projects. In doing so, we reflect on longitudinal, qualitative research with so called 'hard to reach' young people as they grew up in the poorest neighbourhoods of one of the poorest towns in England.

Researching and theorising transitions

The research theorised youth transitions as reflecting the outcome of the interplay between individual agency, local (sub)culture and social structural constraint. The studies adopted a particular empirical and analytical focus upon six aspects of transition, or 'careers' (Becker, 1963; Berger and Berger, 1972): These were:

- 'school-to-work' (e.g. experiences of training, jobs, unemployment);
- family (e.g. of becoming a parent, partnerships);
- housing (e.g. of leaving home, independent living);
- leisure (e.g. of peer associations, identities, pastimes);
- criminal (e.g. of offending, desistance);
- and drug-using (e.g. of recreational and/or dependent use) careers.

Throughout, we have sought a 'holistic', broad understanding of transition that has been enabled by examining closely the interdependent relationships – within and across individual cases – between these 'careers' (Coles, 1995, 2000). For instance, we found it useful and more plausible to attempt to explain an individual's criminal offending in relation to a range of other factors in that young person's life (e.g. in respect of their school to work, family, housing or drug-using experiences) (Barry, 2006). We analysed the research material we gathered in ways standard to qualitative methodology, for example by searching

for thematic similarity and difference across all interview transcripts, but also examined individual cases longitudinally (i.e. tracking continuity and change in a person's life over time and seeking explanations for this).

Whilst it is impossible to describe the research findings in the space we have here we can point to how this holistic, longer view of wider aspects of young people's lives revealed:

- shared poverty and economic marginality across our interviewees as a facet of youth transition and as an outcome in early adulthood;
- a preponderance, then, of 'poor transitions' and striking uniformity of experience of 'school to work' careers (which were complex, unstable and non-progressive);
- greater differentiation of transitions in respect of young people's housing, family, leisure, criminal and drug-using careers – even when class, ethnicity and neighbourhood were constant.

The following two parts of the paper reflect on what we see as some of the key influences on these transitions²: firstly, the significance of 'critical moments' in young people's lives and secondly, the role of social networks and social capital in explaining transitions.

Influences on transitions, 1: 'critical moments'

Our 'close-up', biographical method – in which young people were asked to describe and reflect upon their lives to date and imagine their futures – demonstrated how usually unforeseen 'critical moments' (Johnston et al, 2000; Thomson et al, 2002) had acted as 'turning points' (Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997) in youth transitions. This and similar concepts have been discussed by other writers. Giddens (1991) describes the role of 'fateful moments' in late modern lives. Williamson's (2004) re-visitation of 'the Milltown Boys' twenty years on remarked upon the significance of 'wake-up times' in some of their lives.

In brief, our conceptualisation is of particular events and episodes defined by interviewees themselves, in the context of a retrospect interview, as having an important effect on the course of their later lives. Mostly, these critical moments were recognised by informants as momentous at the time of their occurrence. In a few cases, their impact was only really recognised later, looking back (e.g. Annie described her *growing* realisation of the lasting significance of the death of her brother, several years earlier). Whilst we argue that, actually, some of these events might not be so unpredictable given the social situation of the sample, they remained unpredictable at the level of the individual case. For example, we were struck by the extent of ill-health and bereavement in the lives of interviewees. This should not have been so surprising given the socio-spatial concentration of health inequalities and the objectively poor health record of the neighbourhoods we studied.

Many described the ill-health of themselves, friends or family members. Strikingly, over half in the *Poor Transitions* follow up study (Webster et al, 2004) mentioned the death of a loved one (i.e. a parent, sibling, child or close friend; this figure excludes grandparents). We do not have – or know of – appropriate statistics with which to compare these findings so as to judge whether this is an unusually high rate of bereavement; it seems so to us. Furthermore, we did not ask questions directly about bereavement or health; these were usually

experiences mentioned to us spontaneously in the course of discussion of other topics. We suspect, therefore, some under-reporting (for instance, of bereavement). Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, critical moments were also described in respect of: parental separation; housing moves from one estate to another; family revelations (e.g. learning one's 'father' was not biologically one's father); and the interventions of professionals (e.g. a particularly 'positive' encounter with a New Deal advisor, a notably 'negative' run-in with a Probation Officer).

Sometimes such critical moments appeared relatively trivial or mundane (to us) but carried dramatic and literally self-explanatory weight for the interviewee. Matty (aged 20) traced his later criminal career back to a process of school disengagement from his early teens and the comment of a particular teacher that 'you'll never make anything of yourself'. Clearly we would not want to elevate this passing comment to the status of cause of subsequent criminality (see MacDonald and Marsh, 2005) but the significance of this moment to Matty is also clear in that he homed in on its details, several years later, in seeking to explain the course of his life since then.

Some critical moments, on the other hand, would surely be obvious to all as dramatic, traumatic and heavy with potential for disruption of the life course. Importantly, such single episodes seem to be able to turn people towards and away from more destructive, disorderly life-styles. Lisa (23) told us that she used to be 'in with a crowd getting into trouble and doing drugs' until she was raped by one of them. Zack (24) said that 'the turning point' in his life was when 'my best mate hung himself'. He had now 'calmed down' and given up 'all sorts of mad stuff'. We suggest, then, that perhaps more surprising or interesting than questions about the prevalence of the occurrence of critical moments of one sort or another is the apparent unpredictability of their *outcomes* for individuals.

Let us give one or two more examples, even if we do not have the space to reflect on how and why it was that different people responded differently to similar-looking events. Martin was interviewed three times over several years. Within the terms of our findings, he had one of the most successful 'school to work' careers (e.g. in terms of the relative security, income and enjoyment that came from his job as an office administrator). Yet Fate had certainly seemed to deal Martin a particularly bad hand. In a five year period from the age of 18 his life had been littered with traumatic critical moments. By the age of 23 and our most recent interview with him, he had experienced the suicide of his father and of his best friend, the hospitalisation of his mother for reasons of mental illness, the diagnosis of his own chronic illness and the perinatal death of his first child. He reflected how, on each occasion, his personal response to loss had been to re-commit his energy, time and self-identity to working. Speaking of the death of his father, when Martin was 18, he says: 'I think it's made me a bit more successful, trying to succeed more. I've worked a lot harder since it happened, for me own good. I want to succeed more'. In comparison, other interviewees would describe how similar types of critical moment had been spurs toward more negative pathways (such as chaotic housing careers or careers of dependent drug use).

Influences on transitions, 2: social networks and social capital

Contemporary social theory has termed the networks and bonds of trust and reciprocity that exist between people as 'social capital' (Putnam, 2000; Barry, 2006). This is a concept that has become remarkably fashionable and influential in academic and policy thinking in the UK and globally in quick time. Different and competing understandings of the concept are offered by key theorists (Barry, 2006 provides a useful review). A common argument – especially as these ideas have percolated to the level of policy and practice – is that the success and prosperity of people and places can, in part, be explained not just by their different levels of human (e.g. skills, qualifications) or economic capital (e.g. finances) but also of their social capital. Terms differ but distinctions are usually drawn between 'bridging' (or 'linking') social capital which typically provides sometimes weaker but more numerous contacts to more socially diverse and perhaps geographically wide-spread contacts and 'bonding' social capital (e.g. strong, often kin and place-based networks).

A key, overall finding across the studies was that the informal support that came from social networks of family and friends – bonding social capital – was crucial to making life liveable for young adults under conditions of poverty, multiple deprivation and social exclusion. Interviewees pointed out, for example, the value of: informal childcare for young mothers (from other young mothers or family members); loans of money between individuals or households when cash was particularly tight; protection from criminal victimisation ('watching' each others' houses to ward against burglary, recovery of stolen goods after theft); emotional support at times of distress; informal job search strategies that relied on 'who you know, not what you know'; leisure lives that revolved around local friends, family and neighbours. Policy diagnoses that interpret poor neighbourhoods as lacking social capital (or the right sort of social capital) are in danger of not recognising the central, positive importance to life in poor neighbourhoods of the sort of mutual support we found.

Ironically, then, the functioning of these social networks generated a strong, subjective sense of social *inclusion* (in places and amongst people labelled as socially *excluded*). Similarly, this sort of inclusion – and perhaps solidarity – engendered implicit acceptance of the normality of unusual hardship. This is what life was like; you got on with it, with the help of family and friends.

A corollary of this form of inclusive, bonding capital was, paradoxically that it tended to limit individual social and spatial movement away from the conditions of social exclusion. These forms of social networking helped make life liveable but they also kept people in place. Our longitudinal research found that social networks became *increasingly* locally embedded, culturally uniform and narrow as the years passed. By the time interviewees were in their mid to late twenties – in general – young mothers associated with other young mothers, the recurrently unemployed socialised with others like them, 'heavy end' drug users/ offenders moved with the same. The loyalties, allegiances, associations and friendships developed through these local, informal networks *reinforced* transition pathways, narrative possibilities and social identities.

The significance of social networks in shaping individual transitions was far-reaching and examples were abundant across interview topics. For a significant minority, anti-

school peer group orientations had been crucial in shaping earlier school disaffection and disengagement (Brown and Scase, 1991). Post-16 'career' choices were strongly informed by family experiences and expectations of suitable work for working-class young men or women (Cockburn, 1987). Because job-search largely functioned via 'who you know' it limited young adults' options to the insecure, low paid 'poor work' done by the people that they did know (Morris, 1995). Housing careers and moves were locally circumscribed because of the strong attachment young adults felt to their neighbourhoods and social support they found there (MacDonald et al, 2005; Rugg, 1999). Teenage 'street corner society' was the foundation (for some) of later criminal/ drug careers (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007). Prison sometimes seemed attractive to those offenders who wished to leave the coercive lure of 'the street'; release was often viewed with apprehension by those keen to desist from drug and criminal careers, for the same reason. Young mothers who wanted to achieve a different or additional identity (as a university student) were subject to hostility from otherwise and previously friendly circles of other young mothers.

Speaking of research on social exclusion in Southern Italy, Antonella Spanò (2002: 73) exactly captures this potential weakness of having strong ties to family, friends and neighbourhood:

Networks based on kinship as well as on friendship can easily become a constraint...by enclosing the subject in a limited social space, they can preclude the possibility of having new opportunities, of working out new projects, of maturing new aspirations.

Or as the key exponent of social capital theory puts it: 'bonding social capital bolsters our narrower selves' (Putnam, 2000: 23).

Policy and practice interventions

It is important to stress that – unlike many reports on social groups or places like this – our studies were *not* evaluations of policy. Inevitably, however, discussion in interviews would often turn to how informants had experienced a particular scheme, programme or agency. Sometimes interviewees would focus parts of their account as well on the professional representatives of agencies/ institutions that they had encountered (e.g. a teacher, police officer, probation officer, New Deal advisor or youth worker). It may well be, therefore, that there were very positive examples of policy and professional practice happening in these neighbourhoods at the time of the fieldwork that our method failed to detect.

On the basis of the accounts that we *did* collect in interviews it would be possible to paint a depressing picture of the intervention of policy and professional practice in the lives we researched. After all, Teesside in general and these neighbourhoods perhaps especially have been subject to repeated rounds of area regeneration initiatives during the 1970s, '80s and '90s (Beynon et al, 1994). Yet, at the time of the research at the end of the '90s and early 2000s, all wards that constituted our research sites were in the five per cent most deprived in the country.

Perhaps the single most significant 'policy' investment in these young people's lives has

been through state education. Yet they emerged at school leaving age extremely poorly qualified and in many cases with strong anti-school attitudes. Overall, accounts of school were dismal and depressingly familiar of long-standing, working-class, school 'failure' (Willis, 1977). Careers advice and guidance was generally seen as partial and perfunctory and resulted in the confirmation of class and gender stereotypical 'choices' about early school leaving and enrolment on government sponsored schemes of one sort or another. Accounts of youth training were *uniformly* negative, again exactly reminiscent of the way that post-school schemes for poorly qualified young people were reported in earlier decades (Finn, 1987).

Official employment services and their job search strategies – such as the speculative sending of letters to employers (names and addresses derived from Yellow Pages) regardless of whether they were advertising jobs or not – were universally derided as ineffective, 'stupid' and a waste of time. Not one person received a job offer as a result of this method, despite the samples having sent literally thousands of such letters. By the time individuals were in their mid to late twenties, there was, however, evidence of greater use of private employment agencies in informants' working lives. The New Deal for Young People fared better than immediate post-school schemes in interviewees' assessment, with some commenting on the positive, enthusing, personalised care and support they received from advisors. Others, though, were very critical of this programme and described it in ways similar to the depiction of youth training (Kemp, 2005). Indeed, some individuals found themselves back at the same very training agency and building a few years after graduating from post-school schemes, this time to enrol on New Deal.

Few interviewees commented on youth work provision, with virtually all, by their mid-teens, preferring to spend their free-time leisure in unsupervised 'street corner society' (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007). Whilst some acknowledged that they had attended youth clubs earlier in their lives, these were largely regarded as 'for kids' (i.e. going by these accounts, those under 14 or 15 years). Perhaps surprisingly, relatively little was said about criminal justice agencies or professionals. We think that this partly reflects the 'taken-for-granted-ness' of interviewees' perspectives on police, probation and prison. The minority of interviewees who did have serious criminal careers seemed not to expect these encounters to be anything but 'negative' (although one or two did comment positively about the encouragement or kindness of a probation officer or prison officer).

Returning to our earlier discussion, there was little obvious positive welfare involvement in the lives of those young people as dealt with critical moments (indeed, some of these were caused by what might be regarded as malign professional intervention). For instance, psychological ill-health appeared to be relatively frequent in our samples. The receipt of professional support or care for such conditions appeared to be infrequent, except for the prescription of anti-depressants. We say 'receipt' because interviewees often made clear their preference for informal social support, from family and friends. Many will not have sought professional help.

We can, however, finish this part of our discussion on a more positive note. A scan of our interviews for 'good news' stories about policy and practice, identified two interesting exceptions to the tale we are telling.

The first was in respect of drug treatment and reported by those young adults with serious, long-term careers of problematic drug use. Elsewhere we describe in more detail careers and transitions like this (Webster et al, 2004). Here we note how amongst that constellation of factors that seemed to effect the move toward committed desistance from lives revolving around habituated heroin use and burglary, shop-lifting, street robbery or prostitution – and the social networks that sustained them – therapeutic, quick and non-punitive drug treatment proved significant. At the time of our fieldwork, one local GP surgery stood out as a beacon of good practice in the treatment of heroin users. Interviewees praised this intervention, in comparison with drug treatment agencies and regimes they encountered elsewhere, and paid testament to its effectiveness – and its key staff – in helping them change their lives.

The second was a voluntary sector, youth work project that had a base on the estates we researched. Several of those interviewees with longer-term engagement in 'street corner society' and/ or lengthier careers of offending had begun to attend this project in their late teens and early twenties. Participation in its organised leisure activities, excursions and vocationally-oriented, basic short courses helped to fill their time, divert their energies into more positive activities and broaden social and geographic horizons. This is one example of the sort of 'purposeful activity' that we identified as another significant factor in processes of desistance from criminal and drug-using careers.

Roy (aged 21) and his friends used to attend nearly every day: 'in there you can learn activities – it's not just playing pool like in a normal youth club – learn how to handle yourself and stuff like that'. These young men talked very positively of going along together, supporting each other informally. What was particularly interesting in its description was how it stood out from the generally negative depiction by interviewees of most training and employment organisations that they had encountered. It also contrasted with the general rejection of youth services/ centres as 'for kids' that we have noted. The wholly voluntary nature of participation, the fact that attendance by pre-existing friendship groups was encouraged, that activities were not tied to explicit, 'hard' employment outcomes (that might be perceived as pointless) and that the project was run by professionals whom participants perceived as trustworthy and empathetic (i.e. they understood the pressures these young men faced, in some cases through biographical experience), are all factors that help explain this. To re-iterate, our research was not about mentoring and nor did it uncover much *obvious* evidence of mentoring relationships between adult professionals and young people. Indeed, we have noted the general lack of professional support for young people in their critical moments. The relationships developed in the youth work project described here were, perhaps, the closest thing to mentoring that the studies uncovered. Whilst not experts in this field, we wonder whether the sort of model and principles of youth work described here might be ones that could usefully inform attempts to build mentoring relationships with 'socially excluded' young adults. Interestingly, this youth work project also incorporated – perhaps with no knowledge of this fashionable language – practical attempts to broaden out young people's social capital by offering wider, different views of individuals' social and geographic horizons (see Boeck et al, 2006 for a discussion of youth work and social capital).

Conclusion: understanding youth exclusion

In this paper we have described some of the important themes and findings of our research, focusing upon the influence on youth transitions and processes of exclusion of firstly, critical moments and secondly, social networks and social capital. Returning to the theme of the beginning of the paper, we conclude that it is important not to overemphasise the twists and differences of *individual* biographies – and explanations of these – in understanding *collective* youth exclusion (Shildrick and MacDonald, 2007). Despite the variation we found in young adults' family, housing, leisure, criminal and drug-using careers – and in interviewees' subjective understandings of their changing lives – unstable, non-progressive 'school to work' careers typified virtually the entire sample. Poverty and economic marginality were uniform experiences in youth and outcomes in early adulthood. To explain this we must, we argue, properly appreciate those deeper, macro-level processes of social and economic change, described earlier in the paper; processes that provide the broader context in which such transitions are made. Speaking of our samples, Webster et al (2006: 9) say:

Our cohorts were born on the cusp or in the depths of accelerated social transformation (between 1974 and the mid-80s), which de-industrialised their neighbourhoods, polarising their experiences and class positions. These crises were shifted onto the life histories of individuals.

Undoubtedly, policy and practice interventions of different sorts can help individual young people make better progress to adulthood, even in the contexts of multiple deprivation in which our participants lived. Crimmens et al (2004) describe, for instance, the potential of street-based youth work in helping those young people described as socially excluded (or at risk of becoming so). Despite some of their more generally negative experience of (most forms of) state intervention in their lives, we were able to point to two clear examples of more positive professional practice; both examples assisted young adults to turn away from destructive lifestyles and transitions. Of course, even the proliferation of this sort of best practice with young people – of mentoring, drug treatment, youth work or whatever – would be unable to reverse the longer-term, deeper set processes of *collective* downward social mobility and economic marginalisation experienced by our informants.

Notes

- 1 Paul Mason, Jane Marsh, Donald Simpson, Les Johnston, Mark Simpson, Colin Webster, Andrea Abbas, Mark Cieslik and Louise Ridley participated, at different points, in these projects. We are indebted to them, to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) for their support and to all the participants in their study. All real names of informants and their immediate neighbourhoods have been changed.
- 2 It is important to stress that these are just two sets of influences; the research identified and discussed others as well.

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Obligatory friends, surrogate kin: some questions for mentoring

Lynn Jamieson

Many personal relationships involve an element of mentoring, albeit that they are often more than that and not reducible to mentoring. This article scrutinises current theorising of and research about friendship and kin relationships for messages for planned mentoring arrangements. Consideration is given to the difficulties of separating out caring for and caring about others and to the appropriateness and risks of likening mentoring to relationships of friendship and kinship.

Keywords: *relationships, friendship, intimacy, caring for, caring about*

This article addresses the blurring of formal mentoring relationships with friendship and family, not by focusing on formal mentoring arrangements but on sociological theorising and research about family and kinship relationships. By looking at the relationship between the activities that are at the heart of mentoring and everyday friendship and family relationships, it seeks lessons for more formal mentoring arrangements. The literature discussing the merits of formal mentoring complains about the lack of a common definition (Colley 2003, Hall, 2003, Philip and Hendry 1996). However, the activities of giving support and advice are taken as standard elements. In some accounts, mentoring is also about challenging mentees to realise their potential and providing encouragement to rise to the challenge (Philip and Hendry, 1996). Flows of practical and emotional support, advice and encouragement are common aspects of personal relationships although personal relationships are not necessarily reducible to mentoring or necessarily seen by the parties to them as being about mentoring. Indeed, the term 'mentor' may not be used in this context very often and its use may be class-specific. However, it is sometimes used to describe aspects of family or friendship relationships and its everyday usage reflects the same diversity of meanings that have become a matter of complaint in reviews of the literature on formal mentoring arrangements (Colley 2003, Hall, 2003, Philip and Hendry 1996). A relative or friend might be declared as a mentor, meaning that this person is an exemplar of how life should be lived. Here the word mentor is interchangeable with role model. But mentor can also be used to mean a much narrower band of guidance pertaining to some specific kinds of conduct or a particular activity – success in romance or at work or in play (sport, musical instrument etc.), for example. In this case, to call a friend a mentor is simply to draw attention to a particular aspect of the friendship and might not successfully sum-up the whole relationship.

Planned formal mentoring schemes for young people have often adopted the language of 'befriending' and/or of being like family, as in Big Brother/Big Sister programmes. Studies suggest that young people are more likely to regard mentoring relationships as a success if they experience them as like family or friendship relationships (Colley 2003, Philip et al, 2004, Philip, 2008). For example, Helen Colley described circumstances in which young

people became bewildered when their relationship with their mentor failed to become a friendship relationship (Colley, 2003). Kate Philip and her colleagues found young people across different types of schemes valued mentors who accepted them 'on their own terms', were prepared to 'share a laugh', and with whom they shared mutual trust, reciprocity and a sense of continuity of the relationship (Philip et al, 2004, Philip, 2008). Such a list could also be found in studies of friendship (Willmott 1987, Allan 1998). In this study and that of Jasmine Clayden's and Mike Stein's (2005) young people offered many examples of how apparently simple affectionate gestures by mentors or acts that seemed to go beyond the requirements of their role were referred back to by young people as signalling the relationship as 'special'. Sometimes young people used the language of friends or family to refer to a mentor or key worker, for example, 'she's my second mum' (Philip, 2008). The first section of this article discusses the fact that in personal life flows of assistance are typically an aspect of sustaining or developing close or intimate relationships, and the possible threats this creates for attempts to separate caring for and caring about others in more formal mentoring arrangements. Consideration is given to whether the threat is more or less dramatic because cultural celebrations of the ideals of personal life create a hierarchy of intimacy which values care about somebody, and acting as their soulmate over practical acts of care for them and acting as their helpmate.

In many formal mentoring programmes, it is a requirement that the mentor is 'senior' in some sense, not necessarily older but somehow more experienced or knowledgeable or otherwise having something to pass on which the mentee lacks (although the idea that mentees are in deficit has also been criticised as a limited vision of the problems faced by some recipients of formal mentoring programs). In the fullness of a friendship relationship, mentoring might be an aspect of reciprocity between equals rather than a one-way flow in a somewhat hierarchical arrangement. Everyday usage of the term 'mentor' to describe an informal arrangement is perhaps most likely to describe an informal aspect of a formal and hierarchical relationship, such as an exceptionally helpful and friendly senior colleague at work. The term 'mentor' can be used to make it clear that the relationship has a particular dimension that goes beyond the conventional requirements of the formal relationship but without making it like any other friendship. The mentor has to be a 'senior' for the term 'mentor' to be a good description of his or her helpfulness. The conventions of friendships and intra-generational familial relationships are of a more reciprocal ebb and flow of support and advice. This flags up a possible tension for formal mentoring relationships that claim to be friendship-like. Being friends suggests equality and choice, but mentoring involves negotiating and managing a degree of inequality and lack of reciprocity because one person has something that the other has not which is being passed on. However, one-way flows of support and advice in somewhat hierarchical relationships are also found in everyday personal relationships. In inter-generational familial relationships, and particularly in parent-child relationships, some forms of practical support and advice are expected to be in one direction for long periods. The final section of the paper addresses whether this suggest that surrogate kin are a better model for mentoring than some form of obligatory friends.

Separating Practical Care and Intimacy

Regardless of whether or not people use the term 'mentor', the activity of caring for or

looking out for somebody by helpful passing on of information, experience and expertise is a subset of practical caring activities which are a very common feature of many personal relationships, including friendship, family-household and wider kin relationships. It is widely recognised that access to such informal mentoring strengthens children's capacity to cope, and their resilience (Dolan, 2008). Research which focuses on 'personal communities' (Spencer and Pahl, 2006) or social networks (Allan, 1998) or networks of care (Hansen, 2005), that is the whole constellation of personal relationships in which an individual is embedded, indicates that sometimes people create divisions of labour within their network, for example, going to some people for particular kinds of practical help, others for advice and others for emotional support. Nevertheless, this does not mean that acts of care, whether hands-on practical help or in the form of advice giving, are routinely separated from intimacy in personal relationships. On the contrary, it may be that, in some relationships, practical acts of care are playing a key role in creating a sense that the participants are close and special to each other. It has been argued that there are a repertoire of practices by which people sustain intimacy, and in some relationships practical acts of care will predominate and in a sense substitute for other forms of demonstrating intimacy, such as a dialogue of mutual disclosure and declarations of affection (Jamieson, 1998). Hence, while flows of the kind of advice giving and passing on of information, experience and expertise that are expected in more formal mentoring roles may not be necessary for intimacy, they can play a role in creating and sustaining intimacy in relationships.

The literature on parent-child relationships, sibling relationships and couple relationships contain examples of practical acts of care taking on symbolic significance and being experienced as confirmations of love and being cared about. Research on children's experiences of families contains examples of children citing acts of practical care by way of explanation of why parents and siblings are special. When circumstances unsettle taken for granted assumptions that parents love and care – such as the separation of until then co-resident parents, or the inconsistent behaviour of a drug or alcohol abusing parent – then practical acts of care can take on even more symbolic significance as confirmation of the continuance of being cared about. Similar examples in the literature on couples can be found over a long period. Kathryn Backett (1982) conducted a very detailed study of middle-class couples in the 1970s with conventional mother-at-home and father-at-work arrangements while bringing up young children. She showed that men's small and occasional contributions to childcare and domestic work were symbolically very important. These practical acts complemented verbal expressions of interest in mothering activities in creating a sense of parenting as a joint project which in turn sustained a sense of intimacy and equality between the couple, despite the realities of very unequal divisions of labour. In this case, practical acts of caring helped to authenticate verbal and emotional support. While acts of care by a stranger- become-mentor will not carry the same baggage as acts of care by a parent or partner, in some circumstances, and over time, a relationship which is consistently providing practical care may come to be experienced as an intimate relationship.

There are also, of course, empirical examples of relationships in which there are practical acts of care but an absence of any mutual sense of intimacy. There are various types of employment in which service provider and service user relationship involve bodily intimacy but not the kind of intimacy that involves people feeling close and special to each other.

Julia Twigg's (2000) research on care staff bathing elderly people is an example which illustrates the complexities and contradictions of separating body work and emotional intimacy. Rebecca Pockney's (2006) research on support staff and people with learning difficulties shows the possible confusions and asymmetries in understandings that can arise between service providers of care and service users. Pockney compared the social networks of 14 people with learning disabilities living in residential care with those of 24 of the paid support staff members who looked after them and found each group had a very different view of the nature of their relationship. Whereas people with learning disabilities typically placed at least one paid member of staff in the inner circle of their map of intimate relationships, carers rarely placed people with learning disabilities anywhere on their map. Only five paid workers put a client with learning disabilities on their map and when they did, these were always on the periphery.

The residential arrangements and social world of the learning disabled adults resulted in repeated and regular contact with a pool of paid carers who performed a range of practical caring and mentoring roles. While the carers had extensive social worlds elsewhere, the service receivers or clients did not. Hence, they may not have had other relationships which involved the routine physical contact and elements of self disclosure that characterised their relationships with staff. From the perspective of the staff, their relationships with clients were not intimate relationships. From the perspective of people with learning disabilities, they had intimate relationships with some staff members and those that they included at the centre of their maps of intimate relationships were their friends. When asked to describe what they valued about the staff, the learning disabled research participants said that:

they could talk to them easily, they would listen to their problems, helped them with their college work, spoke clearly, gave them individual attention, made them laugh, took them out, and were enjoyable company. In short, the data suggested that staff were valued because they accepted clients for who they were, could offer practical assistance and information, and provided emotional support and advice (Pockney, 5.5, 2006).

But paid workers almost never described their clients as friends and resisted any erosion of the boundaries between their position as paid carers and their clients.

Service providers and service users also had different perspectives concerning the degree of choice involved in the construction of their relationship. From the perspective of the client, when they identified staff as friends they were choosing individuals from the possible pool of others with whom they interacted. The paid workers, on the other hand, saw their contact with the client as obligatory, the stuff of their paid employment, rather than a matter of choice. Moreover, while staff saw the relationships as asymmetrical ones in which they gave care and clients received it, many clients thought their relationships were reciprocal since they spent considerable amounts of time and energy devising acts of kindness to staff which they saw staff accept. Pockney also noted that neither group seemed clear about where the social boundary between themselves and the others lay. Staff had an ethos of treating clients as equals but also of trying to maintain professional distance by treating all clients the same. She comments 'Given the confusion it is little wonder that many service users have misconstrued the friendliness the staff display towards them as friendship.' (7.5, 2006)

Styles of Intimacy: Soulmates and Helpmates

In both popular and academic commentaries, the essence of the personal in personal relationships is often understood as a particular form of intimacy meaning 'closeness' and being 'special' to another person based on an exchange of mutual disclosure of inner selves. This is the form of intimacy described in Anthony Giddens's widely cited *Transformations of Intimacy* (1992). The stories offered by popular cultures often provides contrasts between the inadequate personal relationships of silent characters who do not know how to or are determined not to show their inner feelings and those with the emotional literacy to reveal themselves through talk. However, in contrast to this, Jamieson (1998, 1999) has argued that in the present as well as in the past, some people construct meaningful intimate relationships with relatively little talk and that there is a repertoire of types of activities which can create and sustain a sense of intimacy. Although being a soulmate may be more idealised in our culture than being a helpmate, in practice and across a range of personal relationships, practical acts of care are a common way of sustaining a sense of closeness.

Research on siblings, friendship and couples has commented on gender differences in willingness to talk in a self-disclosing way, suggesting women and girls value soulmates more than men and boys. For example, recent work on children's sibling relationships has found that girls were more likely than boys to see talk and confiding as a measure of closeness with their siblings while boys were more likely than girls to stress shared activities (Edwards et al 2005, Hadfield et al 2006). Analysis of Irish children's millennium essays about themselves and their futures found significant gender differences in the tendency to talk about family and friendship relationships, and in the emphasis placed on intimate confiding. The combination of gender and age differences lead the researchers analysing these texts to describe adolescent boys as having a 'bleak emotional landscape'. (O'Connor et al, 2004).

Psychological literature has long suggested different styles of friendship among girls and boys, with girls tending to form small, intimate, communicative and co-operative groups or pairs, and boys large, hierarchical, activity focused and competitive groups. There is debate about whether such differences have been exaggerated and inappropriately isolated from analysis of the social construction of gender. Barrie Thorne's (1993) work is often cited in this regard. She criticised the dichotomisation of girls' and boys' friendship patterns into girls' dyadic intimacy versus boys' activity groups. Her detailed study of Californian nine year olds at play documented both considerable overlap and considerable variation between boys and girls. For some boys, the pattern of their friendship was dyadic. She also found girls in large groups of the type which the literature often attributes to boys. Indeed girls who have best friends and do things as a pair may also play in larger groups because interaction varies by activities and context. As well as documenting overlap in the friendship practices of girls and boys, she provided a feminist analysis of the ways in which friendship practices and interactions in play construct gender difference; while boys and girls often come together without reference to gender, assumptions about the meaning of being a boy or being a girl create the ever present potential to turn them into separate camps. Her field work showed that boys already saw being a boy as involving superiority and a mastery enacted in ways which left girls in a 'one-down position' (1993, 84). As in many other contexts, being like-a-girl could be used as an insult to a boy. In the Californian playground

that Thorne studied, boys controlled more space than girls, invaded girls' space more than girls invaded theirs and acted out games in which girls but not boys were contaminated and contaminating.

A number of authors have argued that the hegemonic form of masculinity, with its emphasis on mastery of self and others encourages relationships between adult men which are sociable without being self-revelatory. It has also been argued that the material and financial circumstance of different social class positions can also result in different levels of self-censoring in friendship relationships in order to prevent exchanges that cannot be sustained. As is discussed further in the next section, working-class men's relationships, consequently, are the most restricted in terms of the limited range of contexts in which they occur and in degrees of self-disclosure (Allan, 1998). However, this only makes working-class men's relationships inherently lacking in any intimacy if a narrow definition of intimacy based on mutual self-disclosure is adopted and the notion of a repertoire of practices creating intimacy is set aside. Men may effectively be showing their care for each other instrumentally through the practical help of fixing, mending and their history of taking pleasure in doing things together. Failing to recognise the role that such practical activities play in constructing intimacy may exaggerate differences in levels of intimacy between men's friendships and women's. Graham Allan (1998) and other more recent research on adult friendships by Spencer and Pahl, (2006) and Thorne's (1993) work with children, shows overlap as well as differences between men and women in practices of friendship. The research literature has long contained examples of women limiting degrees of self-disclosure in their friendship relationships and seeking out friendships that provide more practical support rather than being based solely on 'disclosing intimacy'. For example, Ellen Lewin (1993) showed that single mothers found that they often sought out new friends among other mothers because they could not get the practical support they needed from their women friends prior to motherhood. In her review of the research literature, Jamieson (1998) concluded that there has been a tendency to exaggerate the degree of 'disclosing intimacy' in women's friendships, and to downplay the importance of other dimensions of intimacy for both men and women.

This is not to deny the research finding that in heterosexual couple relationships women are often disappointed by the amount of self-disclosure and emotional self-expression offered by their partner. This has been a repeated finding in both British and North American research. For example, speaking about the fact that he is unable to give his wife the emotional support he feels she wants, one of Lillian Rubin's respondents in her classic study of working-class families (1976) commented on the impossibility of discussing such an issue with his friends. 'The guys I know, they don't worry about things like that. ...People don't talk about those things; you just know where those guys are; you don't have to ask them.' The fact that he 'just knows' is a claim to privileged insight into how his friends think without any need to ask, notwithstanding the impossibility of asking because of the self-embarrassment that such a question would create. This 'knowing' is in itself testimony to his sense of intimacy with his friends as well as being a statement of acceptance of the limits of the type of intimacy that they have, an acceptance he may wish that his wife shared in her expectations of intimacy in their partnership relationship.

Accounts of the 'soul mate' version of intimacy typically suggest that mutual self-

disclosure requires exclusivity, keeping 'others' at a distance. For example, in describing the mechanisms by which people construct self-disclosing intimacy, Giddens (ibid) suggested that some form of boundary work maintaining exclusionary boundaries is always necessary. Jamieson has argued that some practices of intimacy, including sustaining intimacy through acts of practical care, have less need to be exclusionary dyadic practices reliant on the creation of narrow boundaries (2005). A sense of shared practical projects and having gone through things together can create a sense of common history that makes a relationship feel special. While common history is by definition not shared by all and could become the basis of forms of exclusionary celebration, this is not necessarily so and neither the sense of intimacy that joint projects create nor the common history need be protected from others. Giddens premised his understanding of the relationship between intimacy and exclusion on psychoanalytic insight into the 'feeling of exclusivity that an infant enjoys with its mother' (1992: 138). He identified trust as a key element of intimacy that requires exclusionary practices; trust 'is not a quality capable of indefinite expansion ... the disclosure of what is kept from other people is one of the main psychological markers likely to call forth trust and to be sought after in return' (Giddens, 1992, pp.138-9). Children's accounts of friendship often echo elements of this emphasis on the importance of trust (Morrow, 2004); a good friend can keep secrets and will not expose personal information in hurtful ways. Trust is not always based on a fusion of intimacy and exclusivity, however. In professional practice, it is common for service providers to promise their clients confidentiality and here trust appeals to the reliability of a system of rules of professional conduct. Children's confidence in professional rules of confidentiality is not widely investigated and in many contexts children are wary of taking their problems to professional 'strangers' (Highet and Jamieson, 2007).

Models for Mentoring: Obligatory Friendship versus Surrogate Kinship

The way that some authors have talked about friendship exemplifies the neglect of practical help as a core activity of the relationship. Friendship is seen as the ideal-type of contemporary personal relationships, in the terms of Anthony Giddens, a 'pure relationship' – a voluntary relationship of equals based on nothing other than the appreciation of the unique qualities of the other individual, with no structure of obligation or overarching script telling you how to be a good friend. This is the sort of definition offered by Alan Silver:

In modern culture, the 'essence' of the personal is found, not in formal roles and obligations, but in subjective definitions of the situation. Not normatively constituted by public roles and obligations – indeed often constituted in distinction from them – friendship is, in formal terms, the 'purest' and most widely available instance of personal relations in this sense. Spouses, lovers, kin, and colleagues are friends to the extent that they treat the objective conditions of their bond as collateral or inessential. Friendship, as a continuous creation of personal will and choice, is ungoverned by the structural definitions that bear on family and kinship ... It is an ideal arena for that individualized conception of personal agency central to modern notions of personal freedom. (Silver, 1997).

This description is not typically presented as the universal character of friendship but rather

a form of friendship produced by the specific social, economic and cultural conditions of a particular period in rich world capitalist industrial societies.

However, those who do empirical research on friendship in our society in the present find the realities of what friends mean to people are rather variable (Adams and Allan, 1998, Allan 1998, Spencer and Pahl, 2006). Similarly variation is also found in how people define relationships as being 'family'. Some researchers consequently refuse to start with a definition of a 'friend' or 'family', opting instead to try to establish empirically how these terms are understood through looking not only at people's verbal definitions but also what they say and do to construct and maintain relationships that are claimed as friend or family. The term 'practices', first advocated by David Morgan (1999, 2002) as a way of understanding the meaning and significance of family through looking at 'family practices', has become a byword for this approach.

In the UK, Graham Allan is the main theorist of friendship relationships and while he may not have typically used the term 'friendship practices' until recently, he has written extensively about variation in the meaning and practices of friendship, demonstrating how people's environments (their personal environment, social networks, community and society) structure and shape their type of friendship relationships and practices of friendship (Allan and Adam, 1998, Allan, 1998, 2005). His discussion includes observations of divergence between ideals of friendship and everyday realities of friendship. He has argued that in Britain at least in the decades from the 1950s -1970s and perhaps for rather longer, white British working-class men had a preference for 'mate' over 'friend' and were likely to say that they did not have friends despite sharing an understanding of the ideal of 'true'/ 'real friend' as a confidante who is 'always there for you'. Mates however might well look out for each other in practical ways in the workplace.

For Allan, marked class differences in spending time with friends, the more context specific nature of working-class friendship- the mates were workmates who never came home or moved into family spheres- were linked to the different material position of working-class and middle-class lives and the different limits material circumstances placed on reciprocity and self-exposure which might reveal inequalities. His argument is that during a particular period of 20th century Britain, the material circumstances of working class people encouraged them to avoid opening up their home to the scrutiny of others and to limit episodes of open ended exchange. Consequently, he talks of how class difference in patterns of friendship have become eroded in very recent decades by improved housing conditions of working class households, greater levels of affluence and also less gender segregation in working-class marriage relationships.

Some analysis also talks about limits on what people will ask of, expect of and do for each other in friendship relationships that go beyond material concerns restricting openness and exchange. For much of the twentieth century, when research literature compared friendship relationships and kin relationships, it indicated that if practical help or financial assistance was needed then kin rather than friends were the front line of defence for most people. It was argued that this was because exchange among at least some kin relationships, particularly parents and children, has a normatively obligatory character. Moreover, as a 'given' and therefore almost inalienable relationship, rather than a 'chosen'

voluntary relationship, giving or receiving involves less risk since imbalances are less likely to undermine the relationship. Such a 'given' relationship does not require direct reciprocity to be sustained but can withstand delay in return or perhaps even an absence of return, and exchanges can be sporadic or occasional rather than becoming the practices that maintain the relationship. Similarly, Peter Willmott, for example, noted that most practical support comes from relatives not friends – for both working-class and middle-class men and women: 'friends are more likely sources of companionship or emotional support.' (Willmott, 1987, 102).

This might suggest that being kin-like might be a better arrangement for mentoring than being friend-like if people are more used to practical care flowing through kin. As noted in the introduction, asymmetries in flows are common across generations and kin relationships seem to offer a better analogy for the somewhat unequal relationships between a formal mentor and a mentee. However, there are caveats suggested by the research literature. In British culture, the fact of being biological kin or legal kin does not mean an automatic presumption of an open channel for assistance or support, even though the parent-child relationship may be the first line of help for many people. Finch and Mason's (1991) [KP1] work on family obligations exploring people's normative assumptions about when help should and must be given, showed that even although parent-child relationships carry a very strong presumption that help should be given, most people recognise limits to what can be asked and expected. Moreover, in general, people dislike and disguise asking for or receiving help from kin.

The suggested dichotomy between kin and friendship relationships is also rejected by some authors because they point to research documenting practices of kinship and friendship that are much more blurred. The kin that people keep in touch with, their active or effective kin relationships typically involves a sense of choice and wanting to keep in touch rather than simply a sense of obligation. Kin relationships without this sense of choice are often relationships in name only. Even parent-child relationships can fundamentally break down and be revoked. Similarly, friendship relationships can take on an obligatory feel. In recent research on personal relationships, Liz Spencer and Ray Pahl (2006) have suggested that both kin and friendship relationships can be mapped on the dimension of 'given' versus 'chosen' as well as a number of other dimensions which I would call practices of intimacy. They suggest that there is increased suffusion between family and friendship relationships in contemporary personal life.

Many authors writing about friendship, including Graham Allan see equality and reciprocity as fundamental to the relationship. However, a number of studies have shown a degree of tolerance of inequality and lack of reciprocity in actual friendship relationships. Spencer and Pahl (2006) devote a section of their recent book to reciprocity in which they describe considerable variation in practice. There are also many documented instances of friendship which have been sustained despite divergence in circumstances that could be described as growing inequalities or which exceptionally have managed to bridge social divisions. For example, Rachel Brooks (2002, 2005) talks about the management of 'difference' by young working-class women planning their route to university and middle-class occupations while maintaining relationships with their peers remaining in working-class tracks. In such ways, friendships can bridge social distance.

The core activities of mentoring, forms of giving assistance, support, advice and encouragement, occur routinely in personal relationships. The crucial role of family and friendship relationships in promoting the wellbeing of individuals and communities is widely recognised across academic, policy and practice domains. The considerable variation in the ideals and practices of personal relationships means that no ready-made road map can be derived from the research literature for use by formal mentors seeking to provide support to mentees. Even though ways of conducting personal relationships are known to vary systematically by such social divisions as gender and social class, there is considerable variation within these categories. However, it has long been recognised in the sociological literature that understanding any particular type of family or friendship relationship requires a picture of the whole constellation of the important personal relationships that make up an individual's social world. Recent literature identifying perceived best practice in fostering resilience in children advocates formal services working intensively to nurture the benefits of naturally occurring positive informal relationships, suggesting work with a young person and the key player(s) in their social world (Dolan, 2008). This is very different from mentoring arrangements that interact with a child in parallel to but with little connection with or regard for their informal support system. However, such mentoring arrangements may typically have relatively modest ambitions.

Practices of providing care for others without caring about others are not normal within personal relationships. In the realms of personal life where nobody is paid to be a friend or an 'auntie', relationships that have become obligation without affect or sense of intimacy are always problematic and unlikely to be sustained. When there are flows of practical and emotional help in 'given' obligatory relationships, they are typically seen as 'chosen' voluntary relationships. Acts of practical care and support are more often part of the repertoire of how people do intimacy in personal relationships than acted out purely because of a sense of obligation. Moreover, even in relationships that do not originate as personal relationships but as relationships in which paid carers provide a service to those in need of care, people often experience being cared for as being cared about. A mentoring relationship has the potential to be experienced as a relationship involving care in both these senses. People who are 'friendship poor' and lack informal social support are particularly likely to see friendly relationships as potential friendships but short-term mentoring is likely to disappoint. 'Helpmates' might be more important to some people and in some circumstances than 'soulmates' even if the latter are more culturally celebrated in our ideals of friendship. This underlines the possibility that a mentoring relationship that involves a sustained period of regular, albeit limited, acts of practical care conducted in specific contexts may be fairly similar to important, close and intimate relationships for some people, some of the time.

The asymmetric character of many one-to-one formal mentoring arrangements has implications for the dynamic of the relationship and how it can be honestly presented. Presenting mentoring as like an age-graded or intergenerational kinship relationship might have the benefit over the label 'befriending' of acknowledging an element of hierarchy and asymmetry, as in the title *BigBrother/BigSister*. However, although friendship and kinship are often seen as different kinds of relationships, there is a substantial body of research showing that this difference is sometimes blurred: kinship relationships are often friendship-like, friendships can sometimes cope with lack of reciprocity and all personal relationships

have limits, things that cannot be talked about or asked for, given or received. The language of kinship and friendship may both hold out the promise of authentic friendship, and a potentially durable significant relationship with clear risks of disappointment. The slang term 'buddy', that has been adopted in some peer support schemes, may be well chosen, if, like the term mate, it conveys like-a-friend but not-quite-a-friend. On the other hand, it may continue to create a sense of a special one-to-one relationship, and carry other locally and culturally specific baggage.

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Too Grand, Bland and Abstract: The limitations of 'youth governance' as an explanatory schema for contemporary governmental responses to socially deviant young people

John Pitts

This article questions the assertion that recent governmental responses to socially deviant young people are best understood in terms of the emergence of a new and distinctive form of 'advanced liberal youth governance'. Drawing upon the findings of a recent national study of street-based youth work with 'socially excluded' and offending young people, and other contemporaneous research, it contends that many of the claims underpinning the 'youth governance thesis' do not accord with actual events in the world, and that others over-simplify and distort the phenomena they purport to explain. It argues that the idea of youth governance is not only tautological but, as currently conceptualised, far too grand, bland, abstract and fatalistic to allow an adequate analysis of recent developments in policy and practice with young people, or effective political engagement. It concludes that, rather than a simple shift to a more intrusive, controlling and punitive form of youth governance, we are witnessing a far more ambiguous process in which some elements of recent governmental interventions can be read as constituting progressive gains for the young people who are their subjects and that this opens up new professional and political possibilities.

Keywords: youth governance, deviance, young people.

In their attempts to conceptualise contemporary policies directed at, and professional practice with, needy, 'socially excluded' and offending children and young people, both critical and mainstream criminologists have converged upon the notion of 'youth governance'. Youth governance has come to serve as a catchall characterisation of, and explanation for, a broad range of governmental and quasi-governmental interventions with children and young people, spanning child protection, education, crime prevention and incarceration.

What is less open to dispute is the diverse and expanding array of strategies that is available to achieve the governance of young people. It is an array that is capable of drawing in the criminal and the non-criminal, the deprived and the deprived, the

neglected and the dangerous ... Youth is largely defined in terms of what is lacking rather than by what it is. This is one reason why young people are afforded a central place in law and order discourse. They remain the touchstone through which crime and punishment can be imagined and re-imagined. Simon (1997) has argued that the salience of law and order in the United States is such that its citizens are continually governing themselves through their reaction to crime. Arguably, more accurately, it is the constellation of images thrown up by youth, disorder and crime that provide the basis of contemporary contexts of governance (Muncie and Hughes, 2002:13).

The danger of using such an elastic concept as 'youth governance' to explain these diverse developments is that it may obscure as much as it explains, leading us to assume that what are actually divergent or contradictory tendencies are mere instances of a single phenomenon.

Political authority and the governance of youth

Deriving from Michel Foucault's work on governmentality (1991), the 'youth governance thesis', locates the impetus to govern in a generalised, Nietzschean, 'will to power', and the subject of government as a product and tool of 'governmentality' (Merquoir, 1985). In this perspective, youth governance emerges as a mechanism whereby the state attempts to establish or sustain its political authority in a situation where its capacity to govern directly has been substantially eroded (Rose, 1996). Whereas, on the one hand, economic globalisation has limited the capacity of the nation state to intervene effectively in economic life, on the other, the waning of traditional social divisions has served to release individuals from the 'conscience collective' of class, family, race and gender, requiring them to assume unprecedented authorship of their own lives. Thus, they must effect choices and assume new responsibilities in the spheres of employment, education, personal relationships, location, leisure and lifestyle which, in a traditional society, were determined in large part by culture and social structure and serviced by an interventionist state. There is simply less for government to do, even as the society it would govern becomes ever more diverse and divergent (Young, 1999).

Whereas in the heyday of the welfare state, it is argued, governments endeavoured to ameliorate the depredations of the capitalist market by direct intervention in the social and economic spheres, in 'post-traditional' (Giddens 1999), 'advanced liberal' (Rose, 1999) 'late modern' (Garland, 2001) societies, spheres of activity previously dominated by government; health, education, policing, public transport etc., are increasingly ceded to the market. Rose characterises this shift as the 'death of the social', a process in which the welfare state relinquishes its role as a universal safety net for the citizen. Now, Rose (1996) argues, particular 'communities', not 'society', become the focus of social and criminal justice policy.

However, this withdrawal of the state during a period of accelerated social transformation and heightened uncertainty threatens to undermine its political authority, thus fostering dissent and social disorder. In these circumstances, it is argued, government must galvanise a constituency and devise forms of 'governance', that will allow it to re-establish the political authority it enjoyed when it was able to 'govern' directly. It achieves this by

directing the anxieties generated by accelerating social, economic and cultural change, via a process of 'populist ventriloquism' (Matthews, 2005), towards certain categories of demonized 'other' against whom governments then act. In what Ulrich Beck (1992) characterises as the 'risk society', it is the anxieties, rather than the ideals, of electors and those who wish to be elected by them that drive the political process. Moreover, in a situation where the voters who make the difference are, disproportionately, middle-aged, white and relatively prosperous, it comes as no surprise, the argument runs, that the targets of governmental demonisation, and this new form of governance, are disproportionately non-white, non-prosperous and young (Pitts, 2003).

To achieve effective 'youth governance' the state must operate at both the discursive and institutional levels. On the one hand, it must forge the links between the political, social and cultural constituencies and discourses necessary to re-present an image of an appropriate childhood and youth to create a new 'common sense', sufficiently plausible to allow its intended subjects to recognise themselves in these newly manufactured identities, and thence to become the vehicles for their reproduction (Pecheux, 1982).

On the other hand, it must orchestrate the necessary nexus of laws, institutions, programmes, projects and practices, to serve as vehicles for its practical achievement. Thus, the plethora of post-1997 initiatives in child welfare, youth work and youth justice are to be understood as manifestations of an 'advanced liberal governance' (Rose, 1996) in which complex networks of individuals, groups and private, voluntary and public sector organisations are orchestrated to bring the activities of troubled or troublesome youth into line with governmental aspirations via the dissemination of 'moralising technologies of ethical reconstruction' (Rose, 2000; Muncie and Hughes, 2002). Hence, as David Garland (2001) argues, the demise of 'the solidarity project' is paralleled by the emergence of a 'culture of control'. Zygmunt Bauman states the essence of this critique of 'advanced liberal governance' succinctly:

'Welfare state' institutions are being progressively dismantled and phased out, while restraints previously imposed on business activities and on the free play of market competition and its consequences are removed. The protective functions of the state are being tapered to embrace a small minority of the unemployable and the invalid, though even this minority tends to be re-classified from the issue of social care into the issue of law and order: an incapacity to participate in the market game tends to be increasingly criminalized. (Bauman, 2004:51)

Yet, if this account of events is an accurate representation of contemporary reality, one might reasonably expect to find:

- (a) Historical propinquity between the advent of 'advanced liberal society' and new forms of youth governance.
- (b) Increasing continuity and consistency over time and between states defined as practising advanced liberal governance in terms of the ideological, fiscal, political and administrative mechanisms by which they endeavour to govern.
- (c) Noticeable historical discontinuity between the anxieties of, and the scope and modes of control adopted by, advanced liberal governments, and their predecessors.

- (d) A growing tendency for politicians, professionals and the media to act in concert, to realise governmental objectives.
- (e) Governmental responses to crime and disorder being unrelated to contemporaneous fluctuations in the nature and volume of crime.
- (f) Cutbacks in, and the 'criminalisation' of, services to children and young people and their users
- (g) State intervention with children and young people becoming more intrusive and oppressive.

(a) Historical propinquity

Most commentators would date the advent of 'advanced liberal governance' in the UK to the mid- to late 1970s (Skidelsky, 1996; Giddens, 1999; Bourdieu, 1998; Mair 2000; Garland, 2001). If an intensification of youth governance is a necessary concomitant of this shift (Rose, 1999; Garland, 2001; Muncie and Hughes, 2002), we might expect heightened levels of surveillance and intervention with, and harsher responses to young people in trouble with the law and on the margins of education, training and work to follow, and to do so fairly promptly.

What actually occurred in the UK from the mid-1970s, were swingeing cutbacks in mainstream education, the Educational Welfare Service, Home-school Liaison, School Counselling, Social Services Departments, the Youth Service, voluntary sector youth and play provision and the closure of Child and Family Guidance clinics; key mechanisms, one might have thought, for what Michel Foucault's acolyte Jacques Donzelot once described as 'the policing of families' (1977). These cutbacks in social provision were paralleled by an unprecedented decline in the numbers of children and young people entering the youth justice system. This was echoed in an equally dramatic fall in the numbers sentenced to security or custody (from almost 8,000 in 1980 to around 1,500 in 1991 (Pitts, 1988; Hagell, 2005). Nor is there any evidence that those who became embroiled in the system were treated any more harshly. The impetus for the state's withdrawal from these areas was in part fiscal (Scull, 1977) and in part a belief, apparently shared by government ministers, civil servants, the judiciary, justice system professionals and radical criminologists, that because of institutional abuse, the attenuation of family relationships and abysmal re-conviction rates, placing children and young people in segregative institutions merely compounded the problems it aimed to solve (Pitts, 2003).

This was paralleled by the closure of non-residential special schools for children with learning and behavioural difficulties and the de facto 'normalisation' of both groups of students by dint of their transfer into the educational mainstream. If the welfare state was being ruthlessly axed, then so was the apparatus of control and stigmatisation.

The use of security and custody for juveniles began to rise again in 1993, in the wake of the murder of James Bulger, escalating from around 4,000 in 1992 to 7,500 in 2002 (Hagell, 2005), just short of the peak it had reached in the late 1970s. This appears to represent a 16-year time-lag between the advent of advanced liberal governance in the UK and the emergence of a 'culture of control', if such it was, making it difficult to sustain the argument that the one was a direct consequence of the other.

(b) Continuity and consistency over time and between states practising advanced liberal governance, in terms of the ideological, fiscal, political and administrative mechanisms by which they govern

The unprecedented decarcerations of the Thatcher era stand in marked contrast with the escalation of youth incarceration under the Reagan administration in the USA (Krisberg and Austin, 1993). This divergence suggests that, just as there is no necessary causal link between the introduction of a 'free market' and the flowering of democracy, so there is no necessary link between the advent of advanced liberal governance and the onset of a 'culture of control'. A consideration of the UK, the USA the Irish Republic and New Zealand suggests that crime control in advanced liberal societies may take a variety of forms, from the robustly interventionist (Reagan, USA) to the radically minimalist (Thatcher, UK) and that in these conditions both 'welfarism' (Republic of Ireland: O'Donnell and O'Sullivan, 2003) and informalism (New Zealand: Braithwaite, 1989) may flourish. This would suggest that while control systems may be shaped, to an extent, by changes in modes of governance, the direction of these changes cannot be 'read-off' from them in any straightforward way. A brief survey of advanced liberal societies suggests that the direction of change in any given state is historically contingent and culturally bounded, as likely to produce continuity as discontinuity and often characterised by reversion to policies and practices of old (Bernard, 1992). Too often, the proponents of the youth governance thesis have conflated quite dissimilar developments in dissimilar nations, neglecting crucial differences between them. Whereas in the USA in the past two decades, for example, we have witnessed the wholesale re-assignment of entire categories of juvenile offences, and offenders, to adult jurisdictions (Fagan and Zimring, 2000), there has been little more than a gesture in this direction in the UK and other European states. While, in the USA, explicitly cruel measures have been introduced into adult and youth jurisdictions in the recent period (Simon, 2001), in the UK, both youth and adult offenders have been granted ever more rights.

(c) Historical discontinuity between the anxieties of, and scope and modes of control adopted by, advanced liberal governments, and their predecessors

Proponents of the youth governance thesis argue that advanced liberal societies are distinctive in that the concerns of those who govern and the objectives and forms of governance they are constrained to adopt differ significantly from those pertaining in a previous era.

The ostensible concerns of contemporary family and youth policy; the widening gap between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' (*Tax Credits, Urban Regeneration*) the capacity of the lower class family to offer adequate parenting (*Sure Start, Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISPs), Parenting Orders*), the attitudinal, physical and technical preparedness of the young to enter education, training and employment (*Education Action Zones, Connexions, Offending Programmes*), the threat to social order (*The New Youth Justice, Community Safety Partnerships, ASBOs*) and social and political cohesion (*Active Communities, Citizenship Education, Restorative Justice*) have been central to the major developments in family policy, education, youth work and youth justice in the 20th century. Moreover, as is the case today, these concerns, and these developments, have tended to emerge during periods of rapid social and economic change and heightened social anxiety (Hall et al, 1978; Pitts, 1988).

The final decades of the 19th century saw widespread political and media concern about the perceived 'crisis of control' in the industrial cities (Pearson, 1983) and the apparent ineffectiveness of the justice system and other agencies of control (Garland, 1985). This crisis was seen to be a product of the effects of economic recession upon the capacity of the lower class family to exert sufficient control over its children. Alongside this were related concerns about the academic and physical fitness of British youth for military service and their capacity to resist the blandishments of a newly ascendant Bolshevism, as well as religious and philanthropic concerns about the suffering of lower class children and young people. These concerns triggered the proliferation of uniformed youth organisations and 'street' and club-based youth work (Kaufman, 2001), radical educational reform, in the shape of Balfour's 1902 *Education Act*, which brought Local Education Authorities into being, and the introduction of a new youth justice system by the Asquith administration in 1908 (Newburn, 1995).

From the late 1950s, concerns about growing social inequality (Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965) rising crime and disorder, political disengagement amongst the young, the employability of low-achieving working class children and a perceived decline in the quality of lower class parenting, precipitated a number of developments. These included the national poverty programme (The Community Development Projects), further expansion of 'street' and club-based youth work (Albemarle 1960); radical welfare reform (the *Children and Young Persons Act*, 1963); educational reform culminating in comprehensive education and a raised school leaving age (the Newsom Report, *Half Our Future*, 1961), and the introduction of a new youth justice system by the Wilson administration (the *Children in Trouble* White Paper and the *Children and Young Person's Act*, 1969).

Then, as now, it was 'modernising' governments that triggered this intensification of intervention with lower class children and young people and, then as now, these governments argued that their new measures were 'evidence-based'; being informed by the new sciences of paediatrics, child psychology, social administration, sociology, criminology and penology. Then, as now, they attracted the enthusiastic legitimisation of academics and, then as now, this intensification of intervention with lower class children and young people led to the simultaneous expansion of youth work and youth justice, generating both heightened levels of 'social education' (Davies and Gibson, 1967), and greater incarceration and community surveillance (Garland, 1985; Pitts, 1988; Newburn, 1995)

Moreover, then as now, these new interventions, in child welfare, youth work and youth justice were 'delivered', to a considerable extent, by the voluntary sector and philanthropic organisations. It is of course true that the tone of the relationship between government and non-governmental providers has changed. Now, in developing its interventions, central government establishes a 'steering and rowing' relationship with local government, 'not-for-profit' and private sector service providers (Crawford, 2001) in which, rather than providing grant aid on the basis of a tacit understanding of shared purpose, government stipulates in fine detail the nature of the services it plans to commission, the target group it aims to reach, the required outcomes of the intervention and the preferred modes of service delivery.

While it is true that, in the recent period, the balance between governmental and non-

governmental service provision has shifted, this is in large part a function of the overall expansion of the sector. Thus, while direct governmental provision represents a smaller proportion of overall provision in the sector, this does not constitute a withdrawal on the part of the state and it certainly does not represent a reduction in state expenditure.

Things have changed, of that there can be little doubt, but a problem with the post-Foucauldian insistence upon historical discontinuity, which unlike the work of Foucault himself is often fairly light on empirical detail, is that it sometimes serves to obscure important historical continuities. Thus, Bernard's (1992) empirically-grounded argument that the historical oscillation between leniency and harshness in youth justice systems is dialectical, unfolding cyclically over decades, has to be considered alongside the less firmly historically grounded linear accounts proffered by aficionados of the youth governance thesis.

(d) Politicians, professionals and the media acting in concert to realise governmental objectives

The co-ordinated actions of politicians, civil servants, penal pressure groups, the voluntary sector and justice system professionals that effected the unprecedented youth decarcerations of the 1980s, approximates closely to the idea of the articulation of heterogeneous mechanisms, discourses and the activities of individuals, groups and organisation, brought into alignment to achieve governmental aspirations, which is said to be a necessary pre-requisite and defining characteristic, of advanced liberal governance (Rose, 1999; Garland, 2001). However, the youth governance thesis holds that these forces come together to extend control, rather than to loosen it. Moreover, when we contrast these developments with the confusion, antagonism, contradiction, ambivalence and ambiguity surrounding the youth incarcerations of the 1990s, it is hard to sustain the view that this represents the example par excellence of advanced liberal governance in action.

In 1997, most ministers, civil servants and members of the New Labour government, appeared to believe that early intervention by multi-agency YOTs, utilising evidence-based methods to offer 'joined-up' responses to the complex problem of youth offending was a good thing. This faith in 'evidence-based practice' was, of course, assiduously fostered by certain overly optimistic public servants and criminologists (Audit Commission, 1996; Farrington, 1996). There was also a belief that young people who persistently evaded or failed to respond to such interventions should be incarcerated in reformed residential institutions where their offending behaviour and educational and drug problems could be remedied. However, most ministers, civil servants and members of the New Labour government also appeared to believe that, because of the efficacy of the community-based responses introduced by the CDA (1998), only a small number of the most intractable offenders would proceed to custody (personal communication from Chair of the YJB, 1998). While less optimistic criminologists (Goldson, 2000; Pitts, 2003), took issue with these assumptions, there is no doubt that the proposed measures represented an elaboration upon, rather than a repudiation of, what has been described as 'penal modernism' or 'penal welfarism' (Garland, 1985); the penal orthodoxy said to have been supplanted by advanced liberal governance. Far from being ousted, however, under New Labour, more adult and juvenile subjects of the justice system are pursuing more rehabilitative programmes than at any time in recorded history (Matthews, 2005).

Yet poor drafting of sometimes contradictory youth justice legislation, paradoxical administrative imperatives and sentences and interventions chosen on the whim of ministers or their political advisers with an eye to how they would 'play' in the Tory heartlands, rather than their 'systemic effects', and a series of apparently random, high-level responses to high profile problems such as street crime, ball banditry, drink-fuelled yobbery and the like, consistently undermined these objectives.

Initially at least, sentencers tended to accept governmental assurances that the new

Detention and Training Order (DTO) represented a constructive response to the social, educational and drug-related problems of the most chaotic young people whom no other sentence and no other agency had been able to reach. This was not just a punitive knee-jerk response to ministerial posturing, but the more familiar spectacle of magistrates trying to do the right thing in a complex and often desperate situation.

The custodial bonanza was further fuelled by pressure on YOTs from the sudden influx of children and young people into the system, which pushed new YOT staff into court, where they lacked the experience and expertise to forestall secure or custodial disposals. The number of youngsters appearing in court was boosted further by pressure from the YJB to enforce the plethora of new court orders introduced by the 1998 Act (Canton and Eadie, 2005). As a result, more orders were breached and by 2003/4 breaches of court orders constituted 7% of the offences for which juveniles were charged and processed (Youth Justice Board, 2005). This led to divergence and deviance in the field wherein a minority of YOTs committed themselves to a regime of rigid enforcement, leading to an upsurge in court re-appearances in those areas; some simply fudged the issue, while others effectively flouted the law by continuing to pursue pre-1998 diversionary strategies (Burnett, 2005). While a whole range of factors, including the probable impact of changing patterns of crime on sentencing (discussed below) contributed to the custodial bonanza described here, we do not appear to be witnessing the co-ordinated actions of politicians, civil servants, penal pressure groups, the voluntary sector and justice system professionals, acting in concert to realise the governmental objectives, said to characterise advanced liberal governance. On the contrary, close analysis of the development of youth justice policy since 1997, suggests that the New Labour government isn't really very good at it.

New Labour appears to have been at least ambivalent and often very torn on the issue of youth crime. While many commentators have argued that burgeoning youth custody rates did not wholly displease a government which achieved office by wresting the mantle of law and order from the Conservative Party (Pitts, 2003), this was also a government which claimed to be wedded to the principles of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness', and a youth justice system out of control was a poor advert for their managerial abilities. Thus, while in 2002 the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary the Chair of the Youth Justice Board and the Lord Chief Justice all called for tougher custodial penalties for mobile 'phone thieves', in the face of steadily rising street crime, in the same year they also bemoaned the rising level of youth incarceration, enjoining the YJB to take steps to reduce it (Pitts, 2003). Moreover, New Labour, having initially increased sentence lengths, has introduced measures to reduce the numbers of fine-defaulters consigned to gaol and the length of many prison sentences with early release schemes. In the youth justice system the YJB has developed intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes (ISSFs) that aim to reduce the numbers

of serious and persistent young offenders sent into security and custody.

While this hardly represents a wholehearted onslaught on youth incarceration, the fact is that the two key organs of government in this field, the Home Office and the Youth Justice Board, are formally committed to reducing present levels of incarceration. Although, as was the case in the 1980s, this 'liberalisation' has been motivated in no small part by the unprecedented influx of prisoners into the system, a government wedded to the kinds of draconian, US-style, penal policies described by Garland (2001), would have acted differently.

(e) Changed policy and practice, unrelated to contemporaneous fluctuations in nature and volume of crime

The rise in youth incarceration in the 1990s, in the face of a falling recorded youth crime rate, is often cited as evidence that state intervention with offending young people bears little, if any, relation to the problem of crime. However this growth in incarceration follows a decade in which crime in general rose further and faster than at any time since records began, from around 3.5 million recorded offences in 1982 to almost 6 million in 1992 (Home Office, 1993). The British Crime Survey (BCS) records a similar, if slightly less dramatic, rise. However, some academics and penal reformers object that while it may be true that adult offending rose, between 1985 and 1996, youth offending fell (Goldson, 2001) and they cite the 36% fall in the number of male juveniles found guilty or cautioned by the police over the period. It is on this basis that penal reform groups and children's charities have argued that the non-interventionist youth justice strategies of the 1980s 'worked'.

But these dramatic falls in the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system must be seen in the context of a 25 per cent drop in the 10-17-year age group, a substantial reduction in the numbers of 14-17 year olds entering the system as a result of rigorous 'systems management', in which the police pursued a strategy of informalism that effectively diverted 10-14-year-olds out of the justice system altogether. There was also a sharp fall in the police 'clear-up' (detection/charge) rate, caused by the introduction of PACE (the Police and Criminal Evidence Act) in 1984, while, between 1981 and 1991, the number of cases withdrawn or discontinued by the Crown Prosecution Service rose from 21,300 to 108,300, and conviction rates for those cases which did 'go the distance' also dropped.

Moreover, during the period, crimes typically committed by juveniles, such as vehicle theft and domestic burglary, rose by 70 per cent and 66 per cent respectively. Farrington and Burrows (1993) found that whereas between 1985 and 1989 the number of children and young people charged by the police for shoplifting fell by 59 per cent, the numbers actually apprehended by the major stores remained more or less constant. This suggests that youth crime, like adult crime, probably did rise through the 1980s, and when we consider the rapidly worsening social and economic predicament of many young people during this period, this should not surprise us.

The 1980s saw a massive redistribution of crime and victimisation in the UK resulting from the seismic social and economic changes that occurred then. As Tim Hope has observed:

It is no exaggeration to say that we are now two nations as far as crime victimisation

is concerned. Half the country suffers more than four fifths of the total amount of household property crime, while the other half makes do with the remaining 15 percent (Hope, 2003:15)

In its report, *Bringing Britain Together*, the Social Exclusion Unit (1998) identified 1,370 'poor neighbourhoods' in Britain, characterised by 'poverty, unemployment, and poor health', '...where crime usually comes high on any list of residents' concerns'. These also tend to be neighbourhoods with only the most tenuous links to the local economy (McGahy, 1986). Through the 1980s, these neighbourhoods saw increasing concentrations of children, teenagers, young single adults and young single parent families. By 1997, 25% of the children and young people under 16 in the UK were living in these neighbourhoods (Page, 1993; Burroughs, 1998). And it was here that crimes of violence and drug-driven offences were most prevalent, and children and young people most vulnerable to pressures towards involvement in crime and criminal victimisation (Pitts, 2003).

This polarisation and intensification of crime and victimisation goes some way to explaining why, by the mid-1990s, we find smaller numbers of young people committing larger numbers of offences and a concentration of these offences in areas of acute social deprivation (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 1993). This phenomenon continues to cause some confusion, however, with penal reform groups and children's charities arguing, correctly, that the numbers of young people committing offences has fallen and the police arguing, correctly, that the numbers of offences committed by young people in areas of acute deprivation, has risen.

Much has been made of the 'criminalising' effects of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and the family of civil measures they have spawned (see below) but this has served to deflect attention from the question of whether, in certain neighbourhoods, disorder has actually worsened. At a purely theoretical level it would be very surprising if, by concentrating chronically disadvantaged young families in the kinds of neighbourhoods described in *Bringing Britain Together*, this did not happen, and there is a growing body of empirical evidence suggesting that it did (Hope and Foster, 1992; Campbell, 1993; Social Exclusion Unit, 2001, Tilley and Bullock 2003; Hales, 2004). Surveys conducted recently in two such neighbourhoods (Marlow et al, 2007), reveal very high levels of, intermittently violent, disorder involving small groups of young people, which generate considerable anxiety amongst residents, young and old.

Despite a steady decline in recorded crime since 1992, crime remains a key political issue because of the popular perception that violent crime is rising; and it is violent crime the public most fears. Between 1995 and 2000 (the period before the effects of changed crime recording practices kicked-in) crimes of violence recorded by the police rose by 21 per cent. This is, of course, precisely the trajectory predicted by Simon Field (1990) in his influential paper on the impact of economic conditions on patterns of crime.

In terms of the seriousness of offences committed by juveniles, two of the most alarming recent developments have been the growth in firearms crime, which rose 31% in 2003, and violent 'drug-driven' crime. Tilley and Bullock (2003) in South Manchester, Hales (2004) and Palmer (forthcoming) in Brent, and Pitts (2006) in North East and South London, all

report a rapid growth in gun crime and gun ownership amongst adolescents and young adults. Indeed, today, Loughborough Road in Brixton, South London, boasts more 'firearms incidents' than any other street in Europe.

Penal reformers frequently cite the fact that the youth justice system of England and Wales incarcerates more children and young people than any other EU state as evidence of governmental punitiveness. However, as Pease (1994) and Kommer (2004) have observed, when we compare prison numbers with arrests and convictions for serious offences, England and Wales emerges as a significantly less punitive country than raw imprisonment rates would suggest, actually occupying the middle rank amongst European states.

In the light of this data it is difficult to conclude that we are simply witnessing the scapegoating by an autocratic government, of the children of the 'underclass' as some post-Foucauldian commentators appear to be suggesting (Scraton, 1997; Rose 1999; Bauman, 2004).

While the data cited above suggests that the nature, distribution and volume of youth crime has changed in the recent period and that, in some instances, it has become more serious, for the aficionados of the 'youth governance thesis', this is all meaningless.

This is because their analysis proceeds from the assumption that the volume and nature of 'crime' or 'disorder' in society is effectively unknowable, being a socially constructed artefact of the struggle between a plurality of powerful players, each making 'truth claims' about 'crime' as a means of extending or consolidating their own power.

Thus, changes in governmental crime control strategies are explained in terms of the advanced liberal zeitgeist in which anxieties precipitated by accelerating social, economic and cultural change, and amplified by government, via a sensation-seeking media, are projected onto criminalised 'others'. It follows that the threat posed by crime is always vastly exaggerated and governmental responses are almost invariably disproportionate. Yet, in some of our poorest neighborhoods, some residents, particularly if they are Black, Asian or young single parents, live in constant fear of harassment and violent victimisation. Have they misunderstood the problem? (Marlow et al, 2007).

(f) The dismantling of the welfare state and the criminalisation of remaining services for children and young people and their users

When, in 1996, Nikolas Rose announced 'the death of the social' and the 'dismantling, or phasing out, of welfare state institutions', he was, presumably, reflecting upon the depredations wrought by Margaret Thatcher. Yet, many contemporary commentators who cite this seminal text appear not to have noticed that, from the early 1990s, the contraction in state services has, in fact, been reversed (Fawcett et al, 2004). This volte-face was due in no small part to the intervention of John Major, Thatcher's successor who, being far less antagonistic to the public services than she, threw them a political lifeline by making funding contingent upon forms of 'market-testing' designed to demonstrate that they represented 'value for money'. This ushered in a new era of growth, diversification and managerialism in the public sector in general and services for children and young people in particular (Fawcett et al, 2004).

Once elected, New Labour elaborated a more extensive and complex market testing and regulatory framework for the public services, while striving to attract new, non-traditional, service providers. This was facilitated by unprecedented levels of public spending on selected services, as the ever-growing girth of the *Guardian* Society supplement testifies. Thus, the assertion that, under advanced liberal governance, the welfare state is being dismantled is simply wrong, while the suggestion that the remaining services, and their users, are being criminalised is, in the sphere of services for children and young people at least, somewhat misleading (Rose, 1999; Garland, 2001; Bauman, 2004).

The political importance ascribed to the 'youth question' by New Labour is evidenced by an apparently unending stream of policies concerned with the capacity of young people to make a successful transition to a self-sufficient, law-abiding, adulthood (Coles, 2000; Mizen, 2003). However, these policies echo many of the concerns, and embody many of the changes, for which radical professionals and academics in the fields of youth work, youth justice, education, child welfare, policing and drug treatment have been campaigning for almost 30 years (Jeffs, 1979). This unprecedented investment is a response to governmental anxieties that, left unaddressed, the social consequences of the profound social and economic changes occurring in the UK in the preceding twenty years: structural, trans-generational, unemployment, family breakdown, and widening social and economic polarisation, resulting in heightened levels of crime and disorder amongst the most disadvantaged, would lead to the erosion of social cohesion and social control (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998).

These policies and the extra investment they have generated have created a new, expanded market in youth services, attracting many non-traditional, service providers into the sector. A recent study of street-based youth work, undertaken by the present author and his colleagues between 2001 and 2003 (Crimmens et al 2004), identified 1,547 projects. This represented a 15-fold increase over the mid-1970s (Marks, 1976), the period before government cutbacks led to the contraction of youth service provision and the decimation of street-based youth work. That the bulk of this growth has occurred under New Labour is attested to by the fact that just over half of the 564 projects returning questionnaire had been operating for three years or less, with almost a quarter having been in operation for under one year.

What is different is that contemporary street-based youth work tends to be time-limited, problem-oriented and 'target-driven', concerned, for example, with employability, youth crime prevention, substance abuse, sexual health, teenage pregnancy, youth homelessness, truancy and school exclusion. It employs workers from health, welfare, urban re-generation, education and criminal justice agencies. As such it has adopted a markedly different emphasis and a different ethos from the user-led, social-educational approaches developed within mainstream youth work over the preceding 45 years (Davies and Gibson, 1967; Jeffs and Smith, 2002).

This changed emphasis is part of a broader reconfiguration of the welfare state in which social policy is supposed to 'buttress rather than burden the wealth producing economy' (Taylor-Gooby, 2003, Fawcett et al, 2004). In this shift from the 'welfare state' of old to a new 'social

investment state', the eradication of dependency and the promotion of future employability become a central rationale for state expenditure upon children and young people. Thus, investment in pre-school education, reducing teenage pregnancy or social crime prevention is justified on the grounds that it will not only obviate the future costs of school failure, welfare dependency and crime, but it will also foster employability. This is why, across the sector, in education, training, youth work, youth crime prevention and youth justice we see such a huge emphasis upon the eradication of supposedly self-defeating behaviours and attitudes; upon understanding the consequences of one's actions for oneself and others and the acquisition and accreditation of the life-, social-, educational and vocational skills which will, it is argued, facilitate a successful transition to the labour market.

But does this reconfiguration of youth services represent the 'death of the social', the residualisation of state services and the demise of universalism, said to characterise advanced liberal governance? In reality, Albemarle's (1960) dream of a universal youth service had effectively run out of steam by the early 1970s (Factor and Pitts, 2001). Despite consistent demands from youth and community workers, their trades unions and the voluntary sector, that the reach and the brief of the youth service be expanded to incorporate concerns about vocational training, employment and political and welfare rights, and that young people's interests should be represented in government at ministerial level, nothing was done about these issues until the election of the first Blair administration. Moreover, the 'social investment' rationale informing contemporary interventions with young people has been evident in educational, welfare, employment and youth service policy throughout the post-war period. Similarly, the provision of services to troubled and troublesome young people has always been motivated as much by a concern about the threat they pose to the law-abiding as the desire to meet their needs or defend their rights (see, for example, Smith et al, 1979).

When we turn to the question of whether services for youth are being 'criminalised' as many commentators suggest (see Muncie and Hughes, 2002 and Bauman 2004), we have to ask why, if the government really believes that integration into the workforce represents the ultimate answer to the problems of social exclusion, youth crime and disorder (see Levitas, 2005), and if it is prepared to invest hundreds of millions of pounds in this endeavour, it would deliberately set out to criminalise them, and in so doing, create formidable barriers to their eventual re-integration into the workforce? Clearly, something rather more complicated is going on here.

Criminalisation takes two main forms; the criminalisation of the behaviours of individuals or groups and institutional criminalisation.

The criminalisation of individuals or groups concerns:

- the legal or administrative re-designation of particular behaviours or practices as illicit;
- the introduction of formal sanctions to control or punish individuals or groups, who engage in these behaviours or practices; and
- the evaluation of these individuals or groups on the basis of their compliance with, demeanour within, or the outcomes of interventions triggered by the imposition of such sanctions.

On the face of it, we are living through an era of rampant child and youth criminalisation. ASBOs, Area Child Curfews, and Child Safety Orders (1998). *Acceptable Behaviour Contracts* (2002) and *Dispersal Orders* (2003) all appear to testify to this fact. Yet, in practice, these measures have had only a marginal impact upon the shape of contemporary control systems. The number of ASBOs imposed on juveniles by civil courts in 2003/4, was equivalent to less than 0.1% of Youth Court disposals (YJB, 2005). Despite the extension of the provision to 15 year olds in 2002, only two Area Child Curfews have ever been granted in England and Wales while, between 2000 and 2002, only 12 Child Safety Orders were imposed. Recently, concern has been expressed that breaches of ASBOs, imposed as a result of youthful misbehaviour, are providing a fast track to incarceration. Yet, a YJB survey of the incarceration of the juvenile subjects of ASBOs suggests that, while breach of an ASBO may, of itself, have precipitated a custodial sentence in a small minority of cases (four), the 43 juveniles on whom full data was available not only had an average of 42 previous convictions, but were facing several other serious charges in the sentencing episode in which the breach of the ASBO was considered (YJB, 2005). Moreover, there is mounting evidence that for good or ill, in some areas, ASBOs and Behavioural Contracts are being used to divert offending youngsters from youth courts (Gardiner, 2005), a practice that effectively re-introduces an informal 'bind-over to keep the peace' by the back door. While civil libertarians and penal pressure groups are no doubt right to stress that these measures provide future governments with a formidable, albeit cumbersome, expensive and hence unpopular legal armoury (Nacro, 2002, ASBO Concern, 2005), at present these measures function, largely, as symbols of political toughness.

Institutional criminalisation concerns:

- the justification of policies in the spheres of education, training, social welfare etc. on the basis of their purported contribution to crime control;
- the incorporation of previously autonomous educational, training, or social welfare services, agencies or organisations, in whole or in part, into the crime and control apparatus;
- the adoption by crime control agencies of techniques originally developed within education, training, or social welfare.

The adoption of a 'social investment' rationale (Fawcett et al, 2004) for social and criminal justice policies targeting youth has meant that, over the past decade, the dividing line between the criminal justice apparatus and education, employment and social welfare services has become ever more blurred. The rationale for this integration of services is, of course, that because youth crime, disorder and social exclusion are inextricably linked, responses must also be 'joined-up'. Integration is achieved, in part, by re-configured funding regimes that require the plethora of would-be providers, drawn into the youth services market by the proliferation of government initiatives, to bid for tightly specified, time-limited contracts. The extent to which these changed funding regimes have enabled government to determine the foci of interventions is evidenced by recent shifts in the targeting of street-based youth work. Comparing street-based youth work projects surveyed in 2002 with those surveyed in 1999 (Skinner, 1999) we see a sharp decline in 'universal', area-based, work targeting the generality of young people in an identified geographical area, and the proliferation of issues-based work targeting particular types of problems, or groups and individuals deemed to be 'at risk' in some way (Crimmens et al, 2004).

The other lever of control available to government is the multi-agency partnership. Partnerships are the preferred vehicle for service delivery because, in theory at least, they are the organisational entity best suited to the elaboration of 'joined-up' solutions. Not least of the political advantages of partnership working for central government is that, because it specifies the 'solutions' to be adopted by them, it is able to circumvent the vested interests of local politicians, service chiefs and professionals, which, it fears, might otherwise subvert its 'modernising' programme (Crawford, 2001). Such solutions inevitably require partners to calibrate or subordinate their intra-organisational imperatives to those of the partnership.

On the face of it, this gives central government substantially increased power to shape policy, strategy and professional practice at local level. Under the influence of the Home Office, New Labour has endeavoured to assign an increasingly central role in the prevention and control of youth crime and disorder to educational, employment, welfare and youth services and the multi-agency partnership, with its attendant funding streams, has been a vehicle for the achievement of this objective.

However, the national street-based youth work study revealed that these pressures towards 'institutional criminalisation' played out quite differently in different areas. Thus, we found areas where the police have taken to faxing details of 'disorder hotspots' and lists of suspected perpetrators to the youth service HQ in the expectation that workers would use this information to target their work. On the other hand, we found instances in which partnership working enabled the effective de-criminalisation of youthful offending. In the YJB-funded Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP), one of eleven projects studied in depth by the research team, staff worked on a broad range of non-crime-related issues with 150 or so 'hard-to-reach' young people in the broader social networks and friendship groups of the fifty young people formally targeted by the YIP partners. This meant that they received a youth work service where none had existed before. The workers understood client-worker confidentiality with this group of youngsters to mean that their identities would not be shared with other partnership agencies. For their part these agencies, the police, education, social services, accepted this as a necessary and potentially productive strategy.

Unless they take place within the youth justice system, interventions with hard-to-reach young people are inevitably shaped in crucial ways by the day-to-day, face-to-face, interaction between workers and young people. Seventy seven per cent of the 564 projects surveyed in the national study claimed that all their work was negotiated with the young people while the other 23 per cent said that they introduced 'some curriculum elements'. 65% of the 102 young people interviewed about the worker's role and their own, said that they plan and decide things with the workers while a further 28 per cent said that the workers usually did what the young people asked them to do. They also maintained that their involvement with these workers had enabled them to achieve goals they, rather than the workers, had defined.

When street-based youth work 'works', it appears to do so because the young people it targets allow it to. In almost all the projects surveyed or visited, the work was based upon the voluntary participation of young people and the negotiation of roles and goals. This suggests that dialogue, and a willingness to begin with the issues and questions that have significance for a young person, may well be a necessary prerequisite of success, irrespective

This is undoubtedly true. Children are prohibited by the state from swigging whiskey from

Since child offenders were first tentatively separated from adults in youth prisons and subsequently in reformatories, discourses of youth and childhood have emphasised not only indiscipline but also vulnerability. Both constructions have legitimated innumerable programmes designed to mould and shape child development whether by coercion or seduction, education and persuasion. The casting of children as in need of guidance and support has enabled virtually every aspect of childhood development to be subject to regulation, surveillance and inspection. (p.2)

Nikolas Rose (1989) bemoans the fact that 'childhood is the most intensely governed sector of personal existence' while John Muncie and Gordon Hughes (2002) contend that:

(g) State intervention with children and young people becoming more intrusive and oppressive

powerful influence upon the nature and scope of the services actually delivered. consequences of, and resistance to, governmental ambitions, which appear to have conflated the intentions of government with their achievements or to ignore the unintended. However, here again, as we have noted, the picture is complex and it would be a mistake to the criticism that social policy is being criminalised, appears to be more firmly grounded. While the charge that welfare services for young people are being cut back is simply wrong,

the attempt to manage 'joined-up' policies all the way down to the point of delivery has often foundered upon the inordinate cost, complexity and inefficiency generated by the very mechanisms created to make such micro-management possible. This is evidenced by the gradual abandonment, across the public sector, of the plethora of performance indicators, in favour of fewer, less specific, 'principles'. And this reality has prompted commentators like Pierson (2002) to suggest that practitioners have more latitude than they might imagine in responding to policy direction from central government.

The other limitation upon governmental intentions is the manageability, or unmanageability, of the complex systems of multi-agency working, developed since 1998. As Adam Crawford (2001) has observed, one of the effects of attracting a plurality of providers into multi-agency partnerships has been to generate a greater demand for co-ordination which has, in turn, spawned yet more partnerships, which attempt to draw together the diverse services in new tangled webs' and so 'the task of co-ordination is itself undermined by the expanding complex of networks'. This burgeoning nexus of partnerships is further disabled by managerialist culture, which tends to promote intra-organisational co-ordination at the expense of inter-organisational co-ordination.

of whether street-based interventions have a primary concern with health, community safety, youth justice or education, training and employment. This kind of work does not lend itself to 'micro-management' via narrowly defined targets, requiring scope for discretion, negotiation and innovation. Indeed, the evident ineffectiveness of the prescriptive 'offence-focused' programmes developed in the youth justice system in the recent period may well be attributable, in part at least, to the absence of such a dialogue (Pitts, 1992; Bateman and Pitts, 2005).

bottles in the street, working up chimneys or owning firearms. They can be removed from their homes against their will if one of their parents is a known paedophile, made to go to school and, post-Jamie's School Dinners, even prevented from eating mechanically reclaimed meat products whilst they are there. But is this so surprising? As every parent knows, not least of the reasons that childhood is so 'intensively governed' is that children and young people really are more vulnerable and less able to protect themselves than adults and may, from time to time, need adults, or indeed the state, to intervene to protect them.

For the champions of the youth governance thesis, however, all state action vis-à-vis children and young people appears to represent an unwarranted intrusion in their lives. There is no notion here that educational, health and welfare services may actually benefit their recipients, nor that the state may be composed of contradictory elements, a 'right' hand and a 'left' hand (Bourdieu, 1998) and that, in some degree, these services may be the fruit of earlier working class struggles which should, one might have thought, be defended rather than denounced. This blanket repudiation of state intervention finds its corollary in the blanket rejection of social norms; the vehicle par excellence for the 'normalising' discourses wherein the state accomplishes its 'governance of souls' (Rose, 1999). Yet, as Terry Eagleton (2003) has argued:

It is a mistake to believe that norms are always restrictive. In fact it is a crass romantic delusion. It is normative in our kind of society...that child murderers are punished, that working men and women may withdraw their labour, and that ambulances speeding to a traffic accident should not be impeded just for the hell of it. Anyone who feels oppressed by all this must be seriously oversensitive. Only an intellectual who has overdosed on abstraction could be dim enough to imagine that whatever bends a norm is politically radical. (p.15)

Similarly, culture and language are viewed not as the means whereby we engage with, ascribe meaning to, and struggle to change the world and what it means, but as the insidious form assumed by the 'normalising power'. Yet, such 'inflation of the role of language', which, as Eagleton observes, '...is an error native to intellectuals, as melancholia is endemic amongst clowns', leads us inexorably to a bizarre post-Foucauldian Nirvana; a pre-linguistic 'state of nature', populated by a race of *enfants sauvages*, untainted by language, social norms or human interaction.

Conclusion: youth governance exhausted

Ultimately the youth governance thesis is a blueprint for political quiescence. Like the structural functionalism of half a century before, it marries an 'over-socialised conception of man' with an 'over-integrated view of society' (Wrong, 1961). If all political, social or personal action, must necessarily involve the mobilisation of beliefs about the nature of the world, the nature of childhood and adolescence and the nature of the state, and these beliefs derive from the monolithic discourses of the powerful, all action, social, political or personal, becomes an instrument of governance, and all such governance must necessarily be oppressive and totalitarian. Not only is this formulation hopelessly tautological but, as Slavoj Zizek (2001) reminds us, having designated a regime 'totalitarian', we are

relieved of the duty to think too hard about it or, indeed, to act against it. Ironically, this post-Foucauldian impotence in the face of 'governance' is mirrored in governmental 'stupification in the face of globalisation' and its consequent inability 'to mount any real challenge to the basic power structures' (Zizek, 2000).

Unsurprisingly, practitioners experience such theoretical and political quiescence as an abdication of responsibility, as they endeavour to wrest the positives from the panoply of politically ambiguous initiatives with which they must work. Does theory have a

responsibility to practice? In an earlier period, theory and practice were deemed to be dialectical and indissoluble, making of the theorists, if he or she were willing, a de facto activist. But in the post-Foucauldian world, this dialectic has collapsed into an ever more arcane, self-referential, monologue, all too often echoing Nietzsche's prescient dictum that:

Those who know that they are profound strive for clarity while those who would like to seem profound ... strive for obscurity.

But of course, the forms of ideological domination bequeathed within the youth governance thesis are never as complete or monolithic as is claimed. The social world is never as politically or culturally homogeneous as this gloomy picture would have us believe, nor any social structure so entirely closed. Instead, the social world is always characterised by 'antagonism, contingency and dislocation' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985), which may, in turn, open the way for 'transformative social action' (Gramsci, 1970; Zizek, 1989; Bourdieu, 1998; Eagleton, 2003). Contemporary political culture contains those who are opposed to the recent war in Iraq and those who supported it, those in favour of fox hunting, raising the age of homosexual consent and extending the use of imprisonment and those against. Where we stand, and what we stand for, is one of the defining features of who we are and what distinguishes us one from another, but such nuances have no place in post-Foucauldian discourses of governmentality.

Edward Said (1994) enjoins us to '...speak the truth to power...'. Eschewing post-Foucauldian 'impossibilism' (Lea and Young, 1988), he argues that intellectuals, having both the opportunity and the means to gain a privileged insight into pertinent public issues, also have a responsibility to enter the public domain; contributing to the development of improved policy and practice, while still honouring their responsibility to maintain a critical dialogue with government, public professionals and the public itself.

Is it a good idea to target multiply disadvantaged children and young people with a view to opening-up access to educational, recreational and vocational opportunities only presently available to their more privileged peers? It is hard to see how it would not be. But, given the choice, does it make sense to do this via the justice system? Almost certainly not. Does the multi-agency YOT represent an intelligent response to the complex inter-related problems presented by children and young people who offend seriously and persistently? Most progressive youth justice practitioners and managers believe so. Should the YOT become the mechanism whereby all but the most serious young offenders are diverted into non-stigmatising community-based provision? This is what the evidence suggests. Is it a good thing that, in 2004 as a result of intervention by the much criticised Connexions service, the numbers of young people not in education employment or training fell by an

average of 14 per cent (Barrett, 2005)? While some academics complain that this merely represents a shift from social exclusion to social alienation, many of these young people appear happy enough to have a 'steady job' (Pitts, 2001; Ridge, 2002) as too, presumably, are the academics who pen these coruscating critiques. But is it an illegitimate intrusion in these young peoples lives, and a violation of their rights, if data collected as a result of their involvement with Connexions is made available to criminal justice agencies? What else could it be?

As a result of political 'triangulation', contemporary policy and practice with children and young people in need and in trouble often fuses narrowly 'correctional' and genuinely emancipatory elements, all too often, however, presenting the former as if they were the latter (Factor and Pitts, 2001). These potentially damaging contradictions are allowed to go unchallenged because of a paucity of critical political and theoretical activity in both the field and the academy. For example; although, by the mid-1980s, it was generally agreed in criminological circles that Critical Criminology 'had won the argument', critical criminologists have been powerless to resist a resurgent positivism in policy and practice, which has served to steer us away from the kind of serious discussion of the complex social, economic and psychological origins of youth crime, upon which a sufficiently sophisticated response to it might be constructed. This is one of the places where the hard intellectual work is required; the more so because a new generation of practitioners is unacquainted with the political struggles of the past which, for instance, elevated the idea of 'diversion' from a 'bee in the bonnet' of an obscure American professor (Lemert, 1967) to the bedrock upon which the youth justice provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was built (Monaghan, 2005). As it stands, the youth governance thesis is too grand, bland, abstract and politically disengaged to have anything like this kind of impact. Perhaps it is time for the theorists to shake off their 'post-modern despair' and get to grips with the complex possibilities of the present.

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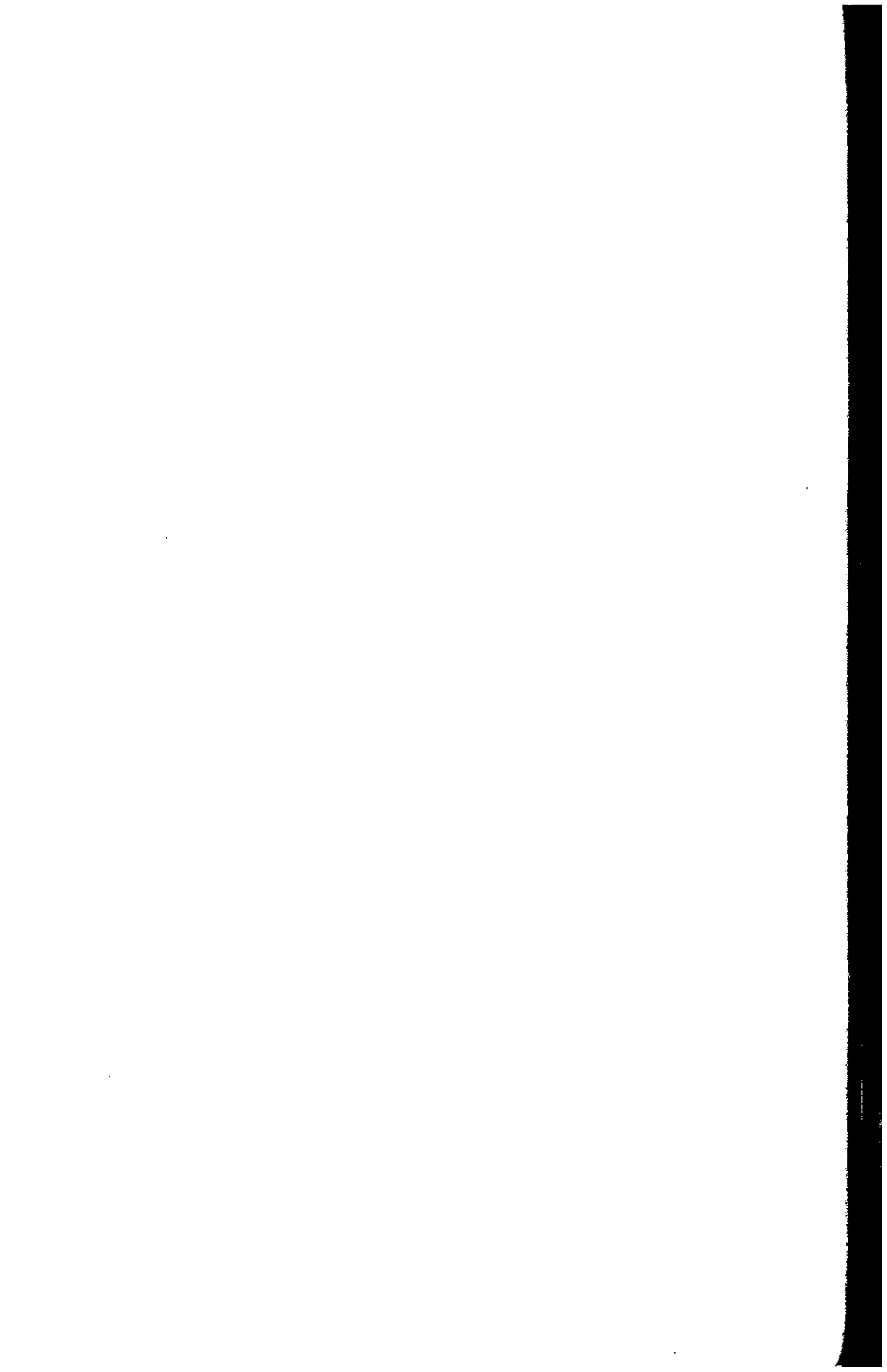
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Reviews

Tammy D Allen and Lillian T Eby (eds)

The Blackwell Handbook of Youth Mentoring: a multiple perspectives approach

Blackwell, 2007

ISBN-13:978-1-4051-3373-9

Price £75

481 pages

Kate Philip

This handbook on mentoring makes some highly ambitious claims to present the definitive text on mentoring. It attempts to bring together research and insights into mentoring across three key areas of which youth mentoring is one element. This multiple perspective approach drawing together work on youth mentoring, student-faculty mentoring and mentoring in the work place is claimed to offer a means of enhancing understanding of the concept of mentoring overall. By working beyond the individual 'silos' it sets out to contribute to an advancement of 'theory, research and practice'. At first glance, this book appears to be of limited value to readers of *Youth and Policy* since mentoring with young people sits somewhat uneasily alongside the other two strands of higher education and workplace mentoring. However closer investigation suggests that the approach could be more useful than this, since the authors offer a novel approach to integrating research findings and practice across the different modes of mentoring. However the high cost of this book may deter all but the most affluent reader who even then has to have a very strong interest in the concept.

The editors attempt to integrate diverse themes and approaches to mentoring. This laudable aim is in the interests of breaking down the isolation between theory, research and practice into different threads of mentoring and working towards an integrated knowledge of the different perspectives. Since a major criticism of much current work is this relative isolation in thinking about the concept, this approach provides a thoughtful attempt to grapple with the difficulties. However the focus on the three identified areas begs some questions: why did the editors choose these topic areas and exclude, for example, health as a topic area: considerable promotion of mentoring in health services has been evident at international levels over a number of years and may provide useful insights? The reader might also ask why the focus is so relentlessly North American with only one non US based contribution among the twenty four chapters (Miller).

The book is structured into seven sections with the first part focusing on an overview and the definition of mentoring (Eby, Rhodes and Allan). This definitional chapter is explored more fully below since it appears to encapsulate both the potential and the problems of this approach. Parts II to VII comprise a section on theoretical and methodological issues, followed by a section on naturally occurring mentoring relationships, the benefits of mentoring, diversity and mentoring, best practices for programmes and a final section which attempts to integrate these different perspectives and to point the way for future work. Within this, the chapters are based on the five section headings so, to give an

example, under the heading of mentoring theory and methodology, the chapters on youth work focus specifically on research within the field. This avoids overlap and gives a coherence to the book particularly since key points from each chapter are drawn together in a reflective chapter which concludes each part. This is a genuinely innovative approach but the question remains as to whether hard pressed practitioners will read across the different themes rather than focus on their own area of interest or expertise.

The book also sets out to offer a single source for up to date reviews and critical analyses of work on mentoring. Towards this, chapter two by Eby, Rhodes and Allen provides a definition of mentoring which attempts to accommodate the three chosen themes. They provide a useful table which compares mentoring with role models, teacher/student relations, coaching and work supervisors but again this raises a number of questions and the chapter would have benefited from findings from, for example, the ESRC review of mentoring undertaken by Pawson and colleagues (Boaz and Pawson, 2005). Although the authors conclude that mentoring is a 'fuzzy' concept, they claim that they have drawn out key features that are shared across different fields. Briefly then, mentoring is defined as essentially an individual relationship. This claim is at odds with findings from some UK research about youth mentoring which suggested that mentoring can also take place within friendship groups and peers. They go on to suggest that mentoring is a 'learning partnership' which is to be welcomed since mentoring projects all too often appear to focus on ensuring compliance rather than adopting an educational role. They also view it as a dynamic 'process' a finding reinforced by much UK research. Slightly at odds with this, is the statement that mentoring relationships are 'reciprocal yet asymmetrical' and that although the mentor may benefit from the relationship, the primary focus is on the mentee or protégé. Clearly this chapter, albeit one of the most interesting in the book, raises more questions than it answers and perhaps encapsulates some of the difficulties with the book overall, in taking a largely uncritical approach to dominant discourses of mentoring and in focusing primarily on the North American experience of mentoring.

The overall thesis of the book is that learning can be enhanced by finding out about other forms of mentoring. However it may be the case that with youth mentoring, a more fruitful approach would be to critically assess the notion of mentoring and to explore developments in relation to other forms of youth work intervention. The tensions between importing business oriented thinking into work with young people are not explored in any depth in this book nor are the implications of this particular approach to mentoring in a UK context. Moreover the uncritical focus on psychological theories about young people and youth development, neglects work that has attempted to locate young people's lives within the wider social and economic context. In this sense it was difficult to tease out what was educational in the approach to mentoring adopted by the authors. It yields interesting insights into the development of mentoring but the largely uncritical approach reinforces some of the uneasiness that many feel about the uncritical perspectives on youth mentoring that appear to inform current planning of youth policy.

Kate Philip, Rowan Group, University of Aberdeen.

Coleman, J. Hendry, L and Kloep, M (eds)

Adolescence and Health Chichester

Wiley 2007

£19.99 (PBK)

PP 256 ISBN 978-0-470-09207-1

Jenny Spratt

This book offers a thought provoking introduction to the study of adolescent health. Throughout the book the reader is presented with competing viewpoints around key issues, and invited to consider the subject from various standpoints. Whilst maintaining a standardised format between chapters, to create a text-book style, each chapter is authored by a different person, bringing a range of expertise to the volume. The writers draw on primary sources of research evidence to familiarise the reader with current thinking in the field, and use a range of case study material and discussion questions to encourage further analysis of the topics.

The tone of the book is set by the first chapter, authored by the editors, in which the complexity of what is meant by the term 'health' is considered, alongside a consideration of how different stakeholders (including adolescents themselves) may view the health of young people. The notion of health as a much wider concept than simply the absence of illness is firmly rooted in the writing of this section, laying the foundations for the following nine chapters, each of which examines a particular aspect of young people's health.

The topic of mental health and well-being is presented by John Coleman. Here the author distinguishes between the support for young people experiencing mental disorders, and the need to foster positive mental health amongst the whole population. The links between poor mental health and environmental factors such as poverty and family breakdown are highlighted, emphasising the social model of mental health. Drawing from the work of Weare, the author identifies some features of positive mental health, such as self understanding, understanding and managing emotions and understanding social situations and managing relationships. However, he casts doubt over the efficacy of programmes designed to promote such competencies. The theme of mental health is expanded by Faulkner who highlights eating disorders as an example of a mental health difficulty

Some of the activities of young people, which are often associated with risk taking are discussed in chapters devoted to Sexual Health (Lester Coleman) and Substance Use (MacFarlane and McPherson). In both chapters the data is presented which can be used to explore the array of factors which impinge upon young people's behaviours in these areas, and to challenge the view that characterises young pregnancy and teenage substance use as uniformly problematic.

The book is to be commended for avoiding the portrayal of teenagers as a homogeneous group. A chapter is devoted to young people who may face particular difficulties associated with their health. Helms writes about the experience of adolescence for those who live with chronic illness and disability. The complex interplay between the conditions themselves and developmental aspects of adolescence are sensitively explored, as are the implications of such conditions on relationships between young people and their families.

In addition to introducing a wide range of topics about teenage health, the book also devotes some chapters to the different roles that health professionals may play in the lives of young people. An overview of the health care services available to young people in the UK is provided by MacFarlane and McPherson, who also point to the serious shortcomings of current provision in being accessible to and meeting the health needs of adolescents. This theme is expanded in relation to young people with complex health needs by McDonagh, who focuses on support during transition from dependent child to independent adult. Both of these chapters problematise existing provision, but provide positive recommendations for practice, based upon research evidence from young people and their families. A third chapter, authored by McKinnon, focuses on health promotion. In keeping with the main theme of the book she argues that health interventions must resonate with young people's lives, but McKinnon extends that argument by exploring ways in which young people themselves could be partners in health promotion. She highlights the difficulties that health professionals face in reaching some of the most vulnerable young people, and points to the need for diversity of provision.

This book would be of relevance to those working with adolescents in the fields of health, social care, education and community education. This book's strengths as an introductory text for professionals (or trainees) working with young people lie in the breadth of its coverage, in the strong evidence base from which it draws, and in its ability to present different perspectives. There is no complacency in this book; these are complex issues, there are conflicting viewpoints and there are no easy answers. The authors prepare the readers to face these realities by challenging them to think critically about the health issues facing young people.

Jenny Spratt, Rowan Group, University of Aberdeen.

Graham Haydon

Values in Education

Continuum 2007

ISBN-10: 0826492711

£60.00 (hardcover)

pp. 247

Richard Davies

Haydon has updated his well received 1997 book 'Teaching about Values', a text which amassed a wide range of plaudits at the time. It is updated in two respects. The first is the removal of contemporary material; in recognition that whilst the issues are eternal, the political context (and politician) is ephemeral. The second is the addition of a new chapter, ostensibly, on school leadership. Haydon clearly sets out that he has not significantly updated the text, even where his own thinking has developed over the intervening years, rather he refers the reader to later publications. In the interests of transparency I ought to reveal: (i) I reviewed the original in 1997 and enjoyed it, and (ii) I was one of Haydon's MA students in the years that original was being written. I continue to be a fan of Haydon's careful consideration of the issues, though theoretically we sing from different song sheets (of which more later).

Haydon offers a majestic balancing act of a book, holding the tension between panoramic views of the philosophical domain and detailed consideration of the particular. If you are interested in values and young people (and one of Haydon's points is that if you are interested in the later then you ought to be concerned with the former) this book is a must. However, there are three niggling issues, none of which are fatal, all three I missed in my original review and which are not faults with Haydon's work: the focus on schooling, political liberalism and the limitations of overviews in disputed areas.

I will deal with the last two at the end of the review, but the first, the issue of schooling, needs to be considered here. This book is about values and schooling, rather than education broadly construed. Haydon is clear in the preface that he is not concerned with informal education or adult education (see footnote 1), but in addition to the title there were a number of other places where the term 'education' seemed to be used as a synonym for 'schooling'. For those unfamiliar with schools and schooling policy in England this can be a little irritating, and the pedantic philosopher in me wonders why they did not just entitle the book 'Values and schooling'.

Enough then of irritations, what do you get for your money? Haydon begins with general introductions to the aims of education (chapters 1, 2), and the development of his claim that all teachers are involved in values education. Part II (chapters 3-5) is a thorough review of the language and concepts particular to the study of values in general, before in Part III moving on to consider the somewhat more sensitive issue of morality in particular. Throughout these opening chapters Haydon's major contribution is to show the difficulties of our language in this area, and how we need to be careful about the words we use. In Chapter 5 he identifies three 'important values: Compromise, Tolerance and Respect' of which more later.

Part IV (Chapters 9, 10) begins to explore some particularly controversial issues, peace education for example, which reflect Haydon's concerns as much as their centrality for schooling. Nevertheless Haydon gives a master class of the practical implications of his analysis so far. It is only by careful analysis that the disputes and dilemmas begin to unwind and one understands the problem. In the final chapters, Part V (chapters 11, 12) and VI (chapter 13), Haydon becomes clearly focused on the practical, though stopping short of any practical remedies. In Part V he offers a path through the Scylla of indoctrination and the Charybdis of youth abandonment, articulating the issues and affirming the complexity of such a path in practice. Finally, in the additional chapter for this edition, Haydon turns to the issue of leadership and the preparation of teachers. After continuing his case for all teachers to be involved in values education, he considers the prerequisites to preparing and supporting those teachers.

Let us return then to the two remaining niggling issues. Poking through the chapters, like a kebab skewer, is the issue of liberal democracy. It is a matter that Haydon deals with directly in Part V, where he questions and supports the central importance of the three values identified in chapter 5 (compromise, tolerance and respect). Haydon's acceptance of political liberalism may well be less controversial in schooling than it is in other educational endeavours and I mention two. The first is those educational endeavours outside of state institutions, for example in the voluntary sector and faith based organisations. There

seems to be no particular reason why such workers need accept political liberalism as an underpinning requirement of their work. In Rawl's (1993) terms the school operates in the 'overlapping consensus' and as such promotes that consensus, voluntary groups are often closely aligned to a particular 'comprehensive doctrine' and as such can remain more agnostic on questions of state governance. The second is those who see political liberalism as essentially oppressive, for example because it is not sufficiently critical or emancipative enough, it promotes rather than challenges the status quo. Such individuals may want to see, for example, Marxism as a skewer, which give rise to potentially different developments of Haydon's careful analyses and certainly to the identification of other centrally important values.

The final issue is, in part, an affirmation of the difficulty of the task – covering an essentially disputed academic area with a text for a wider educated audience. The problem is that those of us working in the area do not agree. I would argue with Haydon's account of virtue ethics (particularly after McIntyre, 1981). This is a book with a particular view of values in education, not simply a review of the scholarly position. After not reading the first edition for a number of years, a re-read of this new edition was a delight. The book offers a sophisticated and much need consideration of timeless issues in working with young people. I recommend it.

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Richard Davies, De Montfort University, Leicester.

Paul Hodkinson and Wolfgang Deicke

Youth Cultures: Scenes, Subcultures and Tribes

Routledge 2007

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£65

pp 265

Lyvinia Rogers Elleschild

This book was inspired by the conference *Scenes, Subcultures and Tribes: Youth Cultures in the 21st Century* organised by the British Sociological Association Youth Study Group in 2003. Following this conference Paul Hodkinson and Wolfgang Deicke set out to stimulate further discussion on contemporary youth cultures and subsequently edited this collection of fifteen chapters. Their aim is 'to critically assess established approaches to the subject at the same time as demonstrating ways in which we might adapt and move on from them in the study of young people's life-styles in the early twenty-first century' (2007: 1).

The book begins with a critical outline of key debates on the study of youth cultures by Paul Hodgkinson. This provides an informative overview of the emergence of the study of youth cultures and of subsequent academic debates in this area, including those over the usefulness of the concepts 'subculture', 'neo-tribe' and 'scene'. The dispute over these concepts is analysed further by David Hesmondhalgh who relates this debate to the sociology of music. Hesmondhalgh points out that youth cultural studies frequently fail to develop sound theoretical approaches and argues that it 'is rare to find anyone taking the time and trouble to lay out a coherent and rigorous theoretical understanding of the terrain' (p. 49). He also raises a point that is of importance to those reading *Youth & Policy*, namely, that contemporary youth cultural studies research often fails to 'address questions of policy, inequality and power', and neglects how welfare and criminal justice policies interact with expressive youth cultures. He suggests that this might be due to disciplinary boundaries between sociology and social policy, and from the depoliticization of youth cultural studies.

Perhaps the contributions in this book that are of most relevance to youth practitioners are the chapters that connect youth cultural practices with policy issues and politics. Wolfgang Deicke addresses the relationship between youth, culture and politics through examining how 'commodified styles may be an ideal vehicle for the diffusion of political symbols and values' (2007: 94). In particular, Deicke traces the significant increase in right-wing activity since German unification in 1990, which included the 'take-over by the far Right' of a re-fashioned skinhead subcultural form, decked out with right-wing symbols and paraphernalia (2007: 103). This merging of skinhead culture with neo-Nazi politics gained popularity evidenced through a range of right-wing music styles including 'dark wave' and 'hate core', and a significant increase in right-wing record labels and distribution companies. This is an excellent chapter, which argues that politics should not be ignored in, but can be explored through, youth culture studies.

Rupa Huq's 'Resistance or Incorporation? Youth Policy Making and Hip Hop Culture' draws on fieldwork undertaken in Strasbourg and Manchester where hip hop has been incorporated in youth projects. Huq points to the importance of youth culture to urban regeneration, suggests that 'studies of hip hop would do well to investigate this further rather than simply replough old furrows of postmodernism, commercial interests or diaspora' and argues that 'youth cultural creativity should be nurtured' (2007: 92). Indeed, the Youth Music Actions Zones cultivate musical activity in a range of music styles and genres across England and Wales (including rural Cornwall from where I write) and is a good example of innovative and engaging youth work cultural-practice.

Ben Gidley's 'Youth Culture and Ethnicity: Emerging Youth Interculture in South London' explores how inner city youth draw from global styles whilst producing 'stubbornly local identities, often circumscribed by the most microscopic of geographies' (2007: 150). One of the few contributors who considers class divisions, Gidley observes that whilst middle-class youth 'saw all of London as a dark continent for them to explore and conquer' (2007: 150), working-class intercultural youth had 'a powerful sense of exclusion – from the freedom of the city', and he explores their strong attachment to locality (2007: 151).

Other contributions discuss hip-hop, 'youth' as a discursive construct, the heavy metal t-shirt as subcultural commodity, literacy practices among U.S. Latina gang-girls, gender and

the goth scene, and the engagement of young people with information and communication technology (ICTs) including on-line gaming and unequal access to ICTs.

Given that this book addresses contemporary youth cultures I think that an important omission is an analysis of if and how social class remains a relevant factor in young people's cultural practices and affinities. In the index of the book 'class' is listed five times only, and one of these listings is 'Class, declining significance' (2007: 258). I would have liked to have read an exploration of how some working-class young people positively identify with and construct themselves as 'chavs' and 'chavettes'. 'Chav' originated a few years ago as a pejorative media construction to describe the life-style consumption practices of some working-class young people, and is often used in conjunction with de-humanising terms such as scum and vermin (see, for example, www.chavscum.com) and exclusionary practices (for example, the banning of young people wearing hoodies or baseball caps styled in Burberry fabric from shopping centres and leisure venues). I have found that some working-class young people perceive this categorising as deeply offensive and indicative of semantic class-warfare, whilst others actively self-identify as 'chavs' in a positive, 'in your face' way.

Although it does not fit neatly with the concepts of 'subculture', 'neo-tribe' and 'scene', an analysis of how young working-class people are identified by and identify with or against 'chav culture' certainly belongs in a collection such as this. The aim of this book is to evolve or move on from established approaches to youth culture research. Stanley Cohen's analysis of how exaggerated media caricatures of mods and rockers provided young people with the cultural resources, the 'lines and stages directions', to define their own identities (Hodkinson, this book: 4) could have been a starting point for a theoretical exploration of the unspectacular yet widely despised 'chav' youth style.

However, this omission aside, this book is excellent and will appeal to students, academics and practitioners in the field of youth studies.

Lyvinia Rogers Elleschild is an Associate Lecturer at the School of Law and Social Science, University of Plymouth.

Helen Spandler and Sam Warner (eds)

Beyond fear and control: working with young people who self-harm

A 42nd Street Reader

PCCS Books 2007

ISBN 978-1-898-05987-5

£16.00

pp. 192

Kathryn Kinmond

Self-harm (SH) is a very troubling form of behaviour engaged in by an apparently increasing number of young people. It is also a form of behaviour that is fundamentally misunderstood. Often confused with attempted suicide, this book makes clear that SH is

often a form of behaviour that actively enables people to preserve rather than take life. Anyone working with young people in school, youth work, counselling or employment, is likely to encounter individuals who SH and many of those workers will feel anxious or confused by the behaviours and also, regarding the most appropriate way to help. This book offers knowledge and understanding together with some possible strategies for intervention. It discusses ways in which services can change the focus from managing or stopping self harm to working with young people in more empowering ways. The need for such a change in both mind-set and practical strategy is increasingly being recognised, but the implications and ethical dilemmas of this move have received little attention. This book addresses this gap by providing in-depth discussion of a range of innovative practices which are effective in supporting young people who self harm.

The book was commissioned by 42nd Street, a community-based organisation based in Greater Manchester that aims to empower service-users and those who work with them. The book brings forward ideas and views from practitioners, activists and service users from a range of service contexts who have developed new and innovative ways of supporting young people who self-harm. The major thesis of the book is to 'challenge the orthodoxy surrounding SH through sharing good practice'. It aims to prioritise practice-based evidence in order to provide a solid foundation for the development of critical best practices. Arguing for a person-centred way of working the book presents a much needed practical approach to a very complex and often very troubling set of behaviours. At all times it gives voice to the experiences of young people who engage in self-harming behaviours, together with those working to support them. The book seeks to offer evidence for a range of alternative approaches to working with SH. As a practising counsellor and psychologist this is a refreshing perspective which has many practical applications.

Divided into three parts, the twelve chapters are written by different contributors from a range of backgrounds. Part one argues for the need to work alongside young people who SH in order that the negative effects of misunderstandings about the behaviours might be replaced by more adequate and responsive services. It includes chapters by service users, a youth-worker and a mental health worker. All chapters are informative and useful, not simply to the discipline from which it was written, but also to a range of applications. Part two discusses the impact of the experiences of abuse, discrimination and oppression through an exploration of the social roots of distress. The focus is explicitly on the use and misuse of power in SH. For example, chapter six offers a very evocative and emotive discussion of how workers' own fears may inhibit their work with people who SH. As a practising counsellor this had particular resonance and I found it both interesting and challenging. Part three presents a range of strategies for working with SH, both for young people and workers. The strategies are not simply permissive suggestions but rather, they are grounded in practical application. There is discussion of the legal context and the potential difficulties of working within the confines of a young-offenders' institution. These issues are especially important as workers strive to offer support in an increasingly litigious society.

The book begins and ends with a story of hope which all the time emphasises the benefits and efficacy of a person-centred way of working with SH. As a practitioner and researcher engaged with SH, people who SH and services offered to those who SH, for many years, I

respect the position adopted.

The writing is varied in style and content representing the different work of the contributors. Spandler and Warner both edit the text and are also two of the contributors. Other contributors include a lawyer, mental health worker, youth worker, social worker and counsellor. I found the writing refreshing and easy to negotiate. The editors suggest that some chapters are 'hard' reading but I found all chapters accessible, informative and useful. Several chapters relate theory to practice but this is not clumsy or unnecessary. Rather, the theory adds strength to the discussion which is at all times focussed on the practical application of the work and the narratives of the young people. The narratives both illuminate the work being related and also serve as a constant reminder of the humanity and validity of the narratives of people who SH.

The book is relevant to anyone who works with people who self-harm or who has an interest in the behaviours. As a practising counsellor and psychologist I have found it extremely illuminating and informative. It will be particularly useful for anyone who works with young people including youth workers, social workers, counsellors and teachers. It might also be useful for anyone engaging in self-harming behaviours who seeks to understand both the 'system' they encounter, but also responses from others, to their behaviours.

The book is a sound, informative and innovative response to the problems and challenges of working with SH.

Kathryn Kinmond is a senior lecturer in Psychology at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Roger Smith
Youth Justice Ideas, policy, practice
Second edition
Willan Publishing
ISBN 978-1-84392-224-7
£19.99 (p/b)
pp258

Jenny Pearce

This is an important book, essential reading for anyone interested or working in youth justice. Smith builds from his previous edition, providing a relevant update of the historical and political context within which youth justice operates.

His first chapter outlining the lessons from history since the 1980s sets the scene for the remainder of the text which continues to place the current conflicts facing practitioners, researchers and policy makers who are trying to respond to young offenders emotional, social and economic needs, in context.

He highlights the importance of the dividing line that was drawn after the 1980s when the

dominant 'anti-custody orthodoxy' was replaced by an orthodoxy where sentencing is driven by the nature of the offence: one where 'just deserts' are issued, irrespective of the personal circumstances of the offender. The strength of this historical overview is in the relationships that Smith insists on maintaining between the criminal justice system, the dominant political agendas of the time and the impact of public opinion and media representation of crime.

The research evidenced within the book explores the way that the ideas, policy and practice of the youth justice system are located in political and social agendas. It fulfils an essential function, reminding readers at every point that youth justice is a political issue. For example, we become acutely aware of the way that the advancement of the 'tough on crime' voice of the early 1990s, which brought with it the slogan of 'condemn a little more and understand a little less', laid the ground for a punitive framework for dealing with youth crime under managerialist and corporatist agendas.

Yet despite the depoliticising effect some of these changes might have had on practitioners, Smith manages to reveal how some encouraging messages lingered throughout the 1990s. The anti-custody lobby and the advancement of children's rights continued to have a voice, although probably due more to international standards than as a result of internal pressures. Also, structured programmes were taken up by many young people who, with support from practitioners, were able to take up opportunities for education and training.

Maintaining the focus on the political context, Smith explores the contradictory messages that have dominated New Labour interventions on youth crime. On the one hand we have strategies within social policy aimed at improving the social inclusion of disadvantaged and marginalised young people, while on the other we have the proliferation of the criminal justice system into new forms of control through 'anti-social behaviour' legislation. Taking us through the seemingly endless reforms in the systems of managing youth justice, Smith shows how, under New Labour, there has been a tightening of the grip. Increases in surveillance have been accompanied by increases in the number of secure training centre places and in the targeting of individuals involved in anti-social behaviour. This background, clearly explained and well researched leaves Smith asking, in chapter four 'Where are we now?'

Here we begin to look at what Smith calls the 'Growth industry' developing under the umbrella of 'anti-social behaviour'. Addressing questions of discrimination, credibility and net-widening, Smith provides well researched evidence to help us to understand some of the inherent ambiguities within current youth justice policy and practice. However, he does not leave it there. We move next to explore the dynamics at play for practitioners implementing policy on the ground. Looking at the role of the Youth Justice Board Smith raises important questions about YJB decisions of the distribution of funding and of the continued reliance on secure regimes.

Alongside this, we question the scope of the YJB to act as an independent voice and to lobby for alternatives to custody for young offenders. Nowhere are the results of these questions so apparent in practice than within the operation of the Youth Offending Teams. Looking at the development of practice in the new century, we are left addressing the impact of managerialism, and in particular, the ASSET form. The impact that undertaking

this 'tick box' approach to assessment is explored, with the worrying suggestion that negative indicators of risk can predispose practitioners to a narrow and unfavourable view of the young person. Revealed to be a managerial implement rather than a basis for intervention, we explore whether ASSET is anything other than an aid to gathering statistics? On a positive note, Smith leaves us with some confidence in the professional decision making processes used by many practitioners based on their face to face contact work with young people.

We move then to a particularly important and helpful section of the book for those working in practice in their efforts to support young people. A helpful overview of different orders available within the current sentencing tariff is given, each explored with an analysis of its impact on offending patterns.

The remainder of the book explores with us whether anything has been gained since the early 1980? Although he recognises some improvements, Smith's final comments are crucial. Are we not putting young offenders outside mainstream society, where the 'price of an apparently more certain approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour by young people is far too high, both financially and, more importantly, in human terms' (P 155). We return here to theorising youth justice, looking at the consumers view and then seeing where we can go from here?

Making a number of suggestions as to how those involved in the youth justice system might put forward and implement alternative strategies to 'prioritise bridge-building and solution-finding, rather than social division and oppression' (p 228), Smith notes that he has aimed to 'set out here some creative possibilities for intervention at all levels of the justice system to promote inclusive, anti-oppressive and rights-based practice' (p 230). The book should be read by academics, practitioners and policy makers alike who share this ideal, as well as by those with doubts that such a system could be put into effect.

Jenny Pearce is a Professor of Young People and Public Policy at University of Bedfordshire, Jenny.Pearce@beds.ac.uk

Rachel Pryke

Weight Matters for Young People: A complete guide to weight, eating and fitness

Radcliffe Publishing 2007

ISBN 1 85775 772 6

£14.95 (pbk)

pp. 213

Emma Rawlins

In *Weight Matters* Pryke tackles the difficult issues of young people's weight management and how to encourage and maintain a healthy lifestyle in adolescence. The book begins by addressing the complex range of issues affecting young people's lifestyle choices from the point of view of the young people themselves. This includes a consideration of family habits

and corporate food practices as well as biological and emotional influences on lifestyle practices. In the second section the focus shifts to nutritional advice for young people, with the emphasis being on a 'sensible' balanced diet with explanations as to why other popular 'fad' diets such as the Atkins diet do not always work. The section also includes advice on how to overcome 'teenage inertia' with ideas and information that can include the whole family. This section also includes information on 'The Top Teen Health Plan' and 'The Food Frequency Framework'. These can be used by the young people themselves or as part of a family project to reconsider their lifestyle. The final section focuses on Weight and Eating Problems, including information on Anorexia, Bulimia and a whole host of other conditions that could affect diet and eating in young people. The book ends with two appendices that detail 'The Top Teen Health Plan' with links to the publisher's website where a host of complementary information can be found.

The aim of this book is to provide advice that emphasises an approach where weight should be 'put into perspective with lifestyle overall, so that a person's weight is not the focus of life but becomes a simple indicator of how a person values him or herself' (p3). While this is achieved to an extent this sentence, however, raises an issue that recurs several times over the course of the book highlighting a conceptual inconsistency within the overall narrative of the book. The above phrase implies that weight does not matter as much as contemporary life would suggest whilst simultaneously insinuating that those who do not realise this or do not maintain a healthy lifestyle as defined within the discourse(s) of contemporary life, do not value themselves. While I am sure that this was not the author's intention, there is an underlying tension in the narrative tone of the book between the notion of young people as active agents in determining their own lives and the idea that young people cannot know what is best for them. This comes across particularly strongly in paragraphs such as that entitled "Common sense does not apply to young people" (p20) and in phrases such as "if they [young people] can avoid becoming inert slugs during the difficult spells then they will regain their energy levels more readily later on" (p112). I feel that this is a shame since small points such as these undermine the comments made elsewhere that could really empower young people for example, the reminder that 'food does not need to be the centre of life' (p9) or the that 'parents may find it difficult not to let their own hopes and ambitions enter into the decision making process, adding further worry, pressure and indecision to the young people's lot' (p35). I agree that adolescence can be a turbulent period when young people are negotiating whether or not to take advice from others or to make their own choices (and potentially learn from any mistakes that may be made) however, the way in which this is occasionally expressed in Pryke's work could be viewed as particularly 'adultist' in nature.

This leads me to the question of for whom this book is intended. My reading of the book suggested that while the first section of the book was written from the perspective of young people it appears to be aimed more at Parents or Practitioners wishing to gain more of an understanding of the motivations and influences on young people's lifestyle choices rather than to inform young people themselves. In this case it seems a shame that there are not more case studies or examples of young people's voices and experiences within the first section of the book in particular. I fully acknowledge that this would have great ethical and moral implications; however this can be addressed by following specific guidelines on working with children and young people. The resulting richness of detail found in many

young people's stories and experiences would enhance the volume greatly. The latter sections of the book, 'Nutrition' and 'Weight and Eating Problems' as well as 'The Top Teen Health Plan' appear to be written more with young people in mind and provide a good example of how providing certain information could enable young people to make an informed choice about matters relating to their own lives. This leaves me wondering how young people would interpret the comments I mentioned previously and to conclude that perhaps this book as a whole is more suited to Parents and Practitioners as something to assist in targeting topics to discuss when speaking with young people about weight management issues. As Ann McPherson comments in the foreword, this book 'puts weight in perspective in terms of "real life" and takes the broader view. It deals with the myths and even if it doesn't have all the answers, it is an excellent basis for asking the questions' (p. v). With this in mind I would suggest that those looking for a general overview of current issues in weight management would find the volume generally useful whilst those looking for greater detail and/or something to work with young people directly should focus on the detail in the appendices or may benefit from using this as a starting point from which to pinpoint key issues to follow up elsewhere.

Emma Rawlins, School of Geography, University of Leeds.

Dan Laughey

Music and Youth Culture

Edinburgh University Press 2006

ISBN 0 7486 2380 9

£16.99 (pbk)

pp. 248

Martin Robb

At a time when new technologies are revolutionising the production and consumption of popular music, Dan Laughey's book offers a stimulating and original account of the ways in which music interacts with young people's everyday lives. Drawing on his own interviews with young people, as well as archival research on pre-1950s youth cultures, Laughey seeks to re-focus the study of music and youth culture away from an emphasis on 'fanatical or enthusiastic consumption' and towards 'the activities of routine, workaday young people'.

Laughey, who teaches media and popular culture at Leeds Metropolitan University, is critical of what he calls 'orthodox structuralist frameworks for conceptualising youth music cultures' and their exclusive emphasis on the 'ideological functions of media productions'. He argues that a sub-cultural approach to young people's lives has constructed 'closed semiotic spaces that define youth groups homogenously against other groups and ignore the everyday interactions between young people (and others) within these different groups'. Instead, he aligns himself with the ethnographic turn in media studies and argues for what he terms a 'situational interactionist' approach to young people's musical practices.

The book includes a sustained argument for this new approach, as well as a thorough

review of existing literature in the field. There are chapters on young people's music media uses and on their public music practices, based on the findings from his own empirical research, as well as a chapter on young people and music in the 1930s and 1940s, making use of Mass Observation archive material. Laughey is good at charting the specifics of everyday musical experience, and particularly the ways in which changing technologies shape that experience. The book is also strong on the contextual nature of young people's musical experience, whether the context is school, workplace, club or home.

One of the most fascinating aspects of Laughey's analysis is his emphasis on the intergenerational dimensions of musical experience and the place of music in family cultures. As he rightly says, sub-cultural theory has tended to see young people's musical consumption as positioned against rather than within parental cultures. The increasing importance of the home as a site both for musical production and enjoyment forces us to re-think this approach. Laughey argues that 'the parental home rather than the street corner' provides the main context for the leisure time of the young people he interviewed.

In a similar vein, one of the book's surprising findings is the part played by parental influences in young people's musical experience. Too often, influenced by an outmoded stereotype of the 'generation gap' and a model of youth culture purely as rebellion, commentators have seen young people's musical practices as framed entirely by their peer groups. Laughey's interviews with young people uncover quite touching stories of the mutual exchange of musical tastes and influences between parents and teenagers. He writes of 'frequent moments when these young people openly acknowledge the interactive processes by which their elders had influenced their tastes and had been influenced by their children's own tastes', and about the personal private meanings associated with family relationships that some kinds of music had for these young people. This emphasis aligns Laughey's work with a wider contemporary trend in youth studies, towards seeing young people as embedded within rather than existing separately from family cultures.

Laughey's historical chapter may seem out of place in a book whose main focus is on contemporary cultural experience. However, its inclusion reinforces the emphasis on the everyday rather than spectacular nature of young cultural experience, and it challenges another fallacy of subcultural theory: that the 1950s saw the invention of 'youth'. It also serves to set up frameworks for understanding musical practices (such as the notion of 'promenade performances') that the author will later apply to contemporary experience, for example of clubbing.

Laughey's attempt in this book to shift the balance of youth cultural studies is welcome and long overdue. At times, however, he runs the risk of protesting a little too much, underestimating perhaps the extent to which cultural studies has taken on board the kinds of criticism that he voices. At odd moments, too, Laughey's approach reveals itself as being rooted in his own generational struggle to throw off the weight of academic father-figures: as when he writes about those 'numerous cultural studies scholars and a significant generation of academics and journalists who have written about youth culture as though they were still living in 1968 among their fellow hippies'.

Finally, while Laughey's attempt to counterbalance an exclusively political account of youth

culture is stimulating and welcome, it occasionally runs the risk of narrowing his perspective. One of the author's key influences is the Russian cultural theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, but he glosses over the ways in which the latter's notion of the carnivalesque emphasises popular culture's capacity to subvert everyday norms and hierarchies. And although Laughey's description of differences in young people's musical practices along the lines of gender, and to a lesser extent ethnicity, is fascinating, his ruthless exclusion of any political dimension means that he is unable to offer much by way of critical analysis of these differences.

Martin Robb is a Lecturer at the Faculty of Health and Social Care at the Open University.

Roger Harrison, Cathy Benjamin, Sheila Curran, and Rob Hunter (Eds)

Leading Work with Young People

Open University Press 2007

ISBN 978-1-4129-4604-9

£19.99

pp. 312

Colleen Robinson

L *Leading Work with Young People* has contributions from academics, as well as practitioners to provide a clear and concise book, which is suitable for professionals as well as students, as a reference for managing work with young people.

The book is divided into 6 areas (however, on a pedantic note, on the back cover of the book it states that the book is divided into 5 parts, when in fact it is divided into 6!); Leadership, Practice, People, Change, Participation and Evaluation, thus providing the option to use the book as a reference guide.

Chapter 1 covers some theoretical underpinning of leadership also including Ethics and being an ethical leader, and the impact this can have on a workforce. It also discusses the phenomena of charisma, and how this has an impact on leaders' results from their employees.

Michael Bracey who is currently a Youth Service Manager wrote chapter 2, (within the leadership section). This gave a different perspective of leadership as it was from a practitioner's view point. However, I expected to see more information on how his leadership/management style had been successful in managing youth work provision. This wasn't overly evident throughout this chapter. However, he did provide 3 'messages' at the end of the chapter as part of the conclusion, which could be useful for new managers.

Harriet Gore discusses some of the issues pertaining to managing oppressive work. She articulates chronologically the changes made from the 1970s and 1980s, and the changes in legislation and policy regarding sex and race. She clearly highlights pointers of good practice for managers in carrying out successful anti-oppressive work; however she does admit that there is still plenty of work to do. She also includes a list of essential elements

that have been implemented by some of the best services to ensure that anti-oppressive work is being implemented.

Chapter 9, written by Mike Hudson, discusses managing people. This chapter is divided into 4 areas; Managing your boss, Get better performance from teams, Delegate work and empower people, and finally Supervise, develop and coach people. This chapter resembled a manager's tool kit in itself. It was well written with clear summaries after each area of discussion. He made his suggestions clear on how to achieve satisfactory outcomes in managing others within a youth work environment.

Harriet Gore, Bryan Merton, and Rob Hunter used a case study methodology in the chapter 'Getting better all the time': A case study of leading and managing change. This case study was based on Derbyshire Youth service. The chapter continues to explain the different tools used to manage change successfully, such as empowering the staff by providing clearer guidelines on deploying and developing resources, control of vacancies and better communication. This chapter could have been strengthened by including how the successful change will be sustained for the future, and what plans, if any have been put in place taking into consideration the ever changing political and social climate of Youth Work.

Chapter 18 discusses managing in an integrated service, again using a case study methodology. Rob Hunter examines the experiences of two senior managers from Doncaster Youth Service; Dee Hammerson and Dee Treweek, as they, and their staff go through the process of becoming part of an integrated service. The chapter looks at the journey that the service undertook using the 7s leadership Framework. The process of integration for this Council is highlighted and discussed by the two senior managers, informing the reader of what the integration process may be like, also pinpointing some of the challenges that they encountered.

The books last area is on Evaluation of Youth work practice. This section provides information on how best to evaluate youth work practice, identifying some of the drivers behind evaluation, the challenges of recording youth work, and of course the benefits of recognising and recording outcomes/impacts. Thus, it provides a critical analysis of evaluation and its importance within the Youth Work context.

To conclude this review, I found the book extremely interesting, well written and useful. As highlighted previously the book has different authors covering academia as well as practice. This provides a holistic feel to the book, giving an all round view of managing work with young people. However, I noticed some omissions, which would be relevant within this type of text. As the book contains different authors, it would be useful to have brief biographies of each one so that the reader is able to connect with the writer in terms of backgrounds, experiences etc. The case studies used were informative; however, it would have been useful to provide a case study of a more urban youth service such as a London borough or another inner city area. This would have provided a more rounded overview of differing service initiatives/best practice's across the country.

There is no reference to managing issues that affect discriminated groups such as managers from Ethnic backgrounds, females or disabled people. Although Harriet Gore discussed anti-

oppressive youth work, there was no indication of anti-oppressive management. As many Youth Services change their structure and become part of integrated services, the likelihood of managers with different backgrounds will become more evident, hence the importance of enabling an arena for this discussion to take place.

Effective Management is a subject I lecture on, and therefore found this book provides a positive initial reference guide for practitioners and students, who are interested in, or embarking on, a management career within the Youth Work profession. The text encourages readers to consider management issues within the youth work environment and provides information via case studies and practical examples of practice. This text will be a good accompaniment to any youth work student or new youth work manager.

Colleen Robinson is the Curriculum Manager for Youth and Community Work Studies at Havering College of Further and Higher Education.

Alan France and Ross Homel (Editors)

Pathways and Crime Prevention: Theory, policy and practice

Willan Publishing 2007

ISBN 978 1 84392 201 8

£25.00 (PBK)

pp. 368

Florence Vidya Seemungal

This book consists of 16 chapters all based on papers presented by the contributors to the Pathways and Prevention International Symposium, 2005 held in Brisbane. According to the editors Alan France, Professor of Social Policy Research and Director of the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University and Ross Homel, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice and Director of the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance, Griffith University, Brisbane, their goals in publishing this text are twofold: 'to contribute to a better understanding of pathways into and out of crime' and 'to improve prevention policies and approaches that involve intervention before crime and related problems emerge or become entrenched'.

To what extent were the editors' objectives achieved? An integrated approach to understanding development and life-course criminology has been previously outlined (e.g. Farrington, 2005) while desistance from crime is given increasing coverage (e.g. Maruna, 2007); however, this text stands out in four ways. First, the pathway paradigm and the theoretical frameworks on which it is premised are critically assessed via reviews and primary data. The approach is multi-disciplinary, multi-epistemological with research questions drawn from amongst other sources, psychology, recreational studies and criminology. Methods of inquiry include ethnographic studies, psychological experiments, in-depth interviews and longitudinal studies. Second, the utility of the pathway approach for explaining the propensity towards criminal behaviour is illustrated with data from the UK, the USA and Australia. These findings would attract a global reading audience and

spawn comparative research. Third, pragmatic issues are covered such as the socio-political difficulties that may arise in translating research findings into State policy and practice (Chapter 1, France & Homel). Fourth, a critical issue in criminology is the relationship between identifying risk factors and predicting offending behaviour. The construct 'risk' and the process of 'risk assessment' are innovatively critiqued (Chapter 4, Haw) while a nuanced account of the limitations of a risk-factor analysis for predicting criminal pathways is provided (Chapter 6, MacDonald; Chapter 5, Kemshall et. al.). Yet the editors acknowledged that, 'while we did our best to get pathways authors... to write about the implications of their work for prevention, few realistically managed to "cross the divide"' (2007:xxi).

The text is divided into Part 1 'Understanding the pathways into and out of crime' and Part 2 'Prevention Theory, Policy and Practice'. There is a good balance in the chapters that provide critical reviews of the extant literature and those offering primary data with a discussion of the implications of the authors' results. In Part One, 6 of the 9 chapters present primary data from the UK and Australia while 3 of the 7 chapters in Part Two report the authors' studies in Australia and the USA. An overview of the work of the leading practitioners is given so that the specialist pathway researcher and the uninitiated reader seeking a foundational understanding can benefit from perusing this text. Key contemporary issues are addressed for example, Jeannette Lawrence's 'Taking the developmental pathways approach to understanding and preventing antisocial behaviour' and Jacqueline Homel's discussion of 'A life-course perspective on bullying'. Don Weatherburn and Bronwyn Lind (Chapter 7) examined what mediates the macro-level effects of economic and social stress on crime and they hypothesized that delinquency is caused by child neglect. By statistically modelling data from New South Wales, Australia the researchers concluded that, 'the path analysis shows that the measure of child neglect has the strongest causal influence on juvenile participation in crime' and that it was, '... the first time to our knowledge, that an aggregate level variable measuring parenting quality has been shown to measure the effects of structural variables on crime' (2007:140). The consequences of repeat sexual victimisation among an offender sample are examined using data from offenders serving intensive correction or probation orders through the Queensland Department of Corrective Services (Chapter 8, Mazerolle et al.). These findings are highly relevant because poor parenting, a frail family structure or child abuse featured consistently in the social inquiry and psychological reports prepared by the relevant professionals on defendants indicted for murder in Trinidad and Tobago. A conviction for murder, a capital offence in Trinidad and Tobago, carries a mandatory death penalty without consideration of mitigating factors (Hood and Seemungal, 2006).

Part Two of the book concentrates on prevention theory, policy and practice; for example, the study of leisure as a context for youth development and delinquency prevention (Chapter 13, Caldwell and Smith). The authors hypothesized that youth perceptions of too much parental control, amotivation, introjected motivation, and peer influence would be associated with higher levels of property damage. Their data from Appalachia USA with 13 year old participants suggested that 'leisure-related variables can serve as risk and protective factors to property damage' and that 'there is a possibility that some form of leisure education intervention may be effective in preventing delinquent acts' (2007:287). However, gender differences were reported in the experimental group: boys who participated in the TimeWise curriculum expressed an increased level of interest after the core lessons which

dissipated afterwards, whilst the interest levels of girls in the same program increased after the core lessons and was sustained over time (2007:290).

The text concentrates on measuring the propensity towards delinquency and anti-social behaviour in children or in tracking youth transition to criminal early adulthood (Chap 6, MacDonald). For an understanding of the criminal pathway across a greater time-span a longitudinal study of South London boys who were followed in criminal records to age 40 is available (Piquero, Farrington and Blumstein, 2007). The focus is on identifying the predictors of minor offending, such as property damage, but what are the precursors of violent crime such as homicide? Overall, the book is informative and the emphasis on theoretical, methodological and policy issues makes it a useful resource tool for students, academics, politicians, parents and educators. Any unexplored areas or unanswered questions can be addressed in future projects by considering alternative applications of the pathways model across comparative groups of people and categories of criminal behaviour.

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Florence Vidya Seemungal, University of Oxford.

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Correspondence:

For Journal Content:

Youth and Policy,
Durham University,
Elvet Riverside II,
New Elvet,
Durham DH1 3JT
E-mail: youth.policy@durham.ac.uk

For Administrative Matters (including subscriptions and advertising)

Youth and Policy,
The National Youth Agency,
Eastgate House,
19–23 Humberstone Road,
Leicester LE5 3GJ.
Tel. 0116 242 7480 Fax. 0116 242 7444
E-mail: andyh@nya.org.uk

Submission Details

Articles

The Editorial Group welcomes the submission of unsolicited articles which take an analytical approach to theoretical, policy or professional matters relating to young people in society.

Articles must be the original work of the author(s) and must not be under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Manuscripts should normally be between 3,500 and 8,000 words, including diagrams and references. In addition, authors should include an abstract of up to 150 words and three to five keywords.

If considered suitable, articles will be subject to anonymous peer review by two referees. This can sometimes take up to six months. The final decision regarding publication rests with the Editorial Group, who may occasionally recommend revisions and re-submission.

When submitting articles for consideration, in the first instance e-mail copy to jean.spence@durham.ac.uk. Alternatively send hard copy and disk.

Each manuscript should be accompanied by a cover sheet containing the following information:

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Please do not include authors names within manuscripts as these must be anonymous for

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All articles must be written in English. Language should be accessible, free from jargon and sensitive to issues of equality and difference. English spelling conventions should be used.

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The editors reserve the right to make minor modifications and edits in the manuscript. However, any in-depth editing will be discussed with the author.

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Reviewers should follow the style outlined for Articles in their manuscripts.

Youth & Policy is devoted to the critical study of youth affairs
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IN THIS ISSUE:

Introduction to the special issue on youth mentoring

Kate Philip

Youth Mentoring: Improving Programmes Through Research-Based Practice

Jean E. Rhodes and Sarah Ryan Lowe

Youth Mentoring – A Case for Treatment?

Kate Philip

**Youth Mentoring and the Parent-Young Person Relationship:
Considerations for Research and Practice**

Pat Dolan, John Canavan and Bernadine Brady

**Understanding youth exclusion: critical moments, social networks
and social capital**

Tracy Shildrick and Robert MacDonald

Obligatory friends, surrogate kin: some questions for mentoring

Lynn Jamieson

Youth & Policy feature article

**Too Grand, Bland and Abstract: The limitations of 'youth governance'
as an explanatory schema for contemporary governmental responses
to socially deviant young people**

John Pitts

Reviews

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