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Ideologically sound can be fun: Thoughts on the Woodcraft Folk

DOUGLAS BOURN

Steve Bell's popular 'If . . .' cartoon strip in **The Guardian** recently featured a discussion by the penguins on Rockall about the behaviour of their 'Percy' and his 'hanging out with unruly gannets'. One says he 'needs outdoor pursuits', another 'put him in the cubs'. Finally it is agreed that what he needs is an organisation with a 'non-sexist atmosphere, free of militarist, monarchist, nationalist and religious bullshit'. The answer is shown with a monkey walking towards them carrying a flag of 'The Woodcraft Folk'. (**The Guardian** 17-20 August, 1988).

To those people who read **The Guardian** and have children, the Woodcraft Folk may not seem a strange subject for Steve Bell's cartoon strip. They probably send their children to a local group. But to the majority of the population, this rather odd sounding organisation, with 'trendy' aims and strange ceremonies and customs is probably new to them. The cartoon itself pokes fun at the name 'woodcraft'. One of the penguins says 'there are no trees on Rockall'. 'No matter', replies the green shirted monkey, 'we make do with whatever's available — expanded polystyrene, old rope, detergent bottles, oil slicks, guano . . . keep the little buggers occupied in a spirit of peace and co-operation'.

Steve Bell's cartoons are not only very funny, they portray all too well, the image the Woodcraft Folk can portray. It's a national voluntary children's and youth organisation, similar in many of its activities to the Scouts and Guides, yet with a sort of 'left wing type' of philosophy. Its support comes mainly from socially committed parents, yet it has rather antiquated ceremonies and customs.

What was surprising to many people was how an organisation like the Woodcraft Folk becomes a target in between Reagan, Gorbachev and Thatcher. Steve Bell is a known supporter of the Woodcraft Folk. His children are members, but there is more than personal enthusiasm in the strip. The Woodcraft Folk may have only twenty thousand members in six hundred and fifty odd groups throughout the United Kingdom, but its name keeps being mentioned and discussed. In 1985, its Sixtieth Anniversary sponsors included such people as Lenny Henry, Paul Weller, Neil Kinnock, Ken Livingstone, Julie Christie, and Rik Mayall. In the last ten years the Woodcraft Folk has more than doubled its membership and opened groups in a large number of new areas. To many **Guardian** readers who happen to have children, the Woodcraft Folk not only offers an alternative evening activity, it has become recognised as a rare organisation in Thatcherite Britain. It is a progressive body which has been successful, become

more popular and instilled renewed enthusiasm and confidence into the possibilities for social change. To parents,

it can be seen as a haven from the worst excesses of Thatcherism.

To those active in youth work, the Woodcraft Folk not only offers one of the few progressive lights in the voluntary sector, it represents a tradition and perspective which has been unique. The organisation is alone in the voluntary youth sector in having a philosophy based on the objectives of education for social change, embodied in the principles of co-operation, democracy, equality and peace.

What the Woodcraft Folk has done has been to bring politics, ideology and culture into the youth service in an open manner. These are issues which affect all areas of youth work, but all too often they are ignored or are deliberately devalued because they are regarded as sensitive matters. Unlike youth work in the rest of Europe, Britain has tried to ignore 'political work' with young people. In most Western European countries, funding is given by the state to the youth wings of political parties. In Britain, only religion is tolerated as an acceptable ideological or cultural basis outside of statutory work.

The Woodcraft Folk has not been afraid to raise issues which others have regarded as too sensitive. For example, the organisation is well known for encouraging its members to support CND and Anti Apartheid demonstrations. It has taken a lead on sexuality as an important subject area in youth work and is well known internationally for its links with liberation movements such as ANC, Polisario Front and Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

Yet despite parliamentary questions over the years, the Woodcraft Folk continues to receive funding from the Department of Education and Science for its Headquarters work. It is now relatively well respected within the youth service, with members active on a range of national committees. Its work in the field of development education has received generous praise from a range of voluntary organisations and local authorities.

This article will look at the history and development of the Woodcraft Folk by referring particularly to the ideology and culture and how this has changed in recent times. Central to the Woodcraft Folk today is 'education for social change'. It underlies all of its work with children and young people. Most people involved with youth work would talk about their objectives being around encouraging young people to develop values and skills to change things for themselves. The Woodcraft Folk has however gone one step forward and puts down guidelines along which it

would like to see this social change. It is what should be the nature of these 'guidelines', how directive should they be that should be the debate for the youth service. Enabling young people can lead to directing young people onto particular paths which can cause difficulties for youth workers. The Woodcraft Folk by the very nature of its work is therefore raising fundamental questions for the role of youth work.

The Emergence of the Working Class Alternative

The Woodcraft Folk grew out of the 'woodcraft' tradition within the scouting movement. Baden Powell in founding the Boy Scouts had been greatly influenced by the ideas of Ernest Thompson Seton, who had adapted ceremonies and customs of the North American Indians in devising activities for boys in the USA. Seton's 'Woodcraft Indians' would 'learn the outdoor life for its worth in the building up' of their bodies and help to strengthen their souls. The 'woodcraft' Seton preached therefore was not just a narrow training for survival in the woods, but rather a total philosophy of human regeneration.

There is little doubt that one of the reasons for the early success of Baden-Powell's Scouts was the emphasis on outdoor work, skills and crafts. A leading figure in the early development of Scouting was John Hargreaves. He actually had the title of Commissioner for Woodcraft for a period of time and was the author of numerous articles and pamphlets stressing the value of Seton's ideas. Seton himself had helped to start the Boys Scouts in America but became disillusioned with its militarism and left in 1915. Hargreave also became increasingly critical of the movement, particularly its close links with the armed forces. In 1920 he left the Scouts and founded the Kibbo Kift Kindred, which placed great emphasis on tribal customs and physical fitness and health.

Kibbo Kift Kindred started to attract support from a number of young, progressively minded people who had enjoyed Scouting but were looking for a more radical alternative. One of these young people was Leslie Paul, a young journalist and he formed with a group of his friends, a number of groups or 'tribes' as they were called in Kibbo Kift Kindred. They even secured some financial support from the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society. But Hargreaves style of leadership became increasingly authoritarian, elitist and mystical and by the end of 1924, the situation had become intolerable for Paul and his friends and they left Kibbo Kift.

Leslie Paul with his friends Sidney Shaw, Gordon Ellis and Joseph Reeves at Royal Arsenal Co-op decided to start a new organisation using many of the ideas of Seton and Hargreaves, but with a more progressive and democratic structure. In February 1925, the first groups of what became known later in the year as the Woodcraft Folk were started in Catford in south east London.

Paul was the guiding figure in the early development of the Woodcraft Folk and his ideas dominated its work. 'The Child and the Race', published in 1926 and written by Paul emphasised physical fitness and health as the route to 'liberation'. The Folk's foundation Charter clearly showed the influence still of Hargreaves, if now tinged with a touch

of William Morris socialism. The Charter stated:

We declare that it is our desire —

1. To develop in ourselves, for the service of the people, mental and physical health, and communal responsibility, by camping and living in close contact with nature, by using the creative faculty both of our minds and our hands . . .

Members were to appreciate that the welfare of the community can only be achieved when the instruments of production are owned by the community for common use, instead of private gain. (D. Prynne 1983 p. 83).

They were captivated by the ideal of a simple society, a more rural society. There was in Paul's writings a touch of anti industrialism, of a desire to return to an almost primitive state. Yet at the same time there was the belief in social change. 'If nothing else, we thought that we would produce men and women who were at any rate tough and fit to face the future'. (L. Paul 1980 p. 10).

Influenced by the eugenics movement with its emphasis on health, physical and mental development, Leslie Paul like many others on the left at the time saw the outdoor life as a way of helping the working class to achieve power. 'With the health that is now ours and with the intellect and physique that will be the heritage of those we train, we are paving the way for the reorganisation of the economic system which will mark the re-birth of the human race'. (L. Paul 1980).

With the help of co-operative societies, the Woodcraft Folk gradually grew in the late twenties and early thirties. Its membership in 1932 was just over a thousand. The involvement of Basil Rawson from Sheffield who started the first group in the North of England was an important development. He had a background in the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and was a great advocate of the countryside. In the thirties he played a leading role in the campaigns around access to Kinder Scout in the Peak District.

Rawson gradually took over from Leslie Paul as the Folk's leading figure in the thirties. He reemphasised the importance of the political base of the Woodcraft Folk, but developed its camping and outdoor work.

Support from the labour movement was patchy. Co-operative societies started to give more support. The Co-op at a national level also started to give a small national grant, but the amounts given were no more than a token gesture. The Labour Party had given its formal blessing to the Woodcraft Folk in a joint pamphlet, 'Labour's Youngsters', published in 1934. It called on members of the Party to provide funds, premises and help wherever necessary. However there is little evidence to suggest that the pamphlet had a significant impact, although by the end of the decade, the Folk's membership was around three or four thousand.

The Woodcraft Folk had never wanted to be formally linked to the Labour Party or to any political party. Paul had always stressed its independence, but in a number of articles in the late twenties and early thirties, he often referred to the Folk as being seen as the 'Labour Scouts'. By the thirties, the Labour Party's main concern with children was with changes in the state school system. They

were also wary of an autonomous youth organisation, being in constant battle with its own League of Youth. The 'socialism' of the Woodcraft Folk was also more in tune with the now ostracised ILP than mainstream labour thinking. Labour leaders, like Clement Attlee were also noted for their support of the Boy Scouts. (D. Bourn 1978). The Woodcraft Folk was however not completely isolated. Indeed in the late thirties, the organisation was probably at the height of its influence. In 1937 it had organised a large International Camp at Brighton which included groups from a number of countries in Europe, including refugees from Spain. The Folk was active in a number of campaigns around peace and the growing threat of fascism.

But it was the publication of Leslie Paul's **Republic of Children** in 1938 which had the most lasting impact. Widely read by many educationalists and socialists, the volume became accepted as a major contribution to the debate about the direction and nature of socialist educational work in Britain. Although mainly concerned with Woodcraft Folk activities, particularly camping, **Republic of Children** brought together many of the ideas currently being discussed by progressive educationalists about approaches to working with children. References were made to the work of A.S. Neil, Montessori and Froebel.

In **Republic of Children**, Leslie Paul continually refers to the Woodcraft Folk being part of the 'task of building a new society'. In earlier publications for the Folk, Paul had referred to its wider objectives, 'we are a movement seeking social change and education must be directed towards social change'. (Paul 1936). He now develops this by putting it within the context of current educational thinking and the political situation and the threat of fascism. In answer to the question, 'have we an ethic to teach?', Paul answers 'in a general way, yes'. Through ceremonies and creeds, the child is urged to develop physically and mentally, but not in a selfish way, rather a cooperative way. (Paul 1938 pp. 56-58).

There is therefore a clearly defined set of ideas and principles for woodcraft. Paul sees the methodology and form of these objectives being implemented through customs and ceremonies which give 'the children a common bond' and 'the tribal form of organisation' at camps which 'enables children to play a certain kind of life'. (Paul 1938 p. 82).

Republic of Children was subtitled a 'handbook for teachers of working class children', yet there is little evidence to suggest that the Folk's ideology and culture endeared itself to working class people on a large scale. Certainly most of its leaders may have come from working class backgrounds, but in no way could the Woodcraft Folk be regarded as 'the working class alternative to the Scouts and the Guides'. There were a number of reasons for this. Although some of the ideas of Seton and Hargreaves were dropped in the thirties, the retention and indeed development of a distinctive 'woodcraft culture' with Folk names, even Folk weddings and christenings reflected inward looking and rather elitist notions. At conferences and meetings, everyone talked to each other using Folk names and a curious language peculiar to the

Folk, with references to North American Indian styles. The ceremonies and the songs of the period, some of which are still in use today in the Folk, although reflecting the influence of William Morris, still emphasised physical fitness, health and the love of the countryside. The declaration of the Pioneer age group, ten to sixteen years of age, called on members to 'keep fit in mind and body'. The Law of the Pioneers ran, and incidentally still does, 'Be strong, live kindly, love the sun, follow the trail'.

As the Folk grew in the thirties, there was increasing debate about the balance between outdoor activities and social objectives. E. Jones, writing in the Folk's Year Book in 1935 reflected a note of dissent that was starting to emerge: 'The Folk tends to be an escapist movement rather than a movement to help bring about social change. . . We have good times at our camps . . . (but) generally isolate ourselves from the efforts of the working class to throw off the yoke of oppression'. It never seemed to be adequately demonstrated how by spending their free time hiking and camping, they would change the social order. Was the Woodcraft Folk trying simply to educate children to be more self-reliant and to be useful citizens in later life, or were they seeking social reconstruction? Were they a recreational movement or one devoted to class struggle? The majority of the several thousands of young people who joined the Woodcraft Folk during this period were probably first attracted to the organisation by its outdoor activities, tinged perhaps with a sense of comradeship and co-operation. Leslie Paul saw the Folk in the thirties as a counterweight to that of schooling:

In the groups . . . the young can get a supplementary education which will not only correct the bias they may have received at school, but will fit them with the resolve to throw their weight on the side of the working class and its struggle for a better society. (L. Paul 1938 p. 99).

Paul's hopes of a more 'political' and less 'woodcraft' type of educational programme seemed to have had only partial success. His own **Republic of Children** referred to talks on trade unionism, but as he was aware, it was the camping and outdoor activities which were the popular attractions. What really restricted change was the 'woodcraft culture' itself. The progressive ideas of the Woodcraft Folk, particularly on coeducation were a hindrance. John Springhall has suggested that Britain between the wars was stressing 'conformity and respectability'. Working class families were looking to social advancement through the existing system, not a rebellion from it. (Springhall 1986). The recruitment of working class leaders was also difficult because of the hours most people worked. Leisure time, although a growing factor in people's lives between the wars, was still a mainly middle class pastime.

But it was, as one recent commentator on the Folk has written, that 'its leaders and programme implicitly challenged many values prevalent in the working class. Pantheistic vegetarianism with a mystical faith in the redemptive power of nature alienated many potential recruits and their families'. (W. Bruce Leslie 1984 p. 309). The Woodcraft Folk unwittingly began to resemble North American Indians in its structure and lifestyle, with growth

coming from families and contacts. It developed its own tribal structure and identity and jealously guarded and protected its own culture and traditions.

The outbreak of war in 1939 highlighted these problems with divisions in the organisation between those who wanted to fight fascism and those who were conscientious objectors. The Folk nearly collapsed from the split. Evacuation and the general dislocation of the war stretched the organisation to its limits. Yet in a strange way, its internalised culture, sense of tribal identity and of course its idealism, saw it through.

The Red and the Green

As a way of showing that the Woodcraft Folk could overcome the problems caused by the war, it hosted the first post war International Camp of the International Falcon Movement (IFM) in 1946. IFM was the umbrella organisation of children's socialist movements which had its origins in the Austrian and Falcon groups which had started in the twenties. Leslie Paul had made contact with them in 1931 and retained close links with them throughout the thirties, despite the spread of fascism.

The Falcon groups were more consciously political than the Woodcraft Folk. They had close ties and funding from socialist parties and the trade unions. They were also more closely linked to working class cultural aspirations than was the Folk. Their main theorist was Kurt Lowenstein and one of his objectives was that children should learn through self government. The culmination of this was through the 'Children's Republics', mass camps which elected young people to areas of responsibility and had parliaments and discussions on social and political topics.

Although the Woodcraft Folk played a leading role in helping to reform IFM after the war, it was clearly different to most of the other organisations. The Folk had a distinctive culture, it was less overtly socialist and in the late forties and fifties, had little contact with the organised labour movement.

This independence after the war was, however, both its strength and its weakness. The co-operative movement, the Folk's main financial supporter, became even more lukewarm after it started its own rival organisation, the Co-operative Youth Movement (CYM). Formed in 1944, with the intention of combining all co-operative sponsored youth activity under the aegis of the Co-operative Union, including the Woodcraft Folk, it quickly became seen as its rival.

The 1946 International Camp was criticised by the Co-op for involving socialist youth groups. This was used as an excuse to attack the Folk's avowedly socialist standpoint. The CYM was seen to be what it became, a conscious right wing alternative to the Folk. It never really gained any roots, despite considerable financial help from societies and the Co-op Union and finally disappeared in the seventies.

The Woodcraft Folk made modest but solid progress during the 1950s. Basil Rawson was now the clear leading figure in the organisation. He was the first post war President of IFM and the main author of its new educational programme **The Woodcraft Way**, first published in 1951.

He built on the material produced by Leslie Paul in the thirties, emphasising particularly the educational side. The badges became more complex and difficult, with grades. There were also more emphasis on social issues like citizenship and world friendship. But as the title suggests, a distinctive 'woodcraft way' of doing things was seen. 'Woodcraft' is described as a 'way of life and training calling for the exercise of many skills and virtues, self-reliance, observation, initiative, ability to work together for a common purpose, knowledge and understanding of things around us and which influence our lives . . .' (Rawson 1962 ed. p. 6).

Another feature of the fifties for the Folk was the development of links with the Pioneer organisations in Eastern Europe. This not surprisingly, caused political stir including IFM which with its social democratic outlook, was staunchly anti-communist during this period.

In a way to combat this adversity, but more to give a focus to its work, 'everything became geared towards the International Camps'. They came to be held every three or four years and as one member recently commented, 'they became our real strength, uniting members in a spirit of internationalism at a time when there were great divisions in the world'. (C. Salt & M. Wilson 1985 p. 40).

But the political profile of the Woodcraft Folk remained its main concern. Questions had been raised in the House of Commons in the early fifties about its activities and songs. The Woodcraft Folk had by the mid sixties started to reassess its philosophy and outlook. Some of the more overtly socialist phrases, notably the Charter were dropped. One of the main reasons for this was the desire to become more closely involved with the youth service. Some members saw this as a 'necessary expedient', but many felt that the Charter was anyway an anachronism. (Salt & Wilson 1985 p. 27).

The major changes involved a gradual dropping of some of the more antiquated aspects of the 'woodcraft culture'. Folk names were no longer used as a way of creating a distinctive identity. There was a gradual acceptance of the need to look outwards to the community. There were long and emotional debates about changing the name, but no consensus could be reached.

There was however no thorough reassessment of its role and its political outlook. The move towards the mainstream of youth provision was accepted more as a necessary expedient than as part of a change of direction and objectives. By the time the Labour government was willing to consider grant aiding the organisation in 1975, the opportunities to attack the Folk for political reasons were still there. It was not therefore surprising that the Conservative Party launched a major public attack in 1975 and 1976, accusing the organisation of being 'communist inspired'. Although the leadership dealt with the crisis in an excellent manner it took some time for them to feel confident again about open public activity.

What the attacks showed was that the Woodcraft Folk had still not really come to terms with its role and ideology since the fifties. The document produced by the national organisation in 1976 in response to the political attacks, although well argued, offered little that was different to the

ideas outlined by Basil Rawson in the fifties or even Leslie Paul before the war. 'The programme and methods are based upon "woodcraft" training, meaning that the individual child learns through play and action, to adapt and contribute to his or her changing environment'. (Woodcraft Folk 1976). Reference was made to its avowed aim of 'education for social change', but little detail was given about what this meant. There had also not been the same reassessment in the Folk that there had been in other youth organisations, following a number of reports on the future and nature of youth work. The Woodcraft Folk also seemed to be naive in responding to the changes in the needs and outlook of young people, following the cultural changes in the sixties.

There had been more noticeable growth in the late sixties and early seventies, as a result of changes in the style and programme of its work, but also because of organisational changes encouraging leaders to be more active in their local communities. Parents, really for the first time, started to become encouraged to take on group leadership responsibilities. Under Margaret White's influence as General Secretary, significant progress was made towards respectability in the youth service. There was however still a dominance of closely knit families, now in their second and third generations, who acted as the guardians of 'woodcraft', fearing change and growth. Cultural and political traditions of earlier times were still therefore very prevalent within the organisation, even in the mid seventies.

The reassessment did have to come and the political attacks necessitated an evaluation of its aims and principles and work. Its relationship with IFM was changed to that of associate status. Changes were started on the educational materials and songbooks. 'The Internationale' for example, was at long last deleted. But it was with the aims and principles that the most radical changes took place. The Woodcraft Folk has always vaguely referred to friendship, tolerance and comradeship and building a better world for the future, without defining what it meant by these terms. The 1979 Constitution did define these terms and added two years later, a new phrase on peace. Although the changes do not appear that dramatic and did not lead to significant notes of dissent from members, they gave the organisation confidence, strength and a clear outlook from which to go forward. Ideas and values which many in the organisation would argue have been implicit for fifty years, became explicit. 'A Co-operative Attitude to Life' had always been central to Leslie Paul's thinking. 'The Rights of the Child' had been implicit in the activities and the programme. 'Protecting our environment' was an integral part of traditional 'woodcraft' practices. 'Equality for men and women' had been one of the reasons for the Folk being founded, being the only organisation at the time which catered for both boys and girls. 'One Race — the Human Race' reflected the Folk's world outlook and commitment to internationalism. 'Education for Social Change' had of course been part of Paul's philosophy, but here it was clarified in terms of developing a 'critical awareness of society so that they could build a better world for the future'.

These areas were not just a shopping list of aims, but a

clear statement of where the Woodcraft Folk stood on the major concerns of the day and what it saw its educational role to be in relation to these principles. Up until 1979, the aims and principles had been no more than five lines in the Constitution. It was now two pages in length and based on social ideals. The term 'woodcraft' was not mentioned in either the section on aims and principles or in the programme.

At the same time, there was a major policy initiative on development, entitled 'Into the Eighties' which encouraged greater parental involvement and the building of contacts with a range of community organisations. This development programme was helped by increased funding from both public sources and at long last, full recognition from the co-operative movement.

What was not realised at the time was how significant these changes were going to be on the Folk over the next decade. 1979 was a year of considerable political change with the election of a Conservative government bent on a programme of radical change. Ten years on, we are fully aware of the changes that have taken place. The social and cultural climate of society has been restructured. Values which had been part of the consensus of society were now discarded.

Progressive minded people who had sheltered behind the social democratic consensus were now faced with the prospect of terminal decline or public activity. Many started to look to some form of alternative perspective which challenged the new authoritarianism of the right. They had been part of the sixties radicalisation and were most likely in professional occupations and had high ideals. They had experienced freedom, self expression, equality and developed a strong self-confidence in developing a lifestyle and culture which could provide the basis for a new alternative hegemony. Some unfortunately retreated into 'alternativism', the 'family home' and in educational terms, to 'deschooling'. Others looked in arrogant and elitist ways to transforming the politics and culture of society overnight by gaining control of the political parties of the left and in some cases, local authorities, which as we know had disastrous consequences.

A considerable number however looked to the new social movements which had emerged in the seventies, the peace movement, the women's movement, environmental groups and the rebirth of a new co-operative movement. The women's movement was starting to have a significant impact by the late seventies and major challenges were being made to a whole number of institutions and structures and attitudes about patriarchal power. In the Woodcraft Folk, there were some quite heavy debates about 'feminist influences' in the late seventies. Critics argued that single issues were starting to take over the organisation. But progress was made, the Constitution was degenderised and there have been some noticeable changes in the educational work of the organisation. The emergence of a new 'green' movement also had its impact on society, a wide range of groups emerged concentrating very often on single issues like nuclear waste or acid rain. The Folk was also influenced by the renewed discussion on 'co-operative' forms of activity, especially in games and play. However it

was the peace movement and its resurgence in the late seventies which had the biggest impact. It created a natural focus for activity, publicity and educational work with children.

Many of the sixties generation now had children and were looking for a radical movement they could grow up in. The Folk's fortuitous reevaluation of its work in 1979 and changes to development policy and a new professionalism with its publicity and training work, meant that all it had to do was to make itself known to these people. Through leafletting CND demonstrations, having stalls at green fairs, writing articles in radical journals, the Woodcraft Folk in just a few years became 'the organisation' for radical families. Longstanding members were caught by surprise at what was happening, tensions naturally occurred but remarkably the progress was relatively smooth. By 1987, the Woodcraft Folk had doubled its membership from the early seventies. The vast majority of leaders were young parents, middle class in background and experienced in a range of social and community groups. For the first time since probably the late thirties, and for a brief period in the mid seventies, the Woodcraft Folk was now a thriving, dynamic and confident organisation. A low profile as a consequence of political attacks was now forgotten and replaced by a high profile and a vibrant belief in educating children in values which were not easily seen elsewhere, in co-operation, equality, anti sexism, anti-racism and a commitment to protecting the environment.

Politics, Culture and Ideology

The changes in the Woodcraft Folk in the late seventies and eighties did not however change the attitude of Kent County Council youth service which still refused to recognise the organisation on the grounds of its so called 'political allegiances'. Kent is unique in the youth service in that it has as one of the terms of condition for affiliation, that no organisation could be 'politically biased'.

Regardless of the short sightedness of the County's policy, the question of 'political bias' is always a difficult issue for youth workers. The experiences of the Woodcraft Folk and its current thinking are therefore of considerable value to everyone concerned with social and political education with young people.

The Folk's Constitution states:

We seek to develop in our members a critical awareness of the world in which they grow up. We urge them to seek and accept their responsibilities as citizens and to participate in the democratic process in order to bring about the changes that they feel are necessary to create a caring society.

There is nothing particularly revolutionary in this, it is indeed similar to many recent youth service statements on participation and democracy.

When the issues were first raised, the Folk argued that all movements and organisations which wish to improve society were in a sense political:

Politics is concerned with people and certainly, more than ever today, the youth service is caring about people. All adults who work with young people have ideals and principles to guide them and are much the

better for it. Providing these values are put over in an open, non-doctrinaire and educational way, then a meaningful relationship between adult and child can be formed. The Woodcraft Folk openly encourages its members to think, question and challenge all points of view and then to be positive and constructive. (Woodcraft Folk 1976).

In this respect, the Folk was following an educational perspective that had been of the organisation since its earliest days. Leslie Paul continually criticised movements like the Socialist Sunday Schools for their dogmatic political approach. He referred always to the educational basis of the Folk, not its political base. 'What is important', he wrote, was that children 'learn by doing'. (L. Paul 1938 p. 58).

What has been the Folk's weakness however, has been that despite its educational aims, there is a clear set of ideas and principles which can be interpreted as representing a distinctive ideology. The **Daily Telegraph** recently criticised the organisation by posing the question, 'need a youth movement have an ideology?' (25 February 1987). The comments were in response to an article in the **Observer** colour magazine about the Folk which referred to its current programme and 'trendy issues' it takes up, but noted that 'the Woodcraft Folk are living proof that being ideologically sound can be fun'. (22 February 1987, pp. 58-9).

Does the Woodcraft Folk have a clear ideology?

In answer to this question, one has first of all to have some view about a definition of ideology. Gramsci's writings are probably the most useful in this respect. He referred to ideologies being conceptions of life, the element which holds the structures together, that which puts everything into perspective. Ideologies, he suggests, have a transformative function. They are a cohesive body of thoughts and value systems, a view of society. Ideology, cannot, Gramsci also suggested, be divorced from culture. For him common sense is the lived culture of a group. It is a way of life, the moral preferences and principles that determine a particular grouping. Ideologies work upon a ground — that ground is culture.

(See R. Johnson in Clarke et. al (ed.) 1979 pp. 201-237; S. Hall, in **Marxism Today** June 1987 pp. 16-21).

What does this theory mean in relation to the Folk? From what has been said earlier, it is clear that the organisation developed a culture of its own, its own practices and values. This culture started to break down in the sixties as more and more new adults joined. There was a common commitment to the aims of the Folk, but the concept of a particular way of life was being challenged. In a training manual of the Folk, there is an often used quotation about camping, 'when we go to camp, we go to fashion a world as we would like it to be'. (Woodcraft Folk 1977 ed.).

Today what binds people to the Woodcraft Folk are the aims and principles. They are now sufficiently clear and specific to be attractive in themselves. Twenty five years ago, the attractions to adults were aims certainly, but more than this, was a way of life, a sense of being part of something which provided a distinctive outlook and

approach to the world around them. It was also because of its smaller size, really one large family or tribe.

There are still elements of this 'woodcraft culture' in the organisation. In some areas where Folk groups exist, you may still find this as dominant in the activities of the organisation. In most areas however where there has been a major influx of newer members, young parents particularly, there is a more pluralistic approach. The sixties radical culture now has a strong influence. In some of the new developments in Scotland for example, there is at long last a strong working class presence. Although there is today a range of influences within the organisation, there is still the danger of a new 'woodcraft culture' developing, if people see the development of a particular way of life as important to its educational work with children and young people.

When one comes to look at the question of a 'woodcraft ideology' this is perhaps easier to resolve. Leslie Paul clearly saw the development of a view of life and society which could change the existing order as central to the Folk. We 'will go forward inspired by a definite social philosophy . . . they recognise that there must be fundamental economic changes before the philosophy of well living will be adopted universally', wrote Gordon Ellis in a letter to Paul in discussing the early development of the Folk. This belief in education within the process of socialist outlook is clear from the early publications. 'The Woodcraft Folk seek to train children for a new social order', noted a publicity leaflet of the thirties.

With the dropping of the Charter in the sixties and the clear distancing from specific socialist ideas, the Woodcraft Folk gradually dropped its own ideological framework. Basil Rawson's 'Woodcraft Way' had elements of an ideology within it, the title in itself suggests more than just a lifestyle. There are probably still a number of members within the organisation who would say that the organisation has an ideology, but if one takes the definition used by Gramsci, then the present Constitution implies that the organisation's aims by themselves do not pose a transformative function. But the accusations by Kent County Council cannot be countered by definitions of ideology. The phrase 'Education for Social Change' could still lead to an interpretation of ideological bias if the culture and outlook portrayed have a distinctive political bias.

One way the Woodcraft Folk could answer the problem is to ask itself whether it's primarily a 'movement' or an 'organisation'. A movement is one that is self-generating, has clear goals and objectives and has a life of its own to which members feel a part. It will have a 'culture' of its own. An organisation on the other hand will have a different function, to organise activity and co-ordinate groupings of people. There may well be elements of a culture, a sense of being part of something, but it is unlikely to have a lifestyle with social objectives. Some organisations of course do have clear political aims, but they are often part of movements in a wider sense.

If one analyses the history of the Woodcraft Folk in this context, it could be argued that it has moved from being primarily a movement to that of being an organisation. There are still many within the Folk who would feel they are

part of a movement. In recent years, a leaflet was produced which had the phrase, 'Not so much a weekly meeting, more a way of life'. It was quickly withdrawn when people realised its implications. It is in this way that the Folk has to look in the future to ensure criticisms from Kent have no justification.

Education for Social Change

The Woodcraft Folk may have started on this new path, but it is by no means clear as to its direction. The organisation may be more diverse than it has ever been, but the dangers of a new 'woodcraft culture', even an 'ideology' could emerge if its social base becomes even more middle class and 'trendy'. Steve Bell's cartoon referred to 'singing songs of an ideologically sound nature' and there is clearly a sense in which the Woodcraft Folk can be a 'cosy haven' from Thatcherism where families can in a rather inward looking way, create the alternative way of doing things.

The sixties radical generation is noticeably white, middle class and 'English' in outlook. The aims of the Woodcraft Folk fit cosily into this. Indeed aspects of its past culture fit it more closely than any previous social grouping. The need therefore to break out of this base of support has become essential to the Folk. Reappraisals of its image and practices have begun, particularly as a consequence of the need to have a clear anti-racist perspective. In Scotland, a development project has shown that support can be gained from working class parents. Starting points may well be different, the images projected of the role of the organisation in the area may well have to be different to established areas of support, but support and self-generating growth is possible. (J. Barr, **Woodcraft Focus**, Spring 1988).

What the Woodcraft Folk is starting to consider is to see what is its relation to existing cultures and social activity. A problem for the organisation has been that because it has been parent dominated and working primarily with under twelves, ideas are developed within adult centred notions. 'Developing children and young people to become responsible and participating citizens' has been one of the Folk's main principles. This has dangers of paternalism and ignoring the needs of young people as young people.

Clarke and Willis have pointed out that working class children are not particularly concerned with what ideal models they are supposed to be. Their concern is not with the ideal future member who is going to solve the problems of capitalism, not even being an ideal citizen to make a better democracy, nor with the self developed individual who can solve the problems of civilisation. Their problems concern survival in society now and they need to make material adjustments and plans to cope with their real and future situation. (I. Bates et. al 1986 p. 11).

The Woodcraft Folk tends to give low priority to 'surviving in today's society', in terms of its educational programme. Work with thirteen to sixteen year olds is still based around the traditional outdoor activities and discussions on social issues, i.e. apartheid, environment and peace. Rather than reflecting a variety of adult culture, it needs to reflect the culture of young people.

A recent DES report on Effective Youth Work noted that

'young people need to be valued for what they are and do now, not for what they will become'. The question is within which framework. The same report notes 'youth workers have to be aware that their prime goal is change and development'. It is within which framework and on whose terms, that issues such as the needs of young people and social change should be assessed. (NACYS 1988).

The World Studies Project has a topic web model which can be valuable here. It refers to the interrelationship of values, problems, background and actions. All activity should have some action or goal. In addition it should encompass values and attitudes, and encourage further research and discovery. An activity should have some wider purpose. (See S. Fisher & D. Hicks 1985). The problem with the model is 'whose values'. It mentions personal values, but reference is also given to the 'good society'. Every young person's values and outlook on life will be conditioned by a whole range of factors and influences. What are the starting points?

Too often they have been the values of the organisation, in practice those of adults and parents. Society may also put direct pressure, response to problems such as riots or drugs. The needs and values of young people would be the starting point from which everything else flows. There will inevitably be guidelines and some direction; this is where the organisation comes in. Some may guide towards spiritual development. The Woodcraft Folk on the other hand should guide towards co-operation, equality and democracy.

When we speak about our education for social change, I think that what we are trying to do is to say, 'Look there are certain values that exist in Society. We believe that you should challenge them, not with the point of saying they must change, but for you to educate them and if you feel that Society can be a better place, then you should challenge the existing values and find ones to replace them'. Now the Folk believes it has values which do challenge the existing structure of society. (C. Salt and M. Wilson ed. 1985 p. 42).

This quotation from a Folk member in many ways answers the question, but there is still the danger of 'guiding' and 'directing' young people within a framework that is already mapped out for them. The World Studies Project refers to young people 'acquiring skills and concepts they will require as active agents of change in their own time'. Education for social change should therefore be seen in the context of participation and equipping young people with the confidence and the skills to change their lives and their views on the world around them, not as education for future citizenship. (See **Learning for Change** 1976).

The Woodcraft Folk is now starting to embark on a discussion about its role in relation to the needs of young people. Changes are underway in its structure with greater autonomy and power for sixteen to twenty year olds in the organisation. Its work on development education has shown that similar processes are underway with younger age groups. The starting point for projects and activities are the young people themselves, how they see the world around them. The 'Images' pack for example, 'starts with the individual's view of her or himself, and her or his life and

concerns, and then, once having established personal and group confidence, broadens out into wider issues that directly affect young people's lives, such as gender roles, racism, views of other countries, and the future'. (P. Thomas 1988).

The role of the Woodcraft Folk should be to provide guidelines, aims and principles which offer one perspective for young people. By joining the organisation, young people will gain the confidence, skills and ideas to change those things that are important to them. The Woodcraft Folk can act as that agency. It may be the body through which young people may wish to seek that change, i.e. campaigning on peace issues, or it may not. The Woodcraft Folk's role is no longer to develop an ideology which directs young people and give them a movement in which to change society. Nor should it represent some culture or 'way of life'. Its function should be to raise an awareness of issues, to develop skills, confidence and ideas within the framework of co-operation, equality and democracy.

The Woodcraft Folk is today well integrated into the mainstream of youth provision. It is no longer on the margins, by design or as a consequence of government policy. Its development education material has been taken up by Scout and Guide groups, local authorities youth agencies and church based organisations. In many ways the Woodcraft Folk is an ideal model of the NACYS objectives for effective youth work in terms of social education and participation.

Yet no one should delude themselves about the difficulties that everyone involved with youth work is operating in. The present government has done more to undermine the rights and needs of young people than any previous government since the war. Political education may have been central to the Thompson Report, but as the **New Statesman** commented, 'Politics is not where you invest your hopes. Life is elsewhere. Politics means taxes and petty regulations. It's a nuisance. This is Mrs. Thatcher's unseen triumph: she's sold politics off too'. (29 July 1988). Youth workers cannot ignore Thatcherism for if there is one section of society which has shown signs of taking up her ideas wholeheartedly it is young people, the generation which has grown up within the hegemony of competition, individualism and privatisation. The challenge to the Woodcraft Folk, as it is to the rest of youth work, is to face these questions head on and not retreat backwards into its own safe culture, lifestyle and ideology. Percy the penguin may be into 'loadsamoney', as Steve Bell suggested. You may not change him by just putting him in a green shirt, but at least you may raise an awareness of issues, ideals and practices.

The history and development of the Woodcraft Folk raises a central question for youth work. What are the objectives of its work? Young people are becoming more and more influenced by values which are probably alien to most youth workers. How do you respond, where do you start, what are you trying to achieve? More than ever politics, culture and ideology need to be questions for discussion.

Notes and References

This article is based on a longer study entitled **Education for Social Change** to be published by Holyoak Books in 1989.

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Homelessness: Today's youth, tomorrow's tramp?

'Day after day, week after week, he had seen these men tramping along the roads being nothing but a nuisance . . .'
(Fletcher, 1882).

The above is a historical commentary on vagrancy in Victorian England, but it could, perhaps, just as well represent a vision of the future. Shelter has recently announced that homelessness nationally is approaching the one million mark. Nobody can be left in any doubt as to the seriousness of the situation which is upon us. Homelessness is one of the major social problems facing contemporary British society.

One of the most disturbing features of this problem is the increasing numbers of young people who become homeless. The diverse nature of young people's homelessness makes the collection of accurate data on the numbers involved extremely difficult. Observable homelessness, such as young people living on the streets or those whose living circumstances mean that they will be picked up by record-keeping mechanisms (e.g. waiting lists, building utilisation surveys) can to some extent be quantified. Labour councillors claimed in January 1987 that between 25,000 and 40,000 young people were living rough in the London area (Jones, 1987). Between May 1981 and April 1985 in Southwark the number of squats increased from 150 units to 1,219 — a growth of one squat a day (Greve, 1985). However, this is only the tip of the homelessness iceberg. Many more young people form the 'hidden homeless', for instance, those who stay on friends' floors or those who remain in unsatisfactory housing situations. Research by the London Research Centre has indicated that there are an estimated 338,000 people in London alone who need separate accommodation from the main households with whom they live. Nearly 70% of these were aged between 17 and 25 (SHOT, 1988). Given these obstacles to ascertaining accurate numbers of homeless young people the figures that do exist represent a sizable underestimation of the real extent of the problem.

The reasons for the growth in homelessness amongst young people have been well documented elsewhere and is generally accepted to be a complex issue (Brynin, 1987; De Smidt and Jansen, 1982). Pressure groups campaigning for the homeless greatly support the notion that the issue is essentially a housing problem. Widdowson (1987) concludes that 'homelessness is growing as a direct result of the failure to provide access to housing at a price people can afford'. Accessibility to housing for young single people is particularly problematic because of their economic position. Young people in particular experience high levels of

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unemployment. The percentage of people under 18 unemployed increased from 12.5% in 1980 to 21.8% in 1986

(Smith, 1988). Similarly the number of full-time workers aged 20 has fallen by over 1/3 since 1979 (Labour Research Department, 1987). The lack of full time employment opportunities has meant that young people have been forced to undertake part-time and temporary work. In 1985 nearly 1 in 5 male workers and 1 in 3 female workers aged 20 had a part-time job (Labour Research Department, 1987). As a consequence of this, young people often receive very low wages. The Official New Earnings Survey shows that one in ten 16-17 year olds have earnings that fall below £49.30 per week and that one in ten 18-20 year olds have less than £70.70 (Shelter, 1988). With such low incomes young people find it very difficult to compete within the housing market.

Similarly, young people have been particularly affected by the government's most recent legislation on Social Security. Such reforms as Section 4 of the Social Security Act 1988, (which raised the minimum age of entitlement to Income Support from 16 to 18), it has been argued, offer evidence of a deliberate policy of prolonging the dependence of the young unemployed on their families. Yet paradoxically young people have increasingly seemed to want and expect more independence, and to a large extent have been supported in this desire by their parents (Harris, 1988).

The Housing Market

The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 allows only those people in 'priority need' to have a statutory right to demand accommodation from local authorities. Only a tiny proportion of single homeless people are accepted as having a priority need. They are discouraged from registering on local authority housing lists and are only entitled to 'advice and assistance' under the Act. Over 40 local authorities in England and Wales impose arbitrary age limits which prevent young people from registering or being considered for housing from the waiting list. Others have minimum residence requirements or restrict applicants to certain categories of housing need. It is not enough, therefore, simply to be homeless. Yet despite these restrictions, single people on council waiting lists are estimated to represent 27% of the total waiting list population (Venn 1985).

Where local authorities have encouraged applications from single people, the demand has been great. In Newcastle, for example, single people under 25 form 22%

of the waiting list and, since 1980, the number has risen 400% (Newcastle Times, 1989). However, council accommodation is in short supply due to the government's policies of reducing public sector housing. Between 1978 and 1984 public sector dwelling 'starts' decreased from 81,000 to 38,000 and completions fell from 131,000 to 48,000 (Social Administration Digest, 1985). Also the sale of council housing stock, which since 1979 has totalled more than 750,000 homes, has reduced public sector housing still further (Widdowson, 1987).

Traditionally single people have been primarily dependent on private sector housing. However, this sector has also experienced rapid decline with the inevitable result of increasing house prices; the average price for a house in the South East in 1982 was three times what the average man earned, whereas now, it costs above £60,000 or nearly 5 times average earnings (Smith, 1988). Home ownership is for many young people an unrealistic goal to pursue.

Accessibility to the private rented housing market for young people is also difficult, particularly for those who are unemployed. A recent survey in Leeds showed that 38% of landlords would not accept unemployed people and 46% would only take them if they had a bond guarantee. Only 16% would take young people without a bond (Shelter, 1988).

Housing options: The illusion of choice

With accessibility to the traditional housing market being denied to many young people, what options remain, then, for the young single homeless? As suggested earlier, one predicted result of recent social security benefit reforms was that young benefit recipients might be forced to return home or remain in the family home for a longer period (Harris, 1988). However, subsequent research does not wholly bear out the first of these predictions (Berthrouth 1986). For many young people, staying at or returning home is not a viable option. The report **No Way Home**, based on a survey at Centrepoint, London, found that only 1/4 of the young people using the night shelter felt that they could return to their last home even if they had nowhere else to go (Randall, 1988).

The main response to homelessness amongst young people, and one which these young people have become increasingly reliant upon, has come from the voluntary sector, which provides hostels and night shelters. In the majority of cases these projects are designed to provide only temporary accommodation and meet a short-term need or provide a specialist purpose. Some young people do require shorter or medium term hostels with varying degrees of supervision and support. Yet for the vast majority this is not a feasible option: they need their own permanent housing. There is evidence to suggest that many hostel places are taken up by young people simply because they have nowhere else to go (SHOT, 1988). Very rapidly bottlenecks occur when move-on accommodation is not available and agencies are then forced to either increase the length of stay or turn the young people back on to the streets. The Stepping Stones Project in Newcastle which provides temporary emergency accommodation for 16-21 year olds received 1,177 applications from young people between June 1984 and January 1987. Of these,

only 195 (17%) were housed and 847 (72%) were turned away because the project's accommodation was full (SHOT, 1988). The demand for voluntary sector accommodation by young people greatly outstrips current provision. Given the insecure nature of the funding for many of these projects, and the uncertainty regarding future funding of both existing and new hostel schemes (DSS, 1988, DoE, 1988), this sector may also experience a serious decline in terms of the number of projects and available bed spaces.

One of the few options remaining for many young homeless people is at 'the doss-house end of the board and lodging market' (Franey, 1985); the resettlement unit or 'spike'. Traditionally, DSS run resettlement units (RUs) have catered for only a very small number of homeless young people. This has been partly due to the fact that many RUs have sought to discourage this group from entering and to redirect them to more appropriate accommodation. The RU was seen very much as only a last resort.

The recent increases in the number of young homeless and the inability of many existing emergency accommodation projects to cope with this excessive demand has however forced more and more young people to use these units. This trend is supported by research findings from the RU at Leeds. Prior to 1985 no person under 20 years of age stayed at the unit, whereas in 1987 the under 20 year olds accounted for 4% of the total RU population (Jones, 1987). Admittedly, the numbers involved are relatively small, but they offer disturbing evidence of this rising trend. This is particularly worrying given the nature of RUs and their existing users.

RUs: The Last Resort

There are currently 22 RUs, one each in Scotland and Wales and the remaining 20 in England. They are predominantly for men; only one caters solely for women and another is mixed. The situation facing homeless young women, then, is even more desperate than that faced by young males, denied even the sanctuary of RUs as a last resort. RUs are very much a relic of the Poor Law 'casual wards', which were established in the nineteenth century. They provided basic food and shelter for persons considered to be utterly destitute. In 1948, with the National Assistance Act, responsibility for these institutions was nationally centralised as part of the Welfare State. At the same time they were renamed reception centres (RCs), in part to reflect the change in admission policies. Whereas casual wards had accepted any wayfarer, RCs admitted only those persons who were considered to have 'an unsettled way of life' — the itinerant, the tramp.

Administration of the centres subsequently passed, in 1966, to the Supplementary Benefits Commission and they were renamed resettlement units in 1980. Schedule five of the Supplementary Benefits Act (as amended by the Social Security Act 1980) conferred upon the Secretary of State a duty:

to provide and maintain places known as resettlement units at which persons without a settled way of life are afforded temporary board and lodging with a view to influencing them to lead a more settled way of life. (SSC 1985-6).

Over the last two decades in particular, RUs have received much criticism not least because of the reported poor physical state of many of the buildings, the institutional environment; the harsh regimes in operation in some units; and the type of inmates (E.g. CHAR, 1986). Camberwell RU in south London (one of the most notorious 'spikes') was originally built as a workhouse in 1878, comprising in the early 1970s of a gaunt three storeyed building with 900 beds (Rose, 1988).

Various writers have expressed their revulsion at the types of men who use these units. Robin Page, visiting Camberwell RU in 1973 described a group of men showering as 'a collection of pot-bellied, sore-covered legs (sometimes caused by louse bites) and flabby muscles' (Rose, 1988). Another writer likened the RU to 'a mental hospital with no doctors — a warehouse of misfits, a storage space' (Wilkinson 1981).

Despite the long history of these institutions there is little comprehensive data available on the RU client group. From a recent review of the research literature Deacon (1987) comments:

The broad picture of RU users which emerges is one of white unemployed men, largely middle-aged with a history of unskilled employment and handicapped by a disproportionate incidence of alcohol-related problems and psychiatric illnesses.

Data from a study undertaken at Plawsworth RU in County Durham emphasises the more heterogeneous nature of the RU population. Based on in-depth interviews with 90 men, a typology of users was identified centering around four main groups; the long-term user; the itinerant; the chronic transient; and the temporary transient (Steele, 1987). This latter group comprised the young single homeless and those who considered themselves temporarily homeless due to unemployment. The younger men, forced to live in this communal setting with the older, more institutionalised men, may be coerced into adopting an itinerant lifestyle. The older users, who actively pursued this wayfarer lifestyle tended to portray a very attractive picture of life 'on the road'. They spoke of its attractions — being free and pleasing yourself, having no responsibilities and travelling around the country visiting places they never thought they would get to see. Very appealing, perhaps, to a young man of 18 or 19?

The realities of this way of life are, however, somewhat different. Itinerant people characteristically experience a high incidence of physical and health problems. They are often in poor physical health, suffering from malnutrition, bronchial and digestive conditions, associated with long periods of sleeping rough and impoverished diets. A significant number of these men have alcohol related illnesses, often chronic due to excessive drinking for many years. Some of the men are also heavily involved in drugs and gambling and will often turn to petty crime to finance their addictions.

The RU is, for the itinerant-type of users, a place to stay when they run out of money or to recuperate and use the medical facilities. They do recognise, however, that this lifestyle is only appealing when a man is young enough to cope with the rigours of being 'on the road'. They did not

look forward to the time when they would have to 'settle down'.

Conclusion

As a direct consequence of having no other options open to them, increasing numbers of homeless young people may be forced to use RUs as a last resort and could be drawn into the itinerant lifestyle. The government announced, in 1985, that these units would be subject to gradual closure in association with measures 'to identify alternative arrangements for resettling people without a settled way of life'. Up to the present time only Camberwell RU has closed and as yet no decision been taken as to when the remaining units will be phased out. Local Review Teams have been set up to consider the needs of the homeless in their locality and to formulate a 'package' of alternative provision. The closure programme 'offers the opportunity to create properly co-ordinated, comprehensive local services to meet the needs of single homeless people' (CHAR, 1986). It is important that the needs of the young homeless are recognised and suitable provision incorporated into the replacement package. If this is not the case, then the traditional image of the middle aged itinerant could radically change as we see teenagers forced to tramp around the country, searching for work and a place to call their home.

Footnote

The views expressed in this article are wholly personal and should not be seen as reflecting those of any Government department.

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The importance of class in the youth service curriculum

ANDY NELSON

This paper is concerned with examining the development and implementation of Manchester's policy document on its youth service, **The Philosophy and Practice of the Youth Services**, and its emphasis on, 'helping young people to understand the harmfulness of discrimination on grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation or handicap and to support young people who are subject to such discrimination' (1982 p.3). In particular I want to look at the consequences of excluding class from this statement, especially in the light of the findings of the inquiry into the murder of Ahmed Ullah at Burnage High School in Manchester in 1986. However, I will start by tracing some of the recent origins of equal opportunities policies in Labour authorities in an attempt to demonstrate a link between the contradictions that existed at the time of their formulation, and the contradictions and dilemmas now being faced by practitioners of the policies.

John Gyford, writing in 1983, analysed the origins and priorities of, 'the new urban left'.

The new urban left has a variety of specific origins. Among these are: community action and community development; the campaigns against local spending cuts; the internal struggles between left and right for control of local Labour parties; the radicalisation of some of the local government professions (notably town planning and social work); environmentalism; the women's movement; and even the former Hainite wing of the Young Liberals. (Gyford 1983 p. 91).

Gyford maintains that what united these elements was a belief in the inadequacy of traditional models of socialist policies. Although Gyford does not specifically refer to them, one could mention books such as, **Beyond the Fragments** (Rowbotham, Segal and Wainwright, 1979) and **In and Against the State** (London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, 1979) as sources of inspiration for the emerging views of the 'new urban left'. Both books argue for new forms of opposition to the state and the emerging 'new right'. There was also an increasing recognition of the decline of the Labour vote and the need to build new alliances. The Labour Party's share of votes cast

... fell from 49% in 1957 to 43% in the February 1974 election, then collapsed to 28% in 1983. As Hobsbawm observed, 'the forward march of Labour and the Labour movement ... appears to have come to a halt in this country about twenty-five to thirty years ago', the single major reason being that, 'the manual working class, core of traditional socialist Labour

parties, is today contracting'. (Boddy and Fudge 1984 p. 4).

It is also important to recognise that the just pressure from the women's movement, black organisations and gay and lesbian groups for change were interpreted in statements such as that in **London Labour Briefing** in the summer of 1982.

Labour councillors need to break out of the confines of council chamber politics and link up with those 'extra-parliamentary forces' — the trade unions, ethnic minority organisations, women's movement, tenants' and residents' organisations, etc. etc., which alone can provide the forces for a real fight. (London Labour Briefing 1982).

Gyford identifies these views with those of Hobsbawm's and Peter Hain and Simon Hebditch:

Hobsbawm's solution to this problem strongly resembles the strategy of the new urban left. He commends what he calls the 'neo-socialist' parties of Spain, France and Greece, who have shown that a wide and heterogeneous range of discontented voters can be brought together. . . In Britain, these would presumably include those groups described by Peter Hain and Simon Hebditch in the pamphlet 'Radicals and Socialism', as proponents of a radical's politics which has hitherto largely bypassed the Labour Party: 'community groups, claimants unions, women's liberation, black groups . . . environmentalists, radical professionals and the counter culture'. (Gyford 1983 pp 91-92).

It is possible to begin to identify in the views, for example of Hain and Hebditch, an analysis which not only begins to place less emphasis on class but also excludes it as an explicit category. It could be argued that class is implicit, except for the fact that a view emerges which, whilst seeking to recognise the differences within the working class, undermines traditional collective working class demands.

... any attempt simply to build alliances with women's groups, black organisations, tenants organisations or union campaigns around existing policies, issues and structures has little hope of success. . . This implies a redefinition of priorities, issues and debates with the Labour Party and the displacement of demands traditionally put forward on behalf of 'the working class'. (Boddy and Fudge 1983 pp 12-13).

I am not seeking to argue the right and wrong of this kind of analysis, merely to sketch how there emerged a view amongst some of the 'new urban left' of a hierarchy of oppression in which the white working class male was held

to be relatively privileged. In 1984 Ken Livingstone maintained that:

What we should aim for is to build a Labour movement that represents not just the trade unions, but also those other sections of society which have been neglected by the Labour movement in the past and whose demands have not been articulated. We have been deeply conservative on the issues that matter to them. The craft unions . . . They're the ones who laugh loudest about gay rights, or feminism, the ones who are most reluctant to give a strong lead on racism. (Boddy and Fudge 1984 p. 270).

Ken Livingstone goes on to argue for a governing majority to be built based on trade unions allied to sections of the electorate such as women's, black and community organisations. The dilemma is how to do both. The trade unions of course are dominated by white men, and intentionally or unintentionally they came to be seen by some as not only part of the 'problem' but perhaps a cause of the 'problem'. This can be seen in the policies developed by local authorities.

Following the May 1982 local elections, a left-wing Labour council was elected in Islington which was committed in its manifesto to policies of equal opportunities and positive discrimination. The first draft of Islington Equal Opportunities Employment Policy stated that:

This Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Council recognises that in our society, groups and individuals have been and continue to be discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, marital status, disability, sexuality, class, age and religious belief. (Islington Council 1982 (a) para. 1.1).

The second draft of the **Equal Opportunities Employment Policy** excluded class (Islington Council 1982 (b) para. 1.1). It was, and still is, easier for white working class men to obtain council jobs, than for example, black working class women. However, by excluding class, Islington Council in some sense was saying that it did not recognise that 'in our society groups and individuals have been and continue to be discriminated against on the basis of class'. Its policy therefore contained the seeds of contradiction. The development of equal opportunities policies in Manchester can be traced back to 1978 (Manchester Evening News 1988 p. 29). However, it was not until the election of a left-wing Labour council in 1984 that the policies were developed to the same extent as in Islington. The 1984 Manchester Labour Party Manifesto, on which future policies were based stated that, 'We are committed to ensuring that the Council adopts policies to combat all direct and indirect forms of discrimination based on sex, race, sexual orientation or disability' (1984 p. 9). Once again class is not included. The inquiry into the murder of Ahmed Ullah at Burnage High School in Manchester identifies as contributory factors to the events that led up to the murder the implementation of what it calls moral anti-racism which it sees as partly stemming from the omission of class from Manchester Equal Opportunities policies. It is worth quoting these conclusions at some length:

In the field of education, the basic assumption behind

many current anti-racist policies is that since black students are the victims of the immoral and prejudiced behaviour of white students, white students are all to be seen as 'racist' whether they are ferret eyed facists or committed anti-racists.

Racism is thus placed in some kind of moral vacuum and is totally divorced from the more complex reality of human relations in the classroom, playground or community. In this model of anti-racism there is no room for issue of class, sex, age or size. We have called it symbolic or moral anti-racism.

In practice, moral anti-racism has been an unmitigated disaster. (Manchester Evening News 1988 p. 29).

In other words the white working class boys at the school could not, according to the council policies, be regarded as oppressed. They were only seen as the oppressors with nothing in common with the black students. Moreover, black students are seen only as black, not also members of the working class. The inquiry report goes on to say:

The council's anti-racist policies do not just deal with discrimination on grounds of race, but also cover sex, disability and sexual preference, but the council has rejected the suggestion of the education department's equal opportunities working party made in 1985, to include 'class' since it was felt that this issue was too controversial and did not easily lend itself to an all party consensus.

We find this decision regrettable. Discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of class has been central to all educational policies since 1945, and to omit it means that there will be a tendency to attribute discrimination and disadvantage to racism and sexism, even where class is the central issue, and to ignore the class element involved.

The omission of class also means that the council's policies will not be addressing the grievances of the white working class majority, meaning that their interests as a group are nowhere catered for. (Manchester Evening News 1988 p. 29).

Since the publication of the leaked conclusions and the recommendations, the press has sought, in some cases, to quote the findings as evidence of the failure of anti-racist policies. The authors of the inquiry report however, have been at pains to stress that they fully support anti-racist policies but that at Burnage High School they were totally inappropriately applied, that good teaching principles were forgotten, and that this resulted from an inappropriate management style. (See Guardian, Monday May 9th 1988 p. 3). However, I now want to turn to look at the application of equal opportunity policies within the youth service in Manchester and the development at one particular youth club which has tried to put the policies into practice, and faced some of the contradictions already identified.

The Manchester **Philosophy and Practice of the Youth Service** policy statement written in 1982 states that:

Provision should be made for social education by a variety of methods including discussions between workers and individual young people in normal social settings, informal discussion groups, the use of more formal group work methods, role play and drama.

Particular attention should be paid to the encouragement of young people to express attitudes and feelings and to developing their understanding of forces in society that affect them. Particular attention should be paid, too, to helping young people to understand the harmfulness of discrimination on grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation or handicap and to supporting young people who are subject to such discrimination. (1982 p. 3 para. 10).

Class as such is not mentioned, although there is a reference to the 'forces in society' affecting young people. Similarly the Thompson Report, **Experience and Participation — Report of the Review Group on the Youth Service in England** (1982) highlights the social education base of the youth service (para. 5.5-5.6) and the need to combat racism (para. 6.35-6.42), to develop provision for the needs of ethnic communities (para. 6.43-6.49), to combat sexism and cater for the needs of girls (6.50-6.54) and handicapped young people (6.55-6.60). Interestingly sexual orientation is not mentioned and neither is class. There is, however, reference to providing facilities and activities for unemployed young people (6.11-6.18). In Manchester a combination of the Thompson Report and the **Philosophy and Practice** document led a number of youth workers, myself included, to re-orientate our provision.

I commenced working at Wilbraham Youth Club, on the fringes of a predominantly white inner city area of Manchester in September 1983. At that time the club operated on three nights per week catering mainly for white working class boys and young men aged between twelve and sixteen. In the past a high proportion of the membership had been black but this was no longer the case. All three nights offered the range of 'traditional' activities such as pool, table tennis and five-a-side. Just prior to starting work at Wilbraham, I attended an anti-sexist training day held in South Manchester and I attended subsequent anti-sexist and anti-racism training sessions. Partly as a consequence of this I, as a white man, decided to change the provision of the club which was suffering from falling attendances and a narrow curriculum which appealed to everyone and no-one. Specifically a girls night was started and a junior night. Additionally, a positive policy of recruiting women and black staff and an orientation toward black members was adopted. A greater emphasis was also placed on small group work. Such drastic changes were accompanied by much discussion with staff and to a lesser extent the members, whom I considered had vested interests anyway in the status quo.

The new orientation was accompanied by staff training sessions and regular staff meetings and by appointing an experienced woman part-time youth worker leader, and subsequently a black part-time youth leader was appointed. These policies led to the club being open five nights, a junior club, a girls only night, a senior mixed night, a senior discussion night and a senior disco night. Over two years the character of Wilbraham Youth Club changed. Most notably there was once again a significant proportion of black members attending the senior nights. Attendance of girls improved slightly but significantly those attending

adopted a higher profile and voiced their needs more than before. The junior night, the discussion night and the disco night all enjoyed periods of success. However, a number of unintended consequences became apparent. Firstly, some of the male staff thought that only the (girls night) women workers should work with girls on the mixed nights and some of the white staff left it to the black staff to challenge the black members. Except for the junior night and the girls night, the number of young people from the council estates adjacent to the Club began to decline. It became apparent that Wilbraham Youth Club was not meeting the needs of white working class boys and young men. It was this category that was falling in its representation. At the same time we received increasing reports of vandalism and thefts from one of the local estates, and increasingly heard statements that 'there was nothing to do round here'. At this time within Wilbraham Youth Club it is my estimation that the most influential groups of young people were the black, male members.

Analysis of this situation made us realise that perhaps an outcome of the developments we had undertaken was to disaffect white young men who lived locally and were very conscious of their territory. By drawing attention to the different needs of members, it also underplayed what they have in common as young oppressed people i.e. their age and class. This of course is encouraged by not including **class** in the policy statement, because if you leave class out you cannot include white working class heterosexual, able-bodied young men. Furthermore, by not having a positive orientation to their class oppression and by not catering for their needs 'we' were also less able to help the white working class young men confront their sexism, racism, heterosexism and discrimination towards the disabled. Equally 'we' tended to view girls as only girls and not as working class, or in some cases, black working class girls. In other words we also compartmentalised oppressions instead of looking at the needs of individuals we tended to look at the 'girls' needs or the 'black members' needs. We probably assumed that because in society black working class people are doubly oppressed compared to white working class people then that must also be reflected in Wilbraham Youth Club. However, that was not necessarily the case. Particularly on the senior mixed night and the disco-night the black young men were the dominant influence. Instead of analysing who held the power, we assumed who did and who didn't.

It might appear that this amounts to a condemnation of the Philosophy and Practice Policy of Manchester Youth Service, or of the way in which I and the staff at Wilbraham Youth Club interpreted it. This is not so. All of us have been trying to grapple with complex relationships. It is certain that only out of experiences such as those described at Wilbraham Youth Club can we go forward. Wilbraham Youth Club made a serious attempt to meet needs previously ignored. As a result the club is better able to cater for the needs of its members and it has placed an emphasis on outreach and detached work with local, predominantly white, young people and initiated provision aimed at meeting their needs for somewhere they feel at 'home'. It is a night on which we can build on our policies of

anti-racism and anti-sexism. At the same time the staff have a heightened awareness of exactly with what good youth work should be concerned.

Good youth work recognises that young people are different with different experiences and needs that cannot be simplistically categorised or pre-determined. Good youth work also recognises the need to challenge oppression in society, including class, and seeks to unite young people in an understanding of oppression, their own and others, their differences, and what they have in common. This is not an argument for ending separate provision for girls, for example. It is a case for not stopping there, or at providing a separate anti-sexist or anti-racist curriculum for boys or whites. It is an analysis which also says that we then have to develop our understanding of different oppressions, what working class young people have in common, and how the youth service can best 'serve them'.

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Addendum

Definitions

Oppression can be defined as, 'social practices, tendencies and relations that discriminate against, ignore, neglect, degrade or harm people to reduce them to less than human' (Hearn 1988 p. VIII) in *The Gender of Oppression, Men, Masculinity and the Critique of Marxism, Wheatsheaf* (1988).

Empowerment of individuals and groups is concerned with enabling them to have the capacity to challenge historical forces and to make history (Bhavanani 1988 p. 44 *Empowerment and Social Research: some comments in text Vol. 8 1/2 1988*).

The Working Class has been characterised by the socio-economic compulsion to sell ones labour power (Mandel, quoted in Callinicos 1987 p. 20 in *'The Changing Working Class'*, Bookmarks 1988) coupled with the inability to control the means of production (Callinicos *Ibid.* p. 27).

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Taking issue with issues

TONY JEFFS AND MARK SMITH

Much youth work has been predicated upon the notion that something needs to be done in order to overcome

the worst excesses of inequality. Recent attempts to articulate such concerns through the notion of 'issues' form part of a highly, and inevitably, variable response. In part, this range is a reflection of the differing concerns and political understandings of the various youth work traditions. But it also represents an often incomplete understanding of the scale and nature of inequality. Having said that it is important to recognise from the outset that some youth workers seek to ignore the extent of inequality. This they may do, although they can never escape its consequences. For the very fabric of practice is impregnated by the divisions and variables associated with the economic and social context in which youth work takes place.

As the 1980s proceeded, the concept of 'issue-based' work has increasingly entered the discourse of youth work. Indeed, the language of issues now appears to be an aspect of the new orthodoxy, having become enshrined in the way HM Inspectors approach report writing (see, for example, DES 1988a; 1988b). Issue-based youth work can be seen to focus upon discrete concerns. It takes a specific dimension or experience which may or may not be seen to be problematic in itself. Sexism, racism, heterosexism, unemployment, and the experience of, and attitudes to, disability have all at various times been a target for such concern. Intervention is then directed towards sites of oppression and/or the social relationships which, either as a consequence of structural or personal factors, may disadvantage or damage young people. Issue-based work is often portrayed as being concerned with the empowerment of particular individuals or groups. Within contemporary discourse it is invariably presented as progressive, radical or liberatory. In fact, issue-based work may in fact be none of these. This model, like a mirror, invariably reflects the values placed before it.

In previous manifestations, particularly within the context of the school, issue-based work has been understood in a somewhat different way. For example, within the debates surrounding the Programme for Political Education sponsored by the Hansard Society in the 1970s it was suggested that:

one of the most appropriate ways to begin to develop political literacy is through a consideration of political problems and issues rather than through the study of political theories or institutions (Stradling and Porter 1978: 74).

The authors proceeded to delineate the ingredients of an issue. These were disagreement over goals, values,

methods and results. Issues in this sense were simply a means to an end. They were the entry point not for radicalisation, but for developing an appreciation of political ideas, institutions and competencies.

The underlying aim was to move from the particular to the general. To broaden rather than narrow the focus. For a number involved in the debates there was a desire to encourage the active construction of theory on the part of the student. Theory which could then be applied to different questions, issues and settings to the extent that many of its advocates argued that it could be tested in examinations.

This idea hardly constituted a curricula revolution. It was a direct descendent of time-honoured project work. A pedagogic style owing much to Dewey's influence (Blyth 1988: 11), and which had long had a presence within education at all levels, youth work being no exception. In the case of the latter, examples of such issue-based work can be extracted from any period of the twentieth century. For instance, in the early 1900s can be found accounts of work undertaken with young women relating to factory safety, racial degeneration and participation (see *Girls Club News* 1911-1918). What these, and subsequent examples, possessed as a common ingredient were elements of style, not radicalism.

Ameliorative practice

Within the current discourse, issue-based work is frequently juxtapositioned, in flattering terms to alternative models. In particular, it is contrasted with ameliorative or problem-centred work, and to person-centred practice. Problem-centred work is described as being primarily orientated towards containment and maintenance: the management of potentially disruptive behaviour, settings and situations being the apparent aim. The point of commencement is the problem. Examples here might include lager louts, drug usage, child sex abuse and 'Taking and Driving Away'. First, the problem needs to be framed — stated in terms that are amenable to intervention. Second, a response has to be constructed. Essentially re-active, even when portrayed as pro-active, the intervention is primarily developed in response to the perceived problem. Within contemporary youth work, Intermediate Treatment (IT) is often held to be an embodiment of these approaches. Interrogation of the practice of IT, however, immediately exposes the limitations of this typology. Highlighting the

naivety of the assumption that ameliorative approaches cannot, by definition, be progressive. For the foci may be the problem, but this does not imply an axiomatic belief on the part of the practitioner that the problem resides in the individual, or that structural root and branch solutions are not required. However, amongst those who work within the parameters of the current issue-based model, such approaches tend to be simplistically disparaged.

Rarely is the question asked what constitutes the difference between a problem and an issue. Yet merely if issue-based approaches are to retain credibility this difference must be made clear. At one level the honest answer has to be that no difference exists between them. Within much of the literature of youth work and in the world of training it is possible to transpose the words without any loss of meaning. At another level, particularly with reference to the mode of intervention, issue-based work does represent something apart from problem-centred or ameliorative interventions. In the context of youth work the latter are perceived as being concerned with what Mills (1970) has dubbed 'private troubles'. The former relates to what he describes as 'public issues'. Once this has been acknowledged the spurious nature of the debate is exposed. Crime is a public issue which self-evidently is also experienced as a personal trouble. The two cannot be coherently considered or approached in isolation from each other.

All too often the rhetoric seeks to portray ameliorative or problem-focused work as thinly disguised social control and person management. However, even those who may offer up this analysis display discomfort with where it leads. For although ameliorative approaches may be concerned with containment and maintenance, the question always to be addressed is to what ends and in who's interests such interventions are made. Much so-called ameliorative work has the merit of offering young people services and provision that address their expressed needs. It is this strength which provides the practice with durability and unsettles the critic.

Person-centred approaches

Person-centred approaches are commonly portrayed as being principally process orientated; focusing upon the relationship of the practitioner to the client and of the client to other parties. In youth work the classic expression of this tradition is found in the work of Davies and Gibson (1967). The crude progressive-reactionary dichotomy can no more be applied to these approaches than to the ameliorative one. For example, practice described as person-centred may be highly political in content and, by any criteria, the outcomes sought radical. Equally, it should not be assumed that person-centred approaches are defined by an allegiance to one-to-one work. It is a mode of thought, which places the quality of relationships at the centre of activity, whether that activity be with a group, crowd or individual. Opportunities to engage in this form of work have long been a major attraction, enticing individuals into both full-and part-time youth work. The absence of it is often highlighted as a cause for worker dissatisfaction (Holmes 1981).

It is crucial not to make superficial judgements regarding any of these approaches. Certainly none of these traditions can lay exclusive claim to ideological and methodological purity. Each has its advocates and detractors. Having said that, the debate that occurs between and around them is overwhelmingly rhetorical. A literature exists around the person-centred and ameliorative approaches although it is patchy. With regards to the ameliorative it is skewed towards the control and management of deviancy (Skinner 1986). Person-centred work is often perceived narrowly as encompassing social education and counselling. We believe that in both cases this is misleading. Although largely unarticulated it is, nevertheless, the case that the ideas perceived to be embodied within these approaches shape and constrain practice in many and varied settings. They also play a significant role in structuring relationships between practitioners and clients in youth work at every level.

Evaluating issue-based work

Issue-based work poses a definitional problem of another order. For while it is commonly referred to in the discourse of contemporary youth work, little or no attention has been paid to the task of constructing a conceptual basis for it. It is discussed with confidence, yet students and practitioners alike cannot readily turn to a source that offers any clear definition of what issue-based work represents, what it seeks to achieve and why it should be given credence and preference over other modes of intervention. Absence of clarity is a common feature of all three constructs and betrays underlying weaknesses. Once attempts are made to isolate and evaluate the constituent elements then it is similarities that come to grip the attention rather than the divergences. When we come to examine the boundary between ameliorative and issue-based work, areas of considerable overlap become immediately apparent. This arises because although the ameliorative approaches claim a prior concern with personal problems, and the other with public issues, the two cannot be so neatly delineated in this fashion. This should not surprise us for rarely, in the context of welfare practice, is it either feasible or practical to tease the public and private apart.

Further, while some proponents of issue-based work eschew person-centred rhetoric, many do not. The avoidance of such rhetoric is based on the argument that its usage reinforces the personalisation of structural problems. The search is then on for a language that conveys an alternative. Yet it must be recognised that a significant proportion of those laying claim to the style and vocabulary of issue-based approaches, operate within paradigms that replicate the key elements of the person-centred tradition.

As might be surmised from the foregoing, we have significant reservations concerning the intellectual, political and conceptual basis upon which the issue-based edifice has been erected. Aside from the general lack of coherent political analysis that has been apparent in much practice and, indeed, the questionable direction of the thinking that does exist, two connected criticisms must be noted.

First, turning fundamental social divisions into 'issues' can

all too easily trivialise and patronise, and can lead to debates and practice being conducted at a shallow, and often diversionary, level. Of particular significance here is the tendency to focus on discrete areas of disadvantage such as, for example, those associated with racism, at the cost of developing an understanding which locates such experience within a comprehensive appreciation of the dynamics of social division as a whole. As a result analysis remains partial, and, in a context of scarce resources, the focus on the discrete can lead to a situation where much valuable energy is expended in competition for funding with those wishing to combat other forms of division. This represents a classic case of divide and rule.

Second, the emphasis on young people adopting particular value positions and behaviours does mean that there tends to be a failure to fully address their existing beliefs and actions. In other words, there is a drift towards the attempted imposition of the practitioner's viewpoint, rather than an exploration and development of the young people's (Smith 1988: 80). It is the contemporary equivalent of the character-building tradition of Baden-Powell and his ilk.

Moreover, we have serious doubts regarding the effectiveness and value of the issue-based approach not only in the context of face-to-face work with young people, but also in its use as the modus operandi of training both full and part-time workers. With regards to training it has served as a bolt hole into which trainers have been able to escape in order to avoid the necessity of constructing theory in relation to practice. The very absence of such theory and sustained attention to role and purpose within youth work initially enabled issue-based work to secure a foothold. Subsequently, it has generated its own momentum, reinforcing and legitimising the anti-intellectualism within the youth work tradition and further impeding the development of grounded theory.

Issue-based work has injected fresh life into those traditions of youth work that focus attention upon feelings and self-redemption. God may have moved from centre stage but the style and tenor of earnest evangelicalism which fired the bellies of so many youth workers in the past remains in a new guise. Saving souls is replaced by a desire to rescue 'sinners' from the devils of, for example racism or heterosexism. The child-saving and social imperialism of so much early youth work presages issue-based work. The moral righteousness and certainty amongst many practitioners, provides a chilling continuity. When set besides an unquestioning and unconscious belief in the inadequacy of the working class to save itself, the innate conservatism of so much practice becomes more easily understood. The form of intervention remains constant, only the moral panics and perceptions of the inadequacy of the clients change. The need becomes to get them away and isolate them. The Guide camp well away from the corrupting influences of the urban environment, where in splendid isolation young characters could be formed and re-formed in the interests of greater Imperial glory, neatly provides a model for the contemporary equivalent, the anti-sexist training weekend. The bourgeois analysis from which much issue-based practice flows still remains rooted in a tradition that posits the failings and weaknesses as

residing within the individual person and/or working class culture (Jeffs and Smith 1988: 7-12; Smith 1988: 75-81). Only rarely is a sustained attempt made to engage with that culture and the material circumstances which help shape it.

Further, as practised, it is generally unable to progress beyond the training of feelings towards the education of minds. The reason is that practitioners are often only one step ahead of the clientele in terms of their knowledge base and experience (and sometimes several steps behind). For example, whilst great swathes of the Youth Service might wring its hands over racism, few practitioners are capable of offering effective and reliable help in relation to advice on such matters as immigration law, discrimination at work or harassment by the police. Effective issue-based practice that progressed beyond the realm of feelings would demand a high degree of sophistication in terms of analysis, expertise and practice. Currently this does not exist on any scale within youth work. To proceed would entail the abandonment of cosy liberal notions such as that embodied within the Albemarle Report (HMSO 1960) and reiterated in Starting from Strengths (Bolger and Scott 1984) which held that 'there is a place in youth work for everyone'. It would require rigorous training and selection procedures for both full and part-time staff. Above all it would necessitate an honest professionalism.

Criticism of issue-based work should in no way be assumed to be directed at all the practitioners who use its vocabulary. Firstly, because the terminology has become a means for practitioners to signal their concern regarding important social and political divisions. Secondly, because the vocabulary of issue-based work has been used to construct a shroud which has protected much radical practice. However, in the same way the language has served to deflect deserved criticism that should have been directed at much appalling practice and the mis-use of valuable resources to finance the hobbies and enthusiasms of self-indulgent workers and officers. Unfortunately the language consumes its own. Once entered upon it defines debate and confines thinking — the shroud or form begins to dictate content and can thus undermine the radical intent. Moreover, the vocabulary of issue-based work can also be used as a cover for interventions of a deeply questionable nature. It protects the incompetent and the self-serving and becomes a means of justifying activities which are largely or solely concerned with gratifying the worker's ego. Williams has underlined this point in respect of the operation of ILEA's Equal Opportunity Policy, which 'has become a byword, a political shield behind which poor service to young people in general, and black young people in particular, can thrive' (1988: 123).

The vitality of issue-based work flows from the need for activity and intervention. Issue-based work offers a self-fulfilling justification emanating not from the quality of the intervention, but from the self-evident 'rightness of the cause'. After all who could reasonably question, for example, the need for anti-sexist or anti-racist work? A consistent theme of our work has been that notions of class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and age must be addressed within practice. However, if this is to occur in any effective way then it will be necessary to transcend an

approach which puts a premium on individual redemption and feelings, while focusing on discrete aspects of individuals' subjugation. We need to escape the bind wherein to interrogate the form, content and effectiveness of such work is frequently taken to imply a desire to lend succour to the enemy.

Clarity of role and purpose

At this point we return to a theme that has been common to much we have written in recent years (Jeffer and Smith 1987; 1987a; 1988; 1989). The inherent weakness of issue-based work is not unique to itself but consistent with those that can be identified in other forms of youth work practice and intervention, both now and in the past. These flow from a reluctance to engage with theory and a retreat into self-perpetuating activity sustained by moral righteousness, rather than a clear conceptual understanding of role and purpose. Until serious attention is given to the development of practice critically informed by theory (and theory critically informed by practice), there is little hope of youth workers adding much to the well-being of young people. The creation of such theory should not be an esoteric exercise reserved for youth work academics. It must emerge from an understanding of practice, both contemporary and historical, the social sciences and political processes. For this to take place commitment and enthusiasm must co-exist with the ability to undertake the task. Yet this process will get nowhere unless those engaged upon it are able to delineate and identify with the substantive area in which they are practising; to determine in what intellectual and practice traditions they wish to locate themselves, whilst accepting the consequences of living with that choice. Until practitioners and academics are able to name what youth work is and what it seeks to achieve, the activity and the practice can all too easily be ignored and dismissed as marginal. Worse, the very real needs of young people will be overlooked, in part as a direct consequence of the inarticulacy of those whose responsibility it is to help them communicate their case and requirements. It is not merely the quality of much provision that gives grounds for real concern but also the failure of the Service and youth workers to acquire a public voice demanding of attention. Mere emotion, 'gut feelings' and the wringing of sympathy linked to self-sacrifice on the part of the advocates is not enough now and certainly will fail to suffice in the future. Issue-based work and training, it needs to be recognised, offer one more false dawn, as did social education before it.

Those within youth work stand a better chance of securing the attention they have long sought, when they begin to demonstrate respect for their craft, draw theory and practice into an appropriate relationship and locate their thinking and practice within an active appreciation of the totality of the economic and social system in which they operate. Otherwise, it will be much as Tawney described the Christian Church in the sixteenth century: 'The social teaching of the Church had ceased to count, because the Church itself had ceased to think (1938: 188).

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On offer in the youth club tonight: Youth work and drugs

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(Parker et al 1988; Hebdige 1979; Brake 1980, 1985). Indeed most would seek to understand illegal drug use as

What is youth work? An almost unanswerable question — and a question rarely asked by youth workers, according to

Jeffs and Smith (1988). However, it is more and more apparent that some kind of understanding of the process by which work is enacted with young people is required in order to fully develop appropriate services to meet particular societal needs. Smith (1988) is caustic in lamenting the failure of youth work to develop any kind of recognisable theory base; but on a practical level, any study of the diversity of youth work practice (Butts and Newell 1978; Smith 1988; Jeffs and Smith 1987) only throws up irreconcilable differences between different aspects of practice.

Nonetheless 'youth work' recognisably exists as a potent force in the socialization of the young. Five million consumers (Paraskeva 1988) — or at least 29% of young people at any one time (Jeffs and Smith 1988) is a sizeable proportion of young people. It is also, because of the diversity of practice, a differentiated client group — multi-racial, multi-sexual, delinquent and religious, groupings by sport and by politics . . . yet practice on key topics is hard to identify as having any real focus, a rationale, or a purpose. For alcohol and drug misuse the very diversity referred to, speaking as it does of many different ideologies and processes, means that 'youth work' can hardly be said to have at hand a coherent response to the challenges the widespread use of these substances throw up. This is not all the fault of youth work; it is partially a result of societal perceptions of where substance misuse fits into the sphere of public reaction. The state seems to see alcohol use as a leisure activity with criminological overtones; illegal drug use is seen as an expression of disordered psychological functioning or the expression of criminality. For historical reasons the youth service hasn't had to determine for itself a direct theoretical base and practice orientation for delinquency. Indeed, since the Albermarle Report, and The 1969 Children and Young Persons Act, the youth service has been entirely excluded to the margins of work with offenders (Adams 1981; 1988; Davies 1986). Accordingly, it has no *prima facie* need to address itself to a theoretical response to drug issues — at least on a structural level. At a grass roots level it has quite often had to do something quite the opposite (Blackley 1987). However, such a structural response only pre-supposes that drugs can be solely located within the sphere of delinquency and mental health, as the state demands of it. At a practical level, most youth workers are well aware that like alcohol use, drug use is part of the wider 'normal' culture of adolescence

operating at much the same level as alcohol use — i.e. is only for minority the expression of some sort of personal pathology.

This gut-level normalisation of drug use to a par with alcohol use raises important questions for youth work practice, on several levels. For whilst no structural response has been demanded or encouraged from the state, a more generalized 'control' element is expected of youth work when youth appears threatening (Adams 1988; Davies 1986; Smith 1966). With regard to drug and alcohol misuse the marginalisation of youth work within 'treatment' or delinquency management means that this control can only be expected via a process of educationally determined prevention — i.e. the traditional tasks of social, or informal education. However, this educative tradition is in some disarray given the demands of the state to expect a particular ethos or kind of prevention/control initiative contrary to that of the consumer — the young person, whose perception of substance issues is somewhat more forthright. The youth workers find themselves in a difficult position of holding a primary prevention line yet being sensitive to the creative contribution of youth culture in determining practice.

If we look at different practice methods we see that within one tradition of youth work practice, 'welfarist professionalism', there is a willingness to address substance abuse issues, without necessary reference to 'justice' or 'delinquency' perceptions of drug misuse. Most illegal drug misuse — and alcohol use too — falls outside of the remit and intervention of social work agencies primarily concerned with 'justice'. Nevertheless, such individuals known to youth workers often identify complex 'welfare' needs to do with housing, or sexuality, or race, or parental discord, in addition to substance-related dilemmas. This sphere of youth work that seeks to develop its professionalism within welfare is quite distinct from social work interventions with young people; however on substance issues this welfarist viewpoint draws from a non-specific theory base regarding drugs — i.e. from sociology and psychology — and from social work. This is because there is no specific literature that guides youth work practice relating to drugs and alcohol misuse.

The third main dilemma caused by the emergence of substances as an important 'issue' for youth work intervention is the already referred to state perception of the role of alcohol within society; i.e. its location within

'leisure'. The concept of leisure is an area of increasing importance for the youth service (Jefferis and Smith 1988). If youth work is something that happens, in some sense, in young people's 'leisure' time, whilst not being simply a matter of 'laying on leisure' (Foreman 1987) then it must accommodate itself to the leisure appetite of young people under capitalism. Leisure is not the simple expression of choice about spare time however; (Rojek 1985; 1989; Clarke and Critcher 1985) it is profoundly tied up with societal control, and economic demands as to what is acceptable or useful to the state. Alcohol use — and increasingly drug use — is hegemonic in its place as an expression of young people's 'leisure', and benignly, the state encourages legal drug use. Yet at the same time the educational ethos of much youth work is fundamentally at odds with the leisure demands of adolescence. Accordingly, with the development of alternative 'leisure' services in both borough and city councils — and in terms of leisure centres specifically and commercially targetted at young people, the youth service is increasingly marginalised within its capacity to offer a coherent vision of an acceptable role for alcohol within this most importantly growing element in normal youth culture.

Social Education in a climate of ambivalence

The state, and much of the youth service is fundamentally ambivalent in its attitudes towards alcohol misuse. On the one hand, periodically, there are scares about adolescent drinking (Dorn 1983; Smith 1988), and plans to crackdown on it via 'identity card' methods, on the other there is an almost complete lack of willingness to devote the kind of approbation against use that drugs finds heaped upon it. Accordingly the state expects that educational reactions to young people's abuse of alcohol should be of the nature of controlling 'excessive drinking', whilst expecting a zero-use attitude towards illegal drugs. It's an untenable position, not only given the demonstrable harm from some illegal drugs as compared to alcohol; it's also untenable within the cultural climate surrounding alcohol. A drug cannot be promoted without reference to its capacities to induce a particular state or reaction in the taker. Most people who drink heavily are beyond the 'social lubrication' stage. They are doing what they are doing for a physical response of pleasure and fun i.e., quite often 'to get pissed'. At this simple normalised level that accepts alcohol and drug use as fundamentally the expression of a desire to have fun, then educative responses are really on a different planet. It is at this point that we might expect the qualitatively different nature of education offered by youth workers within the community (Smith 1988) to give a lead to youth work in resolving this impasse. Social/Informal education is about growth in social as well as numerative and cognitive functioning, and about societal participation. It's also about the development of clear identities via a process of self-directed learning; a dialogue in which the youth worker may only be a facilitator or animateur of learning. Indeed they may be the object of learning. The youth worker may also be a role model of sorts. If we can be fairly clear about the theoretical nature of 'how' social education should be applied to substance

issues, then unfortunately it is harder to translate that theoretical understanding into a position of clarity regarding tasks (Dorn 1983). Youth Workers may find themselves in a position of complete ambivalence regarding how they should raise or respond to issues amongst this client group. This is because of the ambivalence within society on attitudes to alcohol. It has been suggested that one way out of this impasse is to seek to develop a critical conception of drug issues, of how they are closely related to state capitalist control of leisure, and in illegal drugs' case, to that of third world economics. No doubt these do give clear ways of how drug issues might form the basis of what might be called political social education (Taylor 1987). For example, young people might develop a mature understanding of alcohol's place in the development of advanced capitalist leisure relations; or that the breweries are cynical bastards targetting young consumers. In the same way a gender learning process outlines the roles drugs play in the control, both socially and psychiatrically of women — i.e. that alcohol use is in the same way expressive of gender relations dominated via a male discourse (Dorn 1983); that societal attitudes to women's substance use are sexist and moralizing (Dawn 1986; McOnville 1983) and that tranquilliser prescribing is a means of controlling and ignoring women's societal position and reactions against it (Oakley 1981; Curran and Golombok 1984). On an anti-racist perspective drugs throw up huge issues to do with third world oppression (Henman 1986); to do with the treatment and assessment of mental disorder (Littlewood and Lipsedge 1982) and to do with the stereotyping, marginalisation, and policing of black youth (Williamson 1986; Shapiro and Ashton 1984).

I wouldn't want to quibble with the real value of informal education that might seek to identify issues such as these via informal work on drugs. However, these are peripheral to government priorities as to what should be done 'by' youth workers 'to' young people. The agenda of government is simple and simplistically one of primary prevention for illegal drugs and simplistic secondary prevention for alcohol. Accordingly the host of spectacular resources now available for youth workers to both train themselves and to use on young people is woefully inept at realizing the political dimensions of drugs referred to above. Resources such as the YMCA's Whole Health Compendium or Y. Act (both 1987) fail to mention these at all; Tacade's locating Drug Education (1988) is mainly a study in how to identify the local needs of the club; it identifies elements of social education — one example is 'to take the young people to a TV studio to watch a pop programme being made'. Not, as might be more useful, 'the young people hang around in Brixton watching black youths getting arrested (on sus) for possession of cannabis'. ISDD's 'high profile' 1988 (written by Nick Dorn, Nigel South and Christine James) at least tries to raise some of these issues — but the anti-racism level is at the point of 'Now we learn about how alcohol is forbidden in muslim law'; tranquillisers aren't even mentioned.

Political control via the DES who paid for all these products — is primarily a simplistic one that seeks to manipulate youth work's response into a control and prevent basis.

This is untenable — and these glossy resources advance social education at a snail's pace towards a political understanding of drugs in society. At a second level, they don't succeed in the aim of using social education to control alcohol and drug misuse. Underage drinking has shown remarkable signs of expanding in the last ten years (Plant et al 1985; Dorn 1983) statistical evidence from local surveys — (Newcombe and O'Hare 1988; Parker et al 1988; New Society 1986; Christie and Drye 1987; Swadi 1988; Pritchard 1986) and in addition, no decrease in the extent of secondary harm associated with it (drink driving; convictions; violence).

Even without statistics, gut feeling at a grassroots level is that underage drinking is on the increase.

But what is wrong with this? Social education is a powerless force if it cannot identify personalized (moral?) reasoning which justifies setting limits about personal consumption. Most youth workers might feel very embarrassed about their own levels of alcohol consumption; as such, their personal ambivalence corrupts any notion of a consensus about the moral negatives — or moral positives of limit setting. Essentially, it's at odds with alcohol's role in society, which is to get people to drink more of it, and to have to use it, in any social setting. At a personal level, to a young man, it hardly matters that with every pint of lager he contributes x-pence to the state in tax, or that he testifies to the power of the advertising industry in determining his tastes. It won't stop him drinking to excess. This is not to deny the value of 'political' understandings about substance misuse; it is to say that they are a blind alley in encouraging people to set limits on their consumption. To do this requires a 'moral' feeling on an internal basis, that the amount they are using is destructive of health — or character — or of a range of social skills. This will not happen when the place of alcohol and drugs is so firmly based in the shallowness of much youth, and wider societies shallowness of culture. To male western white culture, excessive alcohol use is an identification with labour, sex and societal values. (Dorn 1983). There is no coherent moral imperative against excessive use outside of gender, religious or racial and religious viewpoints on substances. Until this void at the centre of societal reactions against alcohol is filled, successful social education aiming to encourage limit setting in the consumption of alcohol will only happen in gender, religious, or race specific groups. It won't happen with those groups most at risk.

'Welfarist' youth work and substances

In Smith's analysis of developing youth work (1988) he locates the welfarist tradition within the professionalised — and partialised sphere of youth work, in some way remote from traditionalist practices to do with social education and leisure provision, or indeed the character building aim of much religiously based youth work. Smith hasn't got a lot of time for welfarist work, and indeed his reaction would be that it doesn't square with the educative essence of youth work. In some ways his view is the consensus in much traditional local authority and voluntary sector provision. Yet back to Albermarle the need for

youth work to have some active dimension in reaching young people 'at risk' has been self-evident. Not perhaps, central to the provision of youth work — certainly not in the Albermarle report, which specifically says that the service should not become problem-oriented. Nonetheless it was presumed and is presumed by most workers approaching practice that some participation in the delivery of 'welfare' is required (Davies 1986; Albermarle 1960; Adams 1988; Butlers and Newell 1978). This is not the same as saying that youth workers participate in delinquency management. Welfare is much greater in that it encompasses the emotional and social needs of others remote from criminal involvement (i.e. largely girls as well as boys) (Jones 1984).

The difficulty for many workers rooted in their experience in traditional club settings is the subtle differences between the functions of youth social workers and youth workers undertaking 'welfarist' tasks. It has made it easier that processing of juvenile offending has altered to take intermediate treatment away from the participation of youth workers (Adams 1988; Davies 1986) nonetheless some commentators still see a role for youth work in participating even at this stage of the intervention with juvenile offending (Adams 1988, Teasdale and Powell 1987). Social work is unlikely to give up its domination of this role. Welfarist youth work may not overlap with delinquency at the heavy end of convictions but may at the lower end of diversion — of prevention by advice, support and counselling. These are functions of social workers — but practically speaking, outside of the nexus of statutory child care, residential provision and duty work there is no facility by which social workers can operate an open door 'advice' service of a generalist kind for young people. Most social services fieldworkers are far too tied up with statutory responsibilities. The potential area of overlap is with voluntary social work projects, detached youth projects, specialist drugs and alcohol advice services, and generic advice sessions run by social workers for young people. A glance at the NAYPCAS register of members shows that the vast majority of counselling services are run by youth workers. Furthermore, projects that do offer some sense of youth orientated social work are fairly carefree in their requirement that workers be of one professional background or another. There is overlap — but there is not in the main an overlap of services at a local level on a national basis. This is because there is a much more widespread network of youth led counselling services than there are social work projects directed at youth from a non-statutory focus. What projects there are are usually run by the big three, NCH, Childrens Society and Barnardos. All run specific 'youth at risk' projects in major cities; NCH fund one youth counselling service run by social workers; all, with a host of smaller voluntary agencies, run specific counselling services for drug misuse (for example, Turning Point — who are not totally youth focused; Leicester Action for Youth Trust, who are far more youth focused).

Youth work should not fear that it is blurring its professional role with that of social work; instead it should concentrate on the real skills it brings to such work that social work

doesn't — i.e. primarily the desire to give some sort of credit to the values and integrity of its consumers. This urge to involve young people in the direction, planning, and organisation of much youth work provision is recognised as a major contribution of youth work that social work doesn't consider (Williamson and Wilson 1988). Whilst within social work advice and counselling are fundamentally power relationships in the traditional sense, (Rees 1978, Pearson 1975) youth work's contribution to its credit, is in breaking down these professional barriers to humanise the counselling relationship via a recognition of young people's abilities and rights. Without statutory obligations that control a social workers functioning, youth workers can approach counselling for drugs and alcohol with a same spirit of listening to the creative voice of the consumer; this is not just a process of not being judgemental; it is also about accepting young people's views and culture with regard to illegal drugs and alcohol.

On the downside, youth counselling for substances at present remains the exception rather than the rule, largely because of the dilemma we identified at the start, notably that youth work has identified no distinctive tradition of practice and theory that is seen as contributing to substance misuse. Accordingly there is a lack of confidence to tackle drugs problems — but to refer them instead — or to be over-confident and dismissive, a fault that also overcomes social education approaches. This takes the form of saying drug use is OK; the kids know how to use it; it's cool really, let them have a good time. The puerility of this viewpoint stems from a lack of experience of substance misuse at the heavy end and a narrow spread of reaction responses to offer young people that are grounded in youth work practice. This results from the lack of theory referred to. It's commonsense trendy, and it's empty as a vision of the place of drugs in society. At its apogee, it leads to certain regionalised youth services that are only concerned with the welfarist principle to the degree of licensing social unrest by sticking plasters on wounds, not seeking to prevent these wounds in the first place. (The extreme 'harm minimisation' viewpoint).

Welfarist youth practice that is thoroughly convinced by the attractiveness of drug use that it isn't interested in doing anything to prevent its spread is a ghetto of professional development. It is ultimately very remote from the needs of youth work to promote change and societal functioning amongst young people. It is, 'starting at where young people are at'; unfortunately it ensures they stay there. Whilst the acceptance of the positives of some aspects of youth culture is to be encouraged, the fatalistic acceptance of the negative aspects of illegal drug-taking seems to me to be fundamentally misguided by any professional or social standards. This is not to condone, or advocate, simplistic primary prevention in youth work. As we have seen, positive 'welfarist' youth work practice can and does assist the reduction of harm to young people with substance problems without labelling or stigmatizing, or judging their activities.

What is required of youth work practice is that it develops a body of professional knowledge that justifies its activities (Smith 1988). Social work with young people draws upon a

rich vein of sociological and subcultural theory. It is important that youth work lays claim to more than a few basic texts, and that it recognises that much of the literature of sociology is constructive of both professional identities. Drawing from this literature base and adding to it would enable youth work, at a grass roots level, to refer to a tradition of identified practice and motivation of patterns of activity. As Smith (1988) has argued, in most fields youth work has been notoriously bad at doing this. As an example of how a study of practice might contribute to an understanding of the unique character of youth work, the use of detached workers is an excellent example. They can have significant results as an early prevention response to substance misuse, meeting young people proactively but on their terms, on their ground and community, yet offering a service of 'helping' as much as one of 'education'. Such provision does a great deal to offer help to those who might otherwise be immune to 'traditional' youth club provision; as such it might reach the young drug user or drinker who may never go near a club. The literature on detached work remains minimal however, despite this popularised knowledge that not only does detached work 'work', it is entirely a creation of youth work and in no way replaces social work intervention.

As such it constitutes a theory/practice interface that is unique to youth work, yet offers a clear grass roots practice response for substance issues that should be incorporated into any area initiative. Most of the time, as we have seen, there is little real participation of the youth service in the control of delinquency, and in most areas their role in the development of services for drug misuse is marginal. Examples of practice such as this however constitute a resource base that should not be ignored when specialist drug and alcohol services are in development.

In addition, youth counselling services contribute greatly to grass roots provision of services for alcohol and drug misuse. With their youth work ethos, they constitute an alternative service for the assistance of individuals with substance problems who probably would never go near an NHS or social work agency. In their generic nature, they normalise drug use within the wider social construct of social problems facing young people, in a way that specialist 'drug' agencies never do. They have an accessibility and culture that links themselves more closely to young people yet offers them a constructive service in assisting them to overcome the difficulties they face.

A third aspect of welfarist practice also makes a strong contribution to the development of an indigenous theory base in the response to substance misuse. 'Community work' is often the additional tag to many youth workers practice; some youth workers are community workers in that whilst they may facilitate some elements of practical 'youth work' they may have a constituency that embraces people of all ages, yet nominally with an 'educative' focus — so a youth worker may work with elderly people, with tenants' groups, or with parents of substance misusers, and it is self-evident that this constitutes a different angle on intervention on substance issues. Once again it's an area of overlap with social work; but social work has less and less space to commit social workers to community building

initiatives. Accordingly much community social work is in fact community youth work, inspired by youth work philosophies of beginning with the consumer as much as politicized (social) community work that has its roots in Marxism and anarchism. Effectively, community work is a mixture of two value bases and professional groundings, yet the role of contemporary community workers is profoundly influenced by youth work ideals and philosophies of fostering change via informal education, and the encouragement of social functioning and understanding amongst all its members.

These three elements in welfarist practice, coupled with our earlier discussion about informal education, leads us on to begin to identify the common elements of youth work's professional theory base around drugs and alcohol.

A theory/practice base for youth work with drugs and alcohol problems?

It is inevitable that any attempt to construct a theory/practice schemata for substance use issue work will draw heavily upon schemata of the function of youth work for generic issues — and in more general terms the processes by which young people in any difficulty are helped. The value of constructing such a scheme for practice is not only for youth workers at grass roots level to put some sense into their own practice, although this is important (Lloyd 1987). It is also of value for other professions who may seek to marginalise the potential of youth work contributions to the problems raised by substances. It is also useful to demonstrate when intervention with substance users places youth and community workers on a scale of identification with government policies and desires for their implementation. At its most reactive and treatment orientated, work with substance users, whilst not completely 'respectable', is at least part of the process of state control (Ingrams 1987). However, an overview of the nature of the breadth of the potential made by youth work to the assistance of young people demonstrates that the real political, 'entrepreneurial' place of such work spans the whole continuum of politicised understandings of practice. Part of the need to determine what should be the grounding of youth work practice with substances is a recognition of the distinctiveness of approach youth work brings. Accordingly this model is an attempt to fuse elements of practice with reference to a theory base. It is self-evident that it remains only a sketch via which practice can be understood.

Four suggested grounds for a theory/practice grounding

- 1) Youth work with drug misusers owes allegiance to sociological theory and sub-cultural studies of youth in the formation of its professional value base.
- 2) Furthermore, youth work assumes the organic and normalised conception of alcohol and illegal drugs place within society; that illegal drug and alcohol use is an expression of contemporary and diverse youth culture.
- 3) That young people are given recognition for their values and integrity in dealing with their own drug or

alcohol related difficulties. It is the specific contribution of youth work not only to give credit to the values and culture of young people but to facilitate opportunities by which young people can determine their own responses to substances (Williamson and Wilson, 1988).

- 4) In its practice with young people youth work seeks to employ specific methods which blur boundaries between professional and young person, via the understanding of a process of dialogue in learning and welfare. Thus social/informal educative methods; issue based work; gender-related work; detached work undertaken on the home ground of young people; community work; advice and welfare services that seek to eliminate worker/client power boundaries; as advocates and intermediaries between the police and young people; and as having skills in the use of leisure/activity based work.

These four discourses offer a significant contribution to the planning and development of cross-agency and multi-disciplinary services for young people with substance related problems. They define both the ideological identity vis-a-vis professional learning, and the concept of an intervention style with young people on their terms; and also how the delivery of that service and the practice by which theory is taken to young people constitutes a distinct body of professional style and methods.

The purpose of this is not to try to erect professional barriers that will serve to screen workers from young people; indeed it is inherent within it that these professional tenets are forged in dialogue with young people. The aim of this scheme is to identify the separateness of youth work practice from social work intervention by reference to the traditional practice base of youth workers, rather than to say that youth work can adapt social work practice styles (Britton 1987). One implication of this analysis is to give a rationale for the inclusion of youth work projects into the mainstream of 'specialist' provision for drug and alcohol use. To date there is very little evidence of specific involvement of youth work skills within community drugs or alcohol teams, or within the network of provision, except in the Wirral and in isolated projects like PYP in Glasgow and Share in Somerset. This may be because the methodology of youth work is rarely seen by professionals in other disciplines as having the potential to offer a singularly different professional response backed by credible theory in the way that social work, or nursing, or psychology is presumed to have. It is my contention here that it has.

Implications for the Youth Service: The leisure principle

At the start we identified three dilemmas for youth work practice in respect of substances; the first, of conducting informal education in an atmosphere that was ambivalent towards the personal use of illegal drugs and alcohol; the second, of developing a coherent welfarist practice in respect of the diverging practice base of youth work, and the lack of a grounded theory base to justify the identity of welfarist practice; the third was the importance of the

leisure principle in determining societal attitudes to drugs, and for the continuing existence of 'youth services'. I have left the third out of the previous debate because in many ways they constitute a threat to the existing consensus upon which the theory/practice nexus is built.

This happens on two levels; a) leisure, as a determinant principle within state and economic policy may threaten the present structure and identity of youth work, b) 'leisure' may lead to a redefinition of societal views of illegal drug use to a position not indistinct from that of alcohol.

As Clarke and Critcher, and Rojek and others have argued, the state exerts a kind of pluralist control over the forms and nature of leisure that exists within society; but that state control is formulated via a process of dialogue with powerful elements within society and business to create the kind of provision that exists at any one time. The state will only license forms of leisure either by which it profits, or which are agents of social control. Youth work firmly falls into the latter court as it fails to deliver any revenue to the government or to any part of pluralist leisure provision. As such it may not seem to compete with services which have either a directly financial return yet also has a capacity to alleviate public boredom i.e., leisure centres, which already are more attractive to most young people (Jeffs and Smith 1988) than youth clubs. In addition YTS and ET may have yet another capacity to discipline youth into a future workforce for the 1990's than the vaguer control of youth work provision.

This is not the place to speculate upon youth workers future; except in that alcohol and drugs issues may become instrumental in hastening the decline of the present pattern of youth work. This is because of their centrality to notions of leisure and consumerism. As we have argued, leisure has developed into an industry geared around a simplistic reliance upon alcohol as a social lubricant and method of pleasure fulfillment. Indeed, despite voices that astonishingly, ignore it in studying leisure (Roberts 1984) its role is absolutely central to young people's socialization. Increasingly, drug use too cannot be ignored as playing an active role in young perceptions of what leisure means. As Clarke & Critcher (1985) argue, leisure is not something which is under the direction of the individual in the unfettered way traditional leisure theorists have imagined — indeed choices about leisure are made by the state and then incoherently followed through by public policy (Rojek et al 1989). Whilst alcohol use allows such a potent source of pluralist revenue acquisition it will continue to have a determinist influence over the state's use of leisure. It only becomes such a potent source by virtue of its centrality within leisure activity. In terms of the implications for youth work this will lead to yet more difficulty in sustaining the pretence of informal education when society continues to give such a pivotal role to alcohol within the nexus of leisure. Furthermore youth work will have difficulty sustaining the line of control of alcohol consumption to underage drinkers when subculturally underage drinking is so dominantly entrenched. This, coupled with the cynical targetting of alcohol consumerism towards the younger age group, and the financial return inherent in the provision of alcohol may mean that traditional ideas of limit setting

will have to be removed from education. Young people will continue to vote with their feet by patronising sources of leisure that conform to the dominant societal ethic — i.e. pubs and leisure centres. Youth work will continue to be marginalised as a provider of leisure until it comes to terms with this. If privatised it may have less qualms about serving alcohol to young drinkers.

If this requires a value shift in the attitudes of workers then the place of illegal drugs does more so. HIV has ensured that a certain amount of use is condoned; we can only see this accelerate. Youth work may have to find even more reason to accommodate itself to the overall determinant of 'leisure' than just losing their clients to sports centres. The state may decide that the financial return of sanctioning certain illegal drugs may outweigh moral implications it has against its use. This will require another level of accommodation with the voice of the consumer.

Summary

This article has been designed to inspire confidence and certainty in the minds of practising youth workers that their conduct and methodology in respect of substance misuse furnishes them with real capacity to extend the range of professional responses to misuse beyond that which is currently offered by alternative professions. Essentially this is a process of giving credit to the centrality of the 'welfarist' perspective within any structural understanding theorists may have about what is the ethos of 'youth work' rather than 'youth social work', for example. If this is the case for this one particular issue, then it serves to outline the degree to which other elements of welfarist practice can be accommodated within the mainstream of youthwork theory. I hope it also demonstrates that (contra Ingrams 1987) work with substance misusers can constitute a radical response, not an essentially conservative one, in the development of young people's consciousness about their role in society.

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Policy Now conference — An unsolicited report

ROBERT GUTFREUND

Although not a regular attender at such gatherings, restricting my participation to one a year, the advance publicity mounted

by the National Youth Bureau was so convincing that, it was felt, somebody had to be present from our training agency. Thus I found myself, along with about another 140 representatives attending the conference in the attractive surroundings of Regents College in the heart of London. The setting, the location and most of all the very impressive list of Youth Service participants (even though a number did not attend) including a competent and active 'nationally representative group of young people', implied that this was to be a gathering unlike many others. Its very title spelled urgency and action — any failure to participate or be represented was, one felt, to be excluded from those important decision making processes, which were to affect young people's future throughout the land.

I would like, in brief, to report on how I saw the conference, what occurred in the groups wherein one invariably is slotted on such occasions and, perhaps of much more significance, what may have prompted the conference — 'the unhidden agenda'.

The conference opened with the bold assertion that this was the continuation of a process which did not begin here — a planning group and a number of young people had been preparing for almost two years. The central concerns were 'Policy and practice' which, it was suggested, we should take into the wider society by what was known as a 'cascade' process. Those involved in the Youth Service had an obligation to listen to the young consumers of the service — 'to their feelings, their experiences and themselves!' Nothing objectionable here.

Next followed a near inaudible slide presentation of rather timeless sequence showing young people in a range of situations. I say timeless since many in the hall would have been familiar with the issues raised — there seemed no change in the last quarter century. There was more than a vague similarity to the 1950's and 60's — the tattooed arms of the young man was pure 'Rocker' — and concerns with unemployment, police relationships, housing, single parenthood. 'My social worker told me to get pregnant' one young woman was heard to say, black youngsters; each were recurring themes.

Starkly missing from all this were the majority of articulate and 'non problematic' young people, who, I wondered, was thinking of them? This, rather tired slide show was described as conveying a 'powerful message' by the chair — one wondered.

The introductory plenary session concentrated on the

plight — I use the word carefully — of young people who were now to be additionally disadvantaged as a con-

sequence of new government measures designed to decrease their real incomes and thereby extend their dependency. In an impassioned keynote speech we were extolled to recognise the serious problems — of housing and unemployment — faced by 'shut out' young people. This new (to me) category encompassed such diverse groups as young migrants, young women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals and the unemployed, all amidst European prosperity. The powerlessness of young people was historical and economic. This government were imposing in effect, a high marginal rate of taxation in terms of benefit withdrawal. Changes in benefit regulations were onerous — a government spokesman in the Lords had suggested that 'severe hardship' would have to be proven before additional benefits were payable. In effect, a legal entitlement was to be replaced by Ministerial discretion. The role of all those present was to be advocates for disadvantaged and exploited young people. We had to believe that 'everything can change' and that 'there is nothing wrong in young people having high expectations'. I did wonder about both these points. Although everything can change, few things do. Surely, insofar as the fundamental relationships of poverty and wealth remain unaltered, little, if anything changes. And the most salient feature of disadvantaged young people one meets seems to be their low — and often realistic — expectations.

Into groups where we were now joined by a very able young person. As one would expect the group was very well facilitated (no leaders here, of course) by a County Youth Adviser. Our task was to formulate one question for the panel which was to meet at the end of the day. We were to arrive at this by: (a) identifying the key policy issues for the Youth Service in the 1990's. (b) how can the Youth Service, as organised, effectively respond to these issues? (c) how can we change things?

We first got off to a false start by the somewhat surprising claim that the key issue was 1992 and Britain's relationship with Europe. Undoubtedly important but rather some distance from those young people upon whom this conference focused.

Familiar issues arose — and it soon became apparent that the Youth Service has many voices — and few articulate, shared ideas. The recurring question of the 1960's — 'what is the purpose of the Youth Service?' has not yet been satisfactorily answered. This surely, more than any other characteristic of the service is a danger signal. A profession

incapable of formulating agreed and basic objectives which can be communicated to the public and Government has to anticipate that a policy will be externally imposed upon it.

So what issues arose? Who owned the Youth Service? What were the opportunities for young people to participate in it? Or were the central issues affecting the young completely outside of the Youth Service's power to influence? Was the major problem, I wondered, one of young people's isolation following the exclusion of many from the labour market? Or the need for a horizon extending educational service? Was it poverty — amidst so much wealth? The group did look at issues which showed concern — yet there were contrasting responses and we recognized few solutions.

We attempted to disentangle the issues (a) for young people (b) within the social context, and identify an appropriate Youth Service response. Apart from some agreement that we need to collaborate with other professions, communicate our role (never very clearly formulated) to the public and Government and 'listen' to young people we did not go much further. Perhaps as someone suggested, young people needed to be 'helped towards a reproachment' with adults and thus decrease the sense of possible isolation many young experience. The Youth Service was a resource to the community as a whole. Maybe, I suggested, the only way in which young people could ever have any real sense of involvement and participation in the Youth Service was if the Government made to them an allocation of resources on a per capita young population basis, comparable to that made to student unions. Of course this would represent an uncustomary shift of resources to those not entitled to it — unless of course when they are in trouble with the police. As so often on such occasions, the discussion was inconclusive and it was time to enter into the next stage — a session where the young themselves were to introduce the results of their extensive discussion and consultations.

A colourful and sophisticated flip chart displayed what the young hoped to see in their Youth Service. It was a place where, ideally, they could follow their hobbies, make friends and provide a 'half way house' between the (assumed) safe world of home and the 'big bad world' of adult life. On the negative side they complained that in many youth centres they received no support or understanding, inefficient advice, no informal counselling. It was a service staffed by 'text book workers' who, far from being perceived as enablers, facilitators or guides were dismissed as 'the enemy'. Their ideal Youth Service was non-centre based, open virtually 24 hours a day and offering a range of activities and counselling/information services. It would provide 'good cheap food — including vegetarian'. If the Youth Service would not provide, it was hinted, commercial organisations were ready to do so.

Those who perceive the young as highly conventional and conformist would not have heard much to change their mind. There were here no murmurs of any radical — or even political — awareness. The pursuit of individual self-interest was as clearly expressed as at any gathering of conventional adults. There were no demands or requests

for jobs — nor any attempt to lobby those who hold power for redistributive mechanisms to redress the economic inequalities within society. Even such straightforward requests as, for example, free access to leisure facilities in their area, or free travel on the European rail network were not even mooted. Yet each would extend the range of opportunities to the young far beyond those they were encouraged narrowly to focus upon.

Finally there was the familiar panel, which with unusual modesty, faced another panel of young people asking questions prepared by groups throughout the day. This session was notable for two reasons. First, the smooth orchestration of the day began to sag a little when, for the first time in my hearing, a number of black youngsters challenged the panel by asking how they would deal with the extensive racism in society. Of course, the question was neatly sidestepped; it was a 'very important — fundamental issue' which had to be addressed through raising awareness and so on. The training agencies were criticised without, it appeared, any current knowledge of the full facts. Education, employment and penal policies each discriminated against young blacks and what was the Youth Service going to do about it? Although the Service appeared to be motivated to tackle the issue, it really lacked a coherent strategy.

The other salient feature of the panel (and of the Conference as a whole) was the demonstration of a totally unrealistic grasp of what the Youth Service — even in an altered form — could be expected to deliver. There were repeats of the entirely false claim that the Youth Service was an agent of 'Social change and political education'. It was, if properly practised, a 'seditious activity'. There was some talk even, in the language of enterprise-speak, of the need to be clearer about 'marketing our product'.

Whenever 'youth issues' were identified, these had to be addressed by all — but specially by, some claimed, a Minister for Youth. Fortunately, in my view, Parliament has spared the United Kingdom from the afflictions of Ministries of Youth found elsewhere.

I wondered, why was there (in the first place) a conference which spent a full day discussing 'young people at risk or in trouble'?

What were the underlying meta-issues which prompted a Government funded agency to mount such a programme which focused, at most, upon a very small percentage of young people?

It was, perhaps, the assurances repeated throughout the day that 'papers' from this conference would be sent to 'policy makers' and 'the Government' which began to alert one to the claim made by Mannheim that, behind every so called administrative issue there is a political one. What may lie behind this one? Speculating I arrive at the following hypotheses. Concentrating on the requirements for efficiency and given the deficiency model focusing upon particular groups 'in need' the Government will announce a policy for the Youth Service in the near future. And the present indications are that, in seeking the development of 'active citizenship' the age-centric policies will target upon the young 'in trouble'. The Youth Service (fortunately now without the diversionary 'Community' tag) will be asked to

increase (or more sharply focus) its social control functions by becoming another and considerably more cost effective, welfare organisation. This is entirely consistent with the Government's policies; it co-ordinates to the 'indigenous' worker training schemes. But why so many Youth Officers and Educationists whose lifelong professional endeavours have been so consistently focused upon the educational and social needs of all young people should collude in this, is more puzzling.

How can the Service so readily abandon its strong commitment to the social and political educational needs of all young people? One hopes it is not too late to reassert the positive value of this to the developmental needs of young people, everywhere, in whatever circumstances. Otherwise the Service is in some danger of diverting from those areas where it has some, if limited influence, onto those areas where it has almost none at all.

Conferences such as this can give a spurious legitimacy to policies which may have already been formulated. The Youth Service does, of course, need a coherent policy — or range of policies, for all young people who have need of it or wish to use it. Undoubtedly, in terms of equitable resource allocation for all, it should be campaigning to redress the gross economic inequalities between those who receive all that the best in higher education offers — at an average cost of £6,000 per annum and the best the Youth Service anywhere provides — around £20 per annum.

It is such stark inequalities which have to be addressed. Once that is achieved (!) the more peripheral issues of participation, decision making policies and so on can begin. Until then, perhaps the Service will muddle on — so long as government, with the public's full support, permits it.

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Struggling with the contradictions in youth work training

BERNARD DAVIES

In the past two years *Youth and Policy* has carried two articles on qualifying training for youth and community work¹.

What then is the justification — and so soon — for another one?

In part it is that two years is now a very long time in any field of welfare. Thus, over that period we have had within the Youth Service 'A proliferation of part-time qualifying courses which are giving employers a much more influential role in the provision and management of such training'.

An expansion of apprenticeship-type schemes, which again assume a very different relationship between employer, trainer and trainee from that which has usually been assumed by full-time courses.

A major extension of the apprenticeship approach through the new DES-sponsored Educational Support Grant scheme to train and qualify 18-25 year olds as 'youth leaders for the inner cities'. This also superimposes a potentially powerful central managerial and pseudo-governmental role onto qualifying training.

Quite firm proposals for a route to qualification based on validating learning from experience², which could well in 'pilot' form be up and running within the next twelve months.

These, like all such developments, are deeply contradictory in both their underlying intentions and the possibilities they open up. Thus, on the one hand they clearly and in my view correctly promise increased access to training and qualification for groups of workers who for too long have been excluded. On the other hand they potentially threaten some essential conditions of good education and training by shifting the balances of power and control to interests whose concerns can be very narrowly vocational. Especially in current political and economic conditions, supporting these new developments, perhaps for the very best of 'progressive' reasons, could therefore mean offering a number of very exposed hostages to fortune.

All of which suggests that there are other, perhaps more fundamental reasons for another contribution to the debate opened up by Smith and Jeffs and by Holmes. For, in my view both articles took too limited and a historical a view of what has happened and what needs to happen to qualifying training in the youth and community work field.

Professionalism — the out-dated obsession

Both articles did, it is true, seek to locate their arguments in a wider political perspective. Jeffs and Smith for example clearly recognised some of the societal and social policy changes affecting initial training; while Holmes, albeit

briefly, considered it as part of further and higher education developments generally.

However in both cases the

authors seem hooked on an increasingly irrelevant debate about 'professionalism', whether youth workers have or can achieve this and what it has meant for the two year qualifying courses. I have made clear elsewhere my (some might say rather belated!) recognition that, within youth work, notions of professionalism were always extremely weak³; and were anyway the product of the economic, political and ideological conditions of an era which has now passed⁴.

In fact, the real question today is whether anyone with political clout gives the notion of professionalism the time of day. As long ago as 1982-3 Conservative ministers were insisting on 'reducing to a necessary minimum the extent to which decisions are taken for individuals by professionals'⁵. Since then teachers have been so deprofessionalised that they no longer have the right even to negotiate their own salaries while social workers have resoundingly lost their bid for government backing for a three-year training. Even occupational groups which youth workers have always regarded as models of professionalism are now prime targets of government assault. The monopolies of both the opticians and the lawyers are now being systematically undermined while, as the 1988 NHS review made abundantly clear, the growing power of managers as well as politicians is deliberately being used to limit even the doctors' cherished 'clinical freedom'.

Given this context and all else that is going on in and around youth work, youth workers' thirty year obsession with 'professionalism' seems increasingly irrelevant. What is now needed instead — and urgently — is a hard-headed analysis of past and current initiatives in the area of initial training and of the priorities and strategies which might help to defend and build on the more 'progressive' elements within these.

Recent history: the sixties' bequest

This is not to argue from some clever hindsight position that the initial qualifying training which has developed in the past two or three decades, albeit in the name of 'professionalism', has been entirely mistaken or worthless. Seen in its own historical perspective, this training emerged in part because, in the words of the Albemarle Report, 'recruitment (of full-time youth workers was) still haphazard, salaries and conditions of service (had) never been agreed, and professional training (was) producing only a trickle of full-time youth leaders'⁶.

What is more, embedded within this development of 'basic'

training, albeit often implicitly and incidentally, were some forceful challenges to taken-for-granted assumptions about the nature of 'youth work' itself and in particular to the principle of *noblesse oblige*⁷ in which so much of it was still widely rooted. Thus in the 1960s the National College for the Training of Youth Leaders attracted considerable criticism, not to say hostility, to itself when, following the Albemarle Report, it dared to question whether such terms as service, dedication, leadership and character-building could simply be used 'as though they were commonly accepted and valid currency'⁸.

In such conditions, the priorities were clear. These included establishing that the practice of youth work required much more than mere 'common sense'; and that in order to guarantee that this extra was present youth workers needed quite lengthy, continuing and well thought out training.

As so often happens in such circumstances however — and as, I will argue later, seems to be happening again now — these relatively pure and 'progressive' aspirations were never allowed a completely clear 'run'. As they merged with wider shifts in thinking and priorities, they produced on the ground a range of unintended and often quite regressive consequences.

For, the wider context was a society which was convincing itself that 'it had never had it so good' and that 'we are all middle class now'. Such material affluence and political consensus seemed to call for a new breed of face-of-face practitioners equipped with the technical skills to 'social engineer' individuals' progress through the new opportunity society. Here either education (including 'social education') or, for the 'inadequate' or 'maladjusted', 'rehabilitation' and 'therapy' were seen as important arenas for achieving major personal and social change.

Youth workers could claim to be capable of making a very special contribution to such an enterprise. After all, not for the first time, young people were seen as posing the main threat to these new national aspirations. Their (often apparently extreme) rebelliousness — a new and huge 'generation gap' — suggested that they needed to be cajoled or if necessary coerced into at least basic conformity. Who better to take on these tasks and especially to *win* them to the new consensus than a body of workers who met them on their own ground and whose central commitment was to encourage their personal development and responsibility?

As a result the 'progressive' elements within the new training for full-time youth work became inextricably confused during the 1960s with demands for, in Albemarle's words, a 'corps of professional leaders'.⁹ These would be men and (much less frequently) women who could 'bring a trained mind to bear . . .; experiment with new techniques and new modes of youth work; and . . . make plain the standards of achievement that can be reached in informal group work'¹⁰. The equation of the need for a recognised training with the creation of a corps elite of (full-time) professionals responsive to the requirements of the new society was thus already being firmly embedded in both the psyche and the practice of the Youth Service.

In defence of 'student-centred' learning

In some crucial respects, this elitist professionalised model of qualifying training now seems intrinsically flawed as well as outdated. Nonetheless there are within it some important 'student-centred' principles. These, especially in today's conditions, retain considerable 'progressive' potential and therefore deserve some forceful if selective defence. They give great weight, in their own right and as crucial starting points, to the experiences, talents and expectations that participants bring with them to their training, and to methods which build on these qualities.

However, at their most effective, such approaches also recognise that 'starting where people are' is not the same as leaving people where they started. On the contrary what *practitioners* repeatedly identify as the most valuable outcome for them of their 'training' is how it has both affirmed **and changed** them as people; how it has strengthened **but also shifted** their view of themselves as well as of young people and of the wider world; and how as a result it has increased their confidence in **and extended** their abilities, not just to act, but also to analyse and to think critically.

Such responses to training illustrate that — in the newly-fashioned Youth Service parlance — practice 'competences' are not separate from 'the person' who has to develop and display these. That person's view of themselves their own internalised value system, their openness to self-appraisal and outside criticism, their competence and confidence as a social being generally — all these and much else that is 'them' are intrinsic components of their capacity to act appropriately and effectively as a youth worker.

In other words the skills of being a better practitioner cannot simply be superimposed onto the biography and personality which is already there like so many technical modifications to the moving parts of a machine. Through-out, 'training' has to be based on sensitive interventions — by other learners as well as by 'teachers' — which are deliberately designed and targetted to support and extend 'the person'.

I recognise — not least as a long-time trainer myself — that in practice qualifying training for youth and community work has often failed to live up to these educational principles. Nonetheless, restating them does not, as I write, seem a merely idealistic or self-indulgent gesture. Indeed, as we press (as we must) for wider access, there is a real danger that we will concentrate far too single-mindedly on changing institutional structures and procedures and thereby neglect key issues of content and especially method. For this reason — and also because of who the clientele for the new qualifying routes is likely to be — it seems essential to reassert positions which put the 'student' and her/his experience and personal potential at the centre of the training process.

Progressive possibilities in an oppressive society

At this moment however a defence of such principles is necessary for other, political, reasons. For, as I indicated briefly at the very start of this article, the new routes to qualification are being pioneered in conditions which often are extremely oppressive and restrictive. We need therefore

to do today what we did not do sufficiently in the sixties: namely, address and try to deal very directly with these wider ideological and structural pressures before they take over and ultimately undermine whatever 'progressive' possibilities may exist within the new training initiatives. For example, one major expression of these pressures is the current obsession with achieving firmer and more efficient forms of 'management' capable above all of getting 'value for money'. In this context the questions which have to be asked are:

Why (suddenly) have training routes been devised **and enthusiastically embraced by top policy-makers** which give employers new and influential roles in qualifying training?

How, in the short- and the long-term, will such a 'partnership' between trainers and employers affect the form, content and outcomes of the new part-time routes.

Given that Youth Service managers have often been critical of the orientation and relative cost of the *full-time* qualifying courses, how well will these courses — which have often acted as the only means of full-time second-chance higher education for some people — survive the new developments?

Posing such critical questions perhaps helps to concentrate the mind on the *kind* of education and training which, in present conditions, the new routes to qualification will be able or permitted to offer. As we have seen, political and managerial controls on all educational and welfare work are now enormous. In this context the starting point for all qualifying training could increasingly become 'given' notions of 'efficient' day-to-day practice within, mainly, 'traditional' Youth Service settings.

Courses — and probably especially those which are 'practice-based' and 'employer-led' — would then be required primarily to impart the information, knowledge and 'basic skills' seen by managers as essential to carrying out such practice. Over time this preoccupation with 'training' in a very narrow sense would increasingly squeeze out the more personally developmental and stretching educational content essential to preparing workers for a job like youth work.

Paradoxically, the dangers of a shift to such 'technicalist' conceptions of qualifying training within the Youth Service could inadvertently be increased by the very success of the 'Starting from Strengths' movement. The positive impact of this on the status as well as the actual content and methods of training for part-timer youth workers has been unmistakable.

The **Starting from Strengths** report itself¹¹ is deeply rooted in the kind of person-centred training principles outlined above. It starts with workers' own accounts of past experience and present need. And in its chapter on 'Principles, Practice and Development' it explicitly eschews mere instrumental teaching about 'the nuts and bolts of the job' and embraces 'what (is) already known about adult education strategies and, in particular, about how people learn'.

Some of the follow-up analysis of how these ideas are being implemented is also convincing and reassuring¹². For one

thing, the incompleteness of what has so far been achieved — for example in relation to the operational notion of 'strengths' — is openly acknowledged. Secondly, the philosophical difficulties surrounding the central concept of 'competence' are neither written out nor fudged — as is illustrated by the question: 'where "values" are a competence is training seeking to ensure that students have a "correct attitude" (e.g. to racism), or is awareness of the issue/of self merely enough?' Thirdly the contradictory nature of much of the practice, operating as it does within 'the real world of inequalities, bias and vested interests', is explicitly recognised.

However recognising these contradictions does not eliminate them. The threat remains that they may play fast and loose with the person-centred principles and possibilities of 'progressive' youth work training. Thus on the one hand large numbers of practitioners — part-time and full-time — themselves insist that their training must be rooted in the realities of the work to be done, including the requirements of employers. In this sense 'competence' on the job is for them crucial.

On the other hand, within currently dominant political and managerial ideologies, such work-related approaches are increasingly based on some very different values and intentions. Rather than drawing their inspiration from the 'Starting from Strengths' enterprise, these seem more and more to embrace the notion of 'vocationalism' as proselytised so effectively by the old MSC. In this wider context, and on the back of this new language of 'competence', a range of assumptions, purposes and practice principles could therefore quickly take hold within the Youth Service's training discourse which are wholly alien to a young person- and student-centred philosophy. For, in today's conditions, simply taking it on trust that all conceptions of work-based training mean the same thing and that they are all equally benign must be extremely risky. If our sixties' experiences are any guide, this kind of naivety is likely eventually to lead to the dilution if not the 'corruption' of otherwise 'progressive' and person-centred ideas and approaches. It may be that qualifying youth work training, including that now being offered or developed via the new routes to qualification, is already dangerously far along this road.

For the student groups for whom the new routes are being designed such an outcome would be particularly damaging. It would in effect patronise them by implying that they do not need or are incapable of responding to the intellectually as well as vocationally stretching educational demands of a student-centred training, even when this is unashamedly practice-based. It would also threaten to reproduce the second-rate educational opportunities which so many of them were offered earlier in their lives and which, rather than any lack of 'innate' ability, were so often the real causes of their past educational 'failures'.

In search of 'progressive' alternatives

None of this is to argue that 'progressive' possibilities do not exist within the alternative routes to qualification now being opened up, or that we should avoid trying to realise these possibilities out of fear of creating something worse.

For one thing, the 'we' taking such a decision would almost certainly be predominantly (white) men who, as achievers through the old system, now hold privileged positions within it. It would ill behave them to make such a choice from their positions of considerable distance from the experiences and motivations of the mainly Black and women part-time workers now demanding new forms of access.

In any case, given that much of the present training pattern is the product of a very different age, a searching critique of it is now long-overdue. This particularly needs to take into account how those past efforts at professionalisation excluded so many women and Black workers from the full-time ranks and how they rigidly maintained artificial boundaries between full-timer and part-timer.

More positively however this critique needs to respond to new and radical developments which are shifting the very basis on which qualifying training is now proceeding:

Probably most important of these is the widening range of practices and indeed philosophies now asserting their right to be part of what we understand as 'youth work'. These challenges have occurred partly, as Jeffs and Smith point out, because of the impact of intermediate treatment and the old MSC on the Youth Service. What is likely to be even more influential in the long run however is the new assertiveness of constituencies whose voices have for long been suppressed or ignored — Black communities, women, gay and lesbian groups, people with disabilities. Increasingly training will be expected to respond to their insistence that they do their youth work **for themselves** rather than having it done to and for them by others; and that the values and practices underpinning what they do should not be treated merely as deviations from those of 'traditional' and 'mainstream' youth work.

An increasing confusion has emerged over what is 'work', what is 'leisure' and what is 'unemployment'. For young people this has created a radically new 'social condition'¹³ which has profound implications for youth workers and those who train them. In particular some fundamental rethinking is now needed on such issues as:

Who now are the students requiring and offering themselves for training?

What curricula will they now need?

When will they be carrying out their youth work — day-time or evening?

In what settings and contexts will this happen?

It is true of course that compulsory YTS has largely removed 16-18 year olds from the Youth Service's purview. Nonetheless even within this age band there remain priority groups — for example young women with children and young people with disabilities — who continue to need day-time as well as evening provision. In addition youth workers are supposed to be committed to working with 18-plusses. All this suggests that it is now no longer adequate for training to proceed as if youth work must fit only into those evening and week-end hours left over to young people from waged labour.

It is now also much more widely recognised — especially as 'substantial part-timers' become more and more common — that the boundary between 'full-time' and 'part-time'

youth work is neither watertight nor defined simply by greater and lesser degrees of skill. Indeed, not only do part-timers do most of the face-to-face work,

their **qualitative** contribution is now often indistinguishable from that of full-timers.

The institutions in which 'training' has traditionally been provided are now also changing, in particular as they too conflate notions of 'full-time' and 'part-time' and use modular structures and credit systems as the basis for new routes to qualification.

Positive and creative responses to changes of this kind could provide the basis for developing relevant and 'progressive' forms of qualifying training for youth and community work in the 1990's.

The struggle for more collective responses

Nonetheless, negotiating within and through the present oppressive situation will be far from easy, not least because those involved in Youth Service training are very divided. This was particularly brought home to me in the summer of 1988, at a DES-sponsored course for staff working in all the main 'sectors' of initial qualifying training. Participants included tutors from full- and part-time courses and from apprenticeship schemes, LEA and voluntary organisation staff with training responsibilities, CETYCW staff and committee members and staff from the National Youth Bureau, as well as the Youth Service HMI who ran the course.

Clearly such a cross-section of people arrived with some significantly different agendas and so were unlikely within a week to establish an easy consensus around future needs and strategies. Nonetheless in two ways in particular the course was extremely instructive. One was the widely shared frustration amongst participants that, despite its stated intentions, the course did not produce a more penetrating and consistent exploration of training content and methods, especially it seems as these relate to race and gender. Thus, even though course members came from often mutually critically and even competitive working arenas, a basis did seem to exist for some collective thinking and planning on priority issues.

Secondly, however, though sub-sections of the course membership had their own organisations to which to return — the Training Agencies Group, the National Group of Trainers, the Youth and Community Work Training Association, CYWU, NAYCEO — no shared arena seemed to exist for the various 'interests' to continue any dialogue initiated by the course. Indeed, operating as they do in their largely separate or parallel organisational worlds, these groups seem most likely to regard each other with, at best, indifference or, at worst, suspicion. In today's political and economic conditions, that is certainly a recipe for being divided and ruled.

Yet, as this article has tried to show, the often contradictory pressures on qualifying training are common to all settings of the Youth Service. So too are many of its most testing dilemmas, such as — how can course content be made both more critical of, and yet more relevant to, the realities of practice in a Thatcherite society; and how can teaching methods preserve genuinely 'student-centred' educational

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The context of aggressive behaviour: continuities and change

CHRIS MURRAY

The context of aggressive behaviour: theory, history and action.

Most theorists define aggression as 'behaviour directed towards an object or person with the aim of inflicting damage or injury'. However, this is open to criticism for in society aggressive behaviour is sometimes condoned and even encouraged e.g. an aggressive sales technique, the macho inclination and so on. This differentiates aggression from violence which more nearly fits the definition. Be this as it may various theories have been promulgated which attempt to explain 'aggression' and we will examine these before turning to the historical context and practical ways of dealing with aggressive clients.

Theories:

Popular 'theories' of crime and delinquency usually attempt to explain social behaviour either by locating the 'cause' of such behaviour in the individual or his/her social situation. However, in the social sciences there is an awareness that such separation is at best arbitrary. As stated in a report on soccer hooliganism, 'social scientific explanations find it difficult to sustain such boundaries partly because the individual is interacting with other people in groups but also because his ideas, beliefs and attitudes are so much the product of his social experience'. (S.S.R.C. 1978). Bearing this in mind, let us turn to theories of aggression subdividing them into those which have as a focus the person and those which stress the environment.

A. Person centred:

(1) Ethology:

(a) Theories of ethologists such as Tinbergen (1951), Lorenz (1966) and Ardrey (1966) allege that aggression is instinctive, hence ineradicable, because man's evolutionary ancestors were territorial, that is they had to defend a geographically based food supply in order to survive. Weaknesses of this approach may be listed as follows:

- (i) Examples may be chosen from the whole spectrum of animal behaviour to provide post hoc proof of the theory.
- (ii) There is some doubt that all animals are aggressive.
- (iii) Danger in the ethological fallacy, namely that men are evolved from primates because their basic behaviour patterns must be similar. Man is a 'rational animal' and where similarity to animal behaviour occurs then this may arise from situational factors. The distinction is important because 'instinctive' behaviour is by definition immune to basic change.

(2) Frustration/aggression:

Proposed by Dollard and associates in 1939, this theory essentially means that inter-

ference with the realisation of a personal goal can result in aggression. Displacement is also part of this theory in that it is argued that fear of reprisal or punishment may lead to the displacement of aggression on to an object other than the instigator of frustration:- the so-called 'safety valve'. Thus when a soccer team loses, the fans cannot punish the opposing teams, so they take it out on visiting fans, wives, or other nearby 'objects'.

There is experimental evidence to indicate that frustration is not the only trigger for aggression and that aggression is not the only or invariable result of frustration, for example passivity or withdrawal may be another typical response.

(3) Modelling:

Associated with the work of Bandura and associates (1959) this theory proposes that children rapidly learn to imitate aggressive behaviour from 'peers' and 'high status' models. They argue that this process is positively reinforced by a society which stresses competition and the functional adaptability of aggressive behaviour.

B. Environment centred:

(1) Anomia or strain theory:

This theory was initially proposed by Merton (1957) and is based on Durkheim's (1951) theory of alienation and society usually referred to as anomie. It argues that individuals internalise a pressure from a society which values certain material and cultural effects. As it may not be possible for everybody in society to achieve these effects then individuals will be led to achieve them by illegitimate means.

A derivation of this theory is class based which argues that certain groups of people may develop behaviour patterns which are 'normal' for their class, but which would be regarded as deviant in the wider society. (Mays, 1959; Wilmott, 1966; Downes, 1966).

(2) Sub-culture:

A rather esoteric way of describing the origins of crime and delinquency as arising from people with a distinct set of values and norms which stress masculine virtues such as courage and skill in fighting; heavy drinking; exploitative sex; loyalty to group members and territoriality. It has some similarities to the derivative of 'anomie' theory described above but here the focus is on violence, the central argument being that if a value system encourages

violence then violence is likely to occur. This approach to the problem is not new in that from the mid-19th century onwards 'a dangerous class' was described as distinct from the 'honest poor'. Mary Carpenter (1851) describes many of the latter as 'the perishing classes, who have not yet fallen into actual crime, but who are almost certain from their ignorance, destitution and the circumstances in which they are growing up, to do so, if a helping hand be not extended to raise them'. This belief in a 'criminal class' fed by a 'perishing class' was thought to be self-perpetuating in two respects.

(a) young people were socialised into crime through their network of relationships and perceived themselves to be scapegoats for arrest and prosecutions; actions being interpreted differently by the authorities, depending on different social contexts. This explanation of delinquency sees it as a product of a particular criminal class with this view having a long pedigree (Morrison, 1987; Mayhew and Binney, 1862; Lombroso, 1876; Tobias and Chevalier, 1958; Thompson, 1965; May et al., 1975).

It will be evident from the foregoing that various theoretical explanations of crime and delinquency have been proposed at both individual and societal levels. Inevitably, this leads to some confusion with the problem being exacerbated by the elevation of juvenile crime to a media issue which in turn can cause moral panics among the public with an involvement in politics at both the national and local level. This is not to suggest that the issue of young people and crime is not important but rather that it should be put in perspective, a perspective which is both historical and prospective, so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated and problems are not amplified by the strident advocates of a policy which reflects ideology rather than a cool, detached appraisal of the issues involved. In this respect, we may conclude this section by quoting from West (1967) who instances a report written in 1818 as stating that,

The lamentable depravity which, for the last few years, has shown itself so conspicuously among the young of both sexes in the Metropolis and its environs, occasioned the formation of a society for investigating the causes of the increase in juvenile delinquency.

The authors conclude that, taking into account the overall picture, 'theft and violence were more of a problem 150 years ago than they are today'.

To fully understand the present context of juvenile crime it is necessary to trace the historical development of crime as mirrored in the treatment of offenders in general and young people in particular.

The historical context:

It could be argued that in a social sense the 19th century saw the emergence of the adolescent as being socially defined with schools being formally established, thus organisationally demarcating a particular age segment of the population. Paralleling this movement saw the emergence of the juvenile offender as a special class of criminal with a shift away from the punishment centred approach to the therapeutic one. We may trace the

chronology of this movement as follows:

1. It was not until the 1850's that birth certificates became available to determine whether in fact a person was a juvenile or adult. (Compulsory registration of births, 1836).
2. Voluntary societies became established which recognised the special problems of young delinquents, e.g. Peter Bedford, the Spitalfields philanthropist who founded the Society for Investigating the Causes of the Alarming Increase of Juvenile Delinquency in the Metropolis in 1815.
3. There was a gradual movement to establish separate prisons for the young offender with 'a suggestion adapted to the reformation of youth'. However, Parliament was still concerned with deterrence rather than reform as manifested in the resistance to attempts to close down Parkhurst which was established as a separate prison for juvenile offenders in 1838.
4. Intensive lobbying by philanthropists such as Mary Carpenter eventually resulted in Parkhurst being closed down (in 1864); this being presaged by the Juvenile Offenders Act (1847) which provided that 'children under 14 who had committed minor offences could be "privately whipped" rather than sent to prison'.
5. The next major step forward away from a punishment centred to a therapy centred approach may be seen in the passing of the Youthful Offenders Act of 1854. This gave powers of compulsory detention to reformatory schools which had been established by voluntary societies. Within four years of the Act over 50 reformatory schools had been set up. Magistrates receiving advice as to the most suitable schools for 'different classes of criminal children'. This was the first time that 'the offender' was seen as needing different kinds of treatment/punishment depending on the offence.

This form of alternative provision led to a decline in juvenile commitments to prison in England and Wales which may be seen in the following figures:

13,981 in 1856
9,356 in 1866
7,138 in 1876
5,483 in 1881

this downward trend being directly attributed to the work of the reformatories.

This influence was recognised by the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Commission of 1883, viz.

They (reformatories) are credited we believe justly, with having broken up the gangs of young criminals in the large towns; with putting an end to the training of boys as professional thieves; and with rescuing children fallen into crime from becoming habitual or hardened offenders, while they have undoubtedly had the effect of preventing large numbers of children from entering a life of crime'. (Report of R. and J.S.C., B.P.P. 1884: XLV, p.X).

In addition the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879 provided an alternative to either prison or reformatory by allowing a

juvenile to be 'admonished' rather than convicted of petty offences of which he was guilty. This Act was closely followed by the Probation of First Offenders Act of 1887, which gave magistrates the power to release any delinquent convicted of an offence punishable by not more than two years imprisonment. However, it made no provision for the supervision of those on probation; this being eventually achieved at the turn of the century with the passing of the Youthful Offenders Act of 1901 and the Probation Act of 1907.

This legislation was accompanied by the establishment of separate juvenile courts confirming the view that juveniles required different punishments from adults. Prison was abolished in the Children's Act of 1908 for those under 16 and remand homes were set up to avoid the need to keep children in prison while awaiting trial. After 1933 old titles for forms of provision for juveniles were replaced by the term 'approved schools'.

A major shift from punishment centred to welfare centred provision came about with the Children and Young Persons' Act of 1933. New standards of welfare and rehabilitation were being set which abandoned the older ideas of hard work and stigmatisation. The tenor of the Act was that of a moral welfare agency dealing with crime, care and truancy. After the war, the influence of the Beveridge Report gradually made itself felt with the newly-born welfare state giving rise to an influential child care service with the social work services becoming more structured and influential. The social demarcation of the juvenile took on an added dimension during the '60's with the development of the 'laid back society' and a consequent loosening of moral values associated with the emphasis on consumerism. National service and corporal punishment were abandoned, with social scientists such as Peter Wilmott documenting an upsurge in violence in schools, gang warfare and vandalism.

The mass media fanned the reactions of an already anxious public with a succession of moral panics, which presented the more extreme manifestations of youth as a major challenge to public respectability and the country's existing way of life. Not surprisingly calls were heard for the return of National Service and the birch. (Wilmott, 1966).

This public pressure was however resisted both in the White Paper leading to the Children and Young Persons' Act (The child, the family and the young offender, 1965) and the Act itself which was passed in 1969. The tenor of the Act involved a welfare approach to the problem of juvenile crime and called for

- a. a reappraisal of the juvenile justice system
- b. the decriminalisation of the young offender by the abolition of the juvenile court
- c. the extension of the social work role in the treatment of young delinquents.

Many parts of the new Act were not implemented with a change in government in 1970 causing many sections to be frozen. There was considerable unease about the implementation of the Act from all sections of the community, for example,

- a. magistrates were angry at having their power curtailed at the expense of an increase in the discretionary

powers of social workers.

- b. the police felt that a hard core of serious and persistent offenders were 'getting away' with treatment rather than being punished.
- c. social service departments were frustrated by lack of funding and support to carry out the work they had been given power to do.

The consequence of all this was a considerable gap between the 'therapeutic spirit' of the Act and the actual sentencing patterns in the courts. In fact an increasing number of young people were sent to detention centres and borstals; the numbers in 1978 being almost three times that of 1969. (1,672 sentences in 1969 and 5,528 in 1978). Public opinion began to turn against the user of 'soft option' therapeutic measures, because they were 'clearly not working'.

To help assuage this growing public anxiety a White Paper entitled, 'Young Offenders' was published in 1980. Whilst advocating the development of community based options it also gave the courts the power to use stiffer and more punitive sentences. Enshrined in law in 1982 as the Criminal Justice Act it handed back to the magistrates many of the powers they had 'lost' in 1969 and provided them with many more. The general tendency, then, is to revert to a 'punitive centred' approach to juvenile sentencing but, as we have seen, this tends to reflect political and social pressures rather than the most effective form of treatment/punishment. Indeed one author has suggested that during the last twenty years sentencing policy has been based on 'an ideological contest between the two political parties and their supporters' (Parker in Maskell and Yablonsky, 1978).

Whatever the truth of this statement, the current government concern about 'law and order' is to try and fit the punishment to both the crime and the criminal. With effect from October 1988 defendants appearing before magistrates in two pilot areas will be fined according to their means — the wealthier they are the higher the fine. The underlying rationale is that a fine of £200 for one man may represent a financial crisis while, to another, it is of little significance.

The new pilot scheme is termed the Day Fine System and will be introduced in Basingstoke, Hampshire and Bradford, Yorkshire. Defendants will be required to complete a questionnaire providing details of their daily income with fines being based on this. Related to this is the government's proposal to introduce graded compensation for victims of violence. The underlying philosophy being that the best way to stem the crime wave is to ensure the criminals suffer.

The provisions of the Criminal Justice Act came into force on September 29th, 1988 and reflect this view, viz.

1. Criminals carrying guns will, in extreme cases, be liable to life sentences
2. Child cruelty will carry a 10 year jail term
3. Anyone carrying a knife in a public place will be liable to a £400 fine
4. Possessing a shotgun without a firearms certificate becomes an offence punishable by up to 3 years in prison

5. Fines of up to £2,000 for carrying indecent photographs, films or videos of children.

John Wheeler, chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee, is quoted as saying (Daily Telegraph, 26.9.88.).

The concept of the state seeking retribution only according to the gravity of the offence, with no recognition of the personal status of the criminal, is medieval . . . In the 20th century the monetary worth of the defendant must be given full consideration in determining both the fine and the compensation.

Be this as it may the effectiveness of sentencing is extremely difficult to evaluate: the criticism usually employed being the recidivism rate of individuals in the two years after discharge from any particular 'correctional programme'. Problems with this approach may be stated as follows:

- a. Failure to show changes of the kinds which can take place in an individual
- b. It is based purely on numbers of offences committed rather than types of offending
- c. It has failed over the years to show any consistent difference between types of court disposal
- d. It does not take into account that different individuals may respond in different ways to the same treatment.

Consequently, the results using this criterion may be flawed; those discharged from penal institutions have persistently high reconviction rates in the two years after discharge. For example, Detention Centres show a 75% reconviction rate over two years, whereas Borstals show an 89% reconviction rate over the same period. We may quote from the H.M.S.O. publication **The Effectiveness of Sentencing** to illustrate the difficulty faced by magistrates in choosing a sentence which will optimise the chances of an individual's rehabilitation from the range available.

The present day judge or magistrate has a very much more difficult task than his predecessors. Instead of fitting a sentence to the crime, he now has to match a sentence to offender. Without hesitation . . . he must take cognisance of all sorts of details about an individual case . . . First there are the circumstances and gravity of the offence, and the offender's part in it. Then there are personal particulars about the offender himself . . . Finally, it must be decided from the possible sentences available . . . which will best satisfy the demands that justice be done, that public opinion be appeased, that no harm or undue suffering be caused and that, as far as possible, any re-occurrence of criminal behaviour be prevented.

Magistrates and other members of the judiciary, however, are influenced by public pressure and there is a danger that the picture of personal assault and violence may become overdrawn with an over-reaction developing to issues which have no substance in reality. We may present a snapshot of the extent of such violence in 1984:

Table 1 *Personal violence in 1984 by category of offence. (Home Office Study 1989)

Wounding/assault	112,000
Robbery	25,000
Sexual assaults	15,000
Homicide (murder, manslaughter, infanticide)	800
Threats/conspiring to murder	200
Reckless driving	200
Total	153,000

*Recorded by the police: the total amounts to just under 5% of all notifiable offences. Adapted from **Home Office Research Study**. No. 89. Table 1. Appendix A.

Thus while not trying to understate the impact of such violence it must be emphasised that personal violence represents just under 5% of all notifiable offences. It must also be emphasised that there may be a perceptual gap between the label for an offence and what actually happens; for example, a deliberate assault leading to a minor skin abrasion might lead to a charge of 'assault occasioning actual bodily harm'; the taking of a coin by one child from another in a school playground might be classed as robbery. Bearing this in mind, if we count only what the criminal statistics call the more serious offences of violence against the person (endangering life) together with the more serious of the other crimes of personal violence (rape and armed robbery) only 10,700 offences were recorded in 1984, that is, only one-third of one per cent of all recorded offences. The figures though small show, however, an overall increase over a ten year period of 72% with an increase over the same period of 38% for the most serious offences of personal violence. A check on the undue influence of public pressure on sentencing is provided by the Court of Appeal. By way of illustration, **The Times** instances the case of R.J. Wilkinson, November 24th, 1987. A twenty year old man's appeal against 18 months youth custody was allowed and a probation order substituted; the Court of Appeal held that the judge had been wrong to impose this sentence in order to satisfy public opinion. The young man had found his car had been damaged and, in anger, had driven it onto a grass verge causing grievous and actual bodily harm to three men. He had been remanded on bail to a probation hostel, which had given him a favourable report. The sentencing judge had said that public outrage would occur if Wilkinson was not imprisoned. Their lordships considered that, although there was public concern about lenient sentencing, this was no reason to depart from general principles laid down in previous cases (e.g. R.V. Gillam, 1980) which encourages the use of probation hostels.

A tacit recognition of the difficulties associated with dealing with violent offenders is shown by the increased interest many of the helping professions have in finding out how best to prevent themselves being attacked by clients.

Dealing with aggression

Davies (1988), Department of Psychology at St. Andrew's Hospital, has recently contributed to the debate on dealing with aggression and is of the opinion that certain factors

may be identified which could prevent assault: these, derived from the basis of experience rather than research, may be listed rather fully with due acknowledgement to the author:

(1) **Attitudes to the Client:**

Try and avoid the following set views as they may be counter-productive:

- (a) They (the clients) must not be allowed to get away with anything.
- (b) 'If you give them an inch they'll take a yard': the sequitor being 'I know these people'.
- (c) 'I must always stand up to him/her'.
'I must never run away'.
'I must not show that I am afraid'.

Davies remarks; 'The common theme of all these is the **must** element. Surely, most of us would agree that, generally, we would wish to stand up to our clients, not run away from them and not show that we are afraid. But to insist that we must never do any of these is unwise'. Unwise because covering up fear may be communicated as indifference.

(d) I personally must be able to deal with everyone.

Some colleagues are better with some clients than with others. If a client 'writes off' a helper persistence may only lead to problems.

(2) **Taking precautions:** ideal type suggestions.

- (a) Make sure your client knows you are not alone.
- (b) Agree a plan of action when you hear a commotion — or if you can't agree 'at least make sure you know what you would do to help a colleague in that situation'.
- (c) Manage your own time — avoid meeting clients when you are on a 'dip'.
- (d) Some thoughts to appearance — both in terms of practicality and provocation value.
- (e) Have domestic telephone ex-directory unless there is good reason otherwise — prevents them calling round when in a threatening mood. (Address as well as number in directory).

Office design:

- (a) Don't have a Yale type lock on your inside office door — can be easily imprisoned by your client.
- (b) Ideally, have strengthened glass or clear unbreakable plastic panels in office door so colleagues can check on your safety easily.
- (c) Ensure that both you and client are able to leave the office easily should the temperature rise.
- (d) Try to make the overall atmosphere as non-oppressive and conducive to calming down as possible.
- (e) No ornaments to hand which could be used as vicious weapons.

Home visits:

- (a) Make sure you notify colleagues where you are and likely 'check in' time — course of action to follow if you do not check in.
- (b) Change tack if you find the situation different from what you anticipated, for example, your client's partner not there when he/she normally is.

Talking to clients:

In this case there are certain verbal and non-verbal elements which Davies states should be remembered when talking to an agitated person:

- (a) Make sure that your behaviour is governed by departmental rules — depersonalise the issue, for example, don't make refusal to hand over money an issue of personal offence to your client.
- (b) Do the opposite, for example, personalise yourself when the helper reacts aggressively to a particular helping profession, for example, police, probation officer etc. Give information about yourself — name. It is after all one thing 'to give the social worker a bad time' but quite another to 'hit Sue'.
- (c) Ask for the required client behaviour repeatedly, authoritatively, loudly and explicitly, for example, 'Stop hitting him'.
- (d) Avoid provocative phrases such as 'Now don't be silly'.
- (e) Don't get too near a client — habitually violent people have a wider body buffer zone than non-violent people.
- (f) Avoid general platitudes such as 'always remain calm' because this goes against the idea of mood catching and calm demeanour may be interpreted as indifference and may tip an agitated client towards violence. Davies quips, 'Curiously the ability of calmness to incense an irate person is well recognised domestically but not always in the work environment'.
- (g) Eye contact may exaggerate an emotionally charged situation — avoid eye contact or eliminate the constant staring associated with aggression.
- (h) Try to stand at a non-confrontational angle to your client, that is, away from head on and chairs at 45° angle to avoid the element of confrontation.

These factors are termed 'first order' in that they may be acquired through experience. But Davies argues that there must be a range of 'second order' factors as well which encompass a number of more specific skills: these may be given as follows.

Second order

1. The ability to keep thinking in a fraught situation, no matter how panic stricken one feels. Not unrealistically to be 'calm and in control' but more achievable to keep thinking **in spite of** feeling a measure of panic.
2. The ability to spot that there is more than one course of action open to you, the helper.
3. Ability to take personal responsibility for your own safety not afraid to seek assistance.
4. Spotting situations which are becoming progressively more fraught over days or weeks and intervening to produce a solution. Prevents 'matters coming to a head' — leaving situations in the hope that 'things will blow over'.
5. The ability to analyse aggressive incidents which happen to oneself or others and to extract learning points from them for future use.

Conclusion:

We have seen that aggressive behaviour both in theoretical, historical and practical contexts is a complex situation which has to be understood from many different perspectives. While it may well be a natural inclination to

describe aggression in individual terms the most cursory glance at the literature indicates that forces outside the individual are equally important in obtaining a full explanation of why people act in ways which may be labelled 'aggressive' or 'violent'. Given this complexity it is hardly surprising that the issue of 'law and order' is one which may aptly be described as a 'hardy perennial' not amenable to simple solutions, however appealing these may be in a political sense. The 'lager lout' may have long and dishonourable antecedents, consequently banning the drinking of lager in public may not be the answer; as the **Daily Telegraph** leader (Oct. 8th 1988) points out

to forbid the consumption of drink in public is a serious measure, posing immense difficulties of enforcement. It would be intolerable if drunkards in morning coats were left free to indulge in boorish behaviour with impunity, while those in T-shirts were to be indicted. The Home Secretary's motives and intentions are admirable, but it seems questionable whether his department has thought this matter through.

Thinking the matter through would seem a necessary precondition for action if such action is to be both beneficial to both the individual and society.

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Continued from page 32

principles within forms of training which increasingly are vocationally oriented and employer-led.

Coherent and collective responses need to be found too to a range of wider institutional questions. At the moment, to meet often legitimate and pressing demands, part-time and 'apprentice-type' courses are being set up and other 'alternative' routes explored in an entirely ad hoc way, without any consideration of possible longer-term consequences.

But what if we suddenly discover in five or ten years time that the part-time courses have merely reproduced the worst features of YTS and ET? Or that — and in present conditions this seems an entirely plausible scenario — our collective absence of mind has allowed all or most of the full-time courses to disappear? Will those really be our preferred outcomes? Will what we then have left really serve the needs of the range of people wanting to get trained for full-time youth work? Or of the already highly marginalised area of practice to which we are committed? Or — most important of all — of all those young people for whom youth work could still represent an important arena for personal and collective growth?

The mere presence of a more concerted voice on these issues will not of course 'magic away' the contradictory pulls and pushes now facing qualifying training for youth and community work. It might however prompt a more thorough-going analysis of these contradictions and a more organised resistance to the strongly oppressive pressures often contained within them. Certainly such political work is now urgently needed if, in the longer term, all the current shifts and changes in qualifying training are to fulfil their more ambitious and 'progressive' aspirations.

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Working Space

What future detached work?

JOHN WATHAN

Detached Youth Work has been around for a considerable time. Whilst I am not attempting to deny the validity of its origins, I am for this article going to concentrate on contemporary matters and spend some little time on looking to the future.

Despite the fact that Detached Work offered a lot, and was the first alternative style of Youth Work to challenge Club Work, it has not experienced the expected growth. There has recently been, as a result of ESG funding, a marked increase in projects which call themselves detached work projects. However, even if the doubts as to the nature of their work prove unfounded, they may well only prove to be a short term measure with no resources being made available to sustain the work. The main doubt that has been expressed about the new Detached Projects is that many of them have been established without a clear brief of what Detached Work really is.

It has been said virtually every time that Detached Workers get together, 'We need to raise the profile of Detached Work', the question of how to go about this has been debated and debated, without, it seems, any clear way forward emerging. It is fairly easy to draw out a parallel between the lack of growth and the fact that there does not appear to be a very high profile for Detached Work. On saying this I do not believe that raising the profile alone is going to achieve a wonderful revelation of understanding and support.

Firstly, I believe that Detached Youth Work has to know and be able to explain to others the value of this kind of work. When we are at this stage we may then be in a position to undertake a major evaluation of the work being undertaken. So we should be determining what it is we say we do, and then what we actually do, this monitoring would then allow us to make changes in an informed climate. The results of this evaluation should be given the widest possible readership. It is absolutely imperative for other professional workers to understand what it is that we are saying.

These matters have been spoken of, without being adequately addressed, at The Southern Regional Conference and Keele, that I know of, and in all probability at other regional meetings of people concerned with Detached Youth Work. There is an opportunity for the issues with regard to the future of Detached Youth Work to be more adequately addressed when Bill Cox leads the Sunday morning session at Keele. The title of this session is — 'Organising Ourselves: Locally, Regionally, and Nationally', which is intended to examine how Detached

Youth Workers and their Managers — promote Detached Youth Work; represent the needs of young people to

employers, funders, and government; influence trainers and training bodies; build networks and communication with other projects.

The main problem has been the fact that although it has been recognised that something has to happen there is no clear strategy to determine what responses should be forthcoming and who takes action. It is clear that new strategies now have to be found to overcome these obstacles. They are not going to go away, no one else is going to undertake this task, unless they want to determine how we work without consultation. Courses of action must be found to raise the level of understanding, place a high profile on Detached Youth Work, and lead eventually to an increase in quality Detached Youth Work.

It appears to me that those with a commitment to this method of work could have done more to demonstrate the effectiveness of it. I include myself as one of those with a commitment to the work but find that I am unable to express myself in a way that engenders understanding and support from lay-people. It is quite possible that such a demonstration would alone not be sufficient. As a manager I keep up to date and do all that I can to gain a deeper knowledge of the work. I think all managers have this responsibility as do elected members, but it would appear from what is said each and every occasion that workers get together that it is mostly true that managers and members neither understand nor support the work as well as they might.

Detached Youth Work needs to be more specific and more public about good work practice, there are appropriate methods of work that are currently in use that other practitioners could adopt if they knew about them. Detached Youth Work at its best could also be described as Action Centred Social Research. Detached Youth Workers identify the needs of the young people they work with, they also learn a great deal about their hopes, aspirations, fears and lifestyle. Whilst it is certainly true that Detached Youth Workers have a command of information that is of use to young people, they also have much knowledge about young people and their relationship to contemporary issues that is unrivaled by any other professional workers. Other Youth Workers come close but they work by and large with those young people who choose to attend their premises. It is important both to the young people and to the work that this information is shared with the widest possible audience. In general terms

we should be making more public the facts about young people, destroying the myths and educating with facts, helping to show what the reality is, in relation to young people and their needs. The most beneficial way for this to happen is for the young people themselves to learn and use self-advocacy. If, however, the young people are not ready to take these steps then the workers should be prepared to advocate the young persons situation, on their behalf, and with their agreement.

Without undermining the achievements to date, much of the 'Public Relations' type work undertaken has involved a 'preaching to the converted' approach. When the priority should have been promoting the work amongst those who could support the adequate funding of existing work and increase the extent to which they will support new work. There must be a heightened awareness of the work, its usefulness, and future needs by Senior Management, Principal Officers, Elected Members, the DES, Training Agencies, and other colleagues.

The NYB plays a strong role in promoting Detached Work, the awaited publication of a revised Detached Work Statement and Detached Work Pack should further publicise the work. However the delay in the publication of both puts into perspective the image that Detached Work has and its position in the priorities rankings. It is not enough for the NYB to have on the staff team a very small number of personnel committed to Detached Youth Work, there has to be more priority given to it than holding up the publication of important documents for over a year. It seems to me that it is inconsistent to hold a major national conference, 'Policy Now', that advocates this form of youth work and then to treat it so shabbily.

Similarly, there have been a number of occasions over the past few years when the DES has called a number of very different pieces of work Detached Work. They bear no relation to Detached Work as I understand it, so they both add to the confusion that abounds as to exactly what Detached Work is, and to a marginalisation process that makes those involved with Detached Work feel under valued and isolated. The national policy making bodies are having it all their own way because there is no collective national body acting solely on behalf of Detached Work.

There are a number of regional bodies throughout England who mainly concern themselves with organising training events for Detached Workers and their Managers. I have mentioned the Southern Regional Conference for Detached Work because it is the one that I attend and am pleased to be able to support it with professional and personal commitment. However it seems to me that the time has arrived for us all to take stock. For us all the future awaits, now is the time to determine what the future holds and to work towards that aim rather than to allow someone else to determine our future for us.

The process by which we determine the future of Detached Youth Work should commence at Keele. The model that I would prefer is to form a National Federation of regional bodies, where they don't exist at the moment help should be forthcoming to set them up. There must be a half a dozen independent regional bodies at the moment, there is scope for at least two more. Local Detached Work units

would affiliate to a regional body and the regional body would affiliate to the National Association. All of which would be properly constituted. This would still allow space for networking on a local level on an informal basis. I envisage that the Regional and National bodies would have a remit that enabled them to do more than organise training events, thus establishing a wider brief.

The wider brief would then enable Detached Work Organisations to address the promotion and marketing of Detached Youth Work, so that it is carried out more effectively than at present. This must take place both regionally and nationally. There are some learning points to be gained from the way that other organisations have tackled these problems. Most organisations start off in a small way and develop. The above model isn't a new one and discussion may yield a better model. But Detached Youth Work has to elevate itself, and I think that a National Organisation will do the trick.

This is the direction that I would like to see Detached Youth Work take. I would welcome the formation of a National Association of Detached Youth Work. How this is achieved is not a concern at this stage, what is important now is that everyone who feels that this is the way forward should make it known. If enough interest is shown at Keele then it would be possible to establish a working party to seek a way of achieving this massive task. We really do need to obtain a general recognition and acceptance that this is the route that we would wish to follow.

Whilst there is no guarantee, I feel that the existence of NADYW would be of benefit to all of us committed to the work and would considerably help to raise the profile of Detached Youth Work. The whole process involved would be good for the work as it would entail a great deal of co-operation. There would also be a need to determine who was eligible for membership which could well be based on an understanding of what Detached Work is.

Without pre-empting what could actually be achieved through a national organisation the following are strongly advised:

- ★ DES Headquarters funding;
- ★ Full-time Officer;
- ★ Administrative back-up;
- ★ Directory of Detached Units;
- ★ Newsletters;
- ★ Publication of books, leaflets etc;
- ★ Information, library and other support services;
- ★ Influence initial training courses for youth workers;
- ★ Formulate nationally agreed policies on Detached Youth Work Practice;
- ★ Lobbying politicians;
(from any political party, local, national, or European — based on the collective views of the membership).

Those people who support such a venture but are going to be unable to get to Keele should make every effort to find some way of getting their voice heard and feelings expressed.

reviews in this issue

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HELPING WITH ENQUIRIES: HOW TO ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLE TROUBLED BY THE LAW
David M. Boyd
National Youth Bureau
ISBN 0 86155 1192
£3.95 pbk, pp 59

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a guide for Youth Workers on assisting young people troubled by the Law. The introduction explains that it is meant to be read in conjunction with the National Youth Bureau guide to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. This Act has increased police powers and changed the rights of young people dramatically, and has been criticised by many organisations, particularly for its lack of safeguards against Police abuse of their power. This booklet attempts to provide legal information in the light of this Act, and is described as a 'practical guide' for Youth Workers.

It covers the legal implications for Youth Workers when assisting Young People with the Police, and it gives practical advice on appropriate behaviour. It explains a young person's Rights and the correct Police procedures in such situations as: Stop and Search, Arrest, Searching of Premises, and interviews in the Police Station. It goes into detail about the different courts, their powers and functions, and possible sentences. The final chapter deals with advice about legal help and alternative remedies, and how to make complaints

LAYOUT

The layout is clear and well thought out. Each page is divided into a wide margin, and print or graphics. Each section, or chapter is clearly headed, and that heading is repeated at the top of every page in the section. There are no large blocks of continuous print, so the detailed information is broken up into short paragraphs and sentences; and the important or central point of each subsection or paragraph is printed in red in the margin. Also, different points are cross-referenced in notes in the margin, so the reader is always directed to further information, or a fuller explanation, in another chapter. This visual design makes the information accessible and easy on the eye and it facilitates finding and picking out particular points. This makes it handy and easy to use in a hurry, which may well be the manner in which it is consulted in practice!

LEGAL INFORMATION AND PRACTICAL ADVICE

Although the legal information is thorough, it is never dry, longwinded or obscure. The author avoids jargon, so the language is simple and clear, and any important legal terms are explained. The first section covers the Youth Worker's legal position vis a vis the various roles undertaken in the course of her/his work. It explains the legal position of a person who is responsible for a 'public place' such as a Youth club, and for the activities that occur within it. It also covers a worker's legal position when directly helping a young person in trouble with, or being questioned by, the Police.

Each section ends with an 'In Practice' paragraph, which acknowledges that the real live situation may differ from the theory. These sections show that the author is aware that in the heat of the moment, knowing your legal rights is important, but sensitive handling of a situation may be more effective: for example:

You should try to do the following if you feel it is safe to do so.

The author does not patronise the reader, but leaves the choice of action up to the judgement of the individual.

I agreed with the author's two Golden Rules: a) make detailed notes of any event, and b) make sure that legal advice is available for a young person. However, in the section on the 'appropriate adult', the author gives detailed guidelines on how a Youth Worker could assist a young person being interviewed by the Police: my advice in those circumstances would be — follow golden rule number two. Get a solicitor present before you allow a young person to answer **any** questions, even if the young person wants to make admissions. The appropriate adult's role should be supporting the young person and making sure they don't answer questions unwittingly during apparently innocent chats with a 'friendly' officer.

One criticism I had was of the section on Legal Help and Other Remedies. The Author devotes two short paragraphs to making complaints about the police, and taking them to Court. This can be a lengthy and intimidating process, with wider implications, and a fuller discussion on this point would have been useful.

THE DILEMMA OF THE YOUTH WORKER

The author understands the potential dilemmas facing a youth worker when advising and helping young people, and he examines the fine dividing line between an obligation to help and a legal requirement not to obstruct the law. The guide is written in the belief that it is a worker's duty to help young people when they are in conflict with authority but this is not the same as taking sides or condoning or approving their behaviour. It therefore explains fully the legal implications of any course of action, but leaves youth workers to make their own decisions about choice of action. The author makes other helpful suggestions such as:

discuss and negotiate some rules with colleagues and young people and agree in advance what you will do when problems arise.

This prevents workers having to make decisions on their own, and provides policy support for difficult courses of action. The author understands young people's need for trust and advises against repeating anything said in confidence, and he points out that good youth work practice means helping young people stay out of trouble:

A young person who has committed an offence is far more likely to reoffend if taken to a police station, prosecuted through the courts and given a custodial sentence than a young person whose

behaviour can properly be dealt with informally under the club's rules.

It is a thorough and useful document, well thought out and accessible, with a good balance between legal advice and practical suggestions for action. Its understanding of the aims and philosophy of youth work and youth worker's difficulties and dilemmas make it an indispensable addition to any youth worker's bookshelf.

Ellen Phethean

RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE

Dorit Braun

Bedford Square Press 1988

ISBN 0 7199 1241 5

£6.95 pbk, pp 94

This handbook has been written in recognition of the central role teachers and other professional groups can play in the detection and prevention of child abuse; especially child sexual abuse. It is designed as a training pack to be used by groups of professionals wanting to address the issues raised by child abuse and define appropriate strategies in their own work settings.

The book provides a comprehensive store of background information and reading material in easily identifiable sections, taking the reader through various stages ranging from definitions of abuse, signs and symptoms, disclosure, referral and support to possible prevention.

Each section is accompanied by a set of practical exercises allowing participants to work through their own feelings and attitudes and work towards taking action. The active training material is extremely adaptable for courses/meetings of varying depths and lengths and for almost any group. For this, in the introduction to the book, suggestions are made how activities can be selected and combined to design a complete and comprehensive course to suit the needs of any particular group. This handbook provides all the ingredients for a balanced menu — whether it is for a one-off two hour meeting, a one day workshop or a series of six three hour meetings.

The adaptability of the materials is definitely a major positive feature of this book. The user-friendly presentation of the materials should encourage professionals to address child abuse in their work environment and go a long way towards dispelling the myths and fears surrounding the topic.

Surprisingly absent, in the otherwise exhaustive background information, is any discussion about the effects of abuse, especially sexual abuse. The book fails to establish a common rationale for wanting to deal with the issues and seems to presuppose shared objectives in any training event. One limitation of the book therefore lies in the assumption that dealing with abuse is primarily about detection/disclosure, subsequent referral and possible prevention. As the long term effects of abuse are dramatic and far-reaching; Youth and Community Education Workers, for instance, are extremely likely to come across past abuse and the effects amongst senior youth club members or

other adults and will need some understanding about the specific counselling skills required for this.

This could be seen as too complex for a book of this type. It would have been helpful to draw attention to counselling agencies people could be referred to and an extra chapter would have made this book even more versatile for a broader range of professionals.

A great deal of emphasis is put on disclosure, covering exercises for sensitive listening, responding and exploring one's own feelings about a situation which is potentially harrowing for most people. Unfortunately, in this section, the learning material is too general, failing to address the specific nature in which abuse is disclosed and the typical issues arising from that. Disclosure of sexual abuse is not normally about reporting a one-off, unfortunate event, but typically a reflection on years of suffering. Sometimes the full extent of the abuse might well not be disclosed on the first occasion, either because as an initial attempt the listener's reaction is tested with a partial or modified disclosure to establish the safety of the situation, or memories of the abuse had to be suppressed for a long time and will only emerge gradually. For this reason the stories being told are often changed in subsequent conversations — which is often mistaken for somebody 'making it all up'. As the abuser is most likely a known and trusted adult, the child is likely to have very conflicting feelings about that person which need to be worked through in their complexity.

The book's final chapter deals with prevention and rightly addresses power imbalances between adults and young people/children. In the case of sexual abuse, however, the power issues are equally as pronounced as a male/female phenomenon and anti-sexist training is therefore quite an appropriate measure for prevention.

Generally, little reference is made to the different training needs that women and men have around the issue of child sexual abuse, or indeed to the recurring fear of male youth workers being (wrongly) accused of sexual abuse themselves.

Bearing in mind the above points some adaption/extension is necessary to make this book equally as useful for Youth and Community Education Workers as it clearly is for teachers. The wealth of information matched with the versatility and applicability of the training material make this book a very comprehensive reference book which provides a solid framework and structure for training in this field.

Ilona Buchroth

WORKING PARTNERSHIPS: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Maurice Broady and Rodney Hedley

Bedford Square Press 1989

ISBN 0 7199 1243 1

£6.95 pbk, pp 166

Recent years have marked a period of unprecedented change in British local government. On the basis of claims that local authorities have

become remote, unaccountable, inefficient and unresponsive to the public (claims that have provoked little significant dissent), central government has introduced a range of changes which, taken as a whole, constitute a threat to the very survival of local government in its present form. Specifically, significant reductions of local authority power in key areas such as education and housing have been accompanied by a general centralisation of control over local authority expenditure and a progressive introduction of private sector alternatives to local authority service provision in the form of compulsory competitive tendering. Consequently, those who would defend local government are faced with the challenge of developing new methods of working which are capable of promoting more efficient service provision and a healthier local democracy. One reaction to this challenge, and the concern of 'Working Partnerships' is the growing emphasis being placed by local authorities on 'community development'.

There are, the authors tell us, two views of community development. The first, their own definition, is that it has to do with 'the way in which (a) local authority deliberately stimulates and encourages groups of people to express their needs; supports them in their collective action; and helps them with their projects and schemes'. The second view, and the one which the authors discovered many local authorities to be utilising, is that it refers to 'any effort (on the part of local authorities) to relate their services more responsively, and thus more effectively, to the community at large'. The authors, both representatives of voluntary and community organisations, state clearly that their sympathies lie with the former view. However, they concede that to adhere strictly to this view would be to overlook much of the work currently being undertaken by local authorities in pursuit of community development. Consequently they adopt a concept of community development which incorporates both views, identifying a strengthening of local democracy as the unifying *sine qua non*.

Recognising that such a catch-all concept of community development brings a plethora of activity within its scope, the authors utilise a six-point classification of community development activity developed by Newcastle City Council, which consists of 'a continuum which extends from the direct provision of community facilities all the way across to community self-government', and comprises: 'community provision'; 'community consultation'; 'community co-option'; 'community management'; 'community action'; and 'community control'.

The substance of the book is based on the findings of a survey of all local authorities in England and Wales, sponsored by the National Coalition for Neighbourhoods, an organisation devoted to promoting the shared interests of 'bodies concerned with neighbourhood organisation'. This sponsorship, and the affiliations of the authors, make an emphasis on practical applications and a less than critical acceptance of the value of empowering neighbourhood groups understandable. This said, this type of book is best judged on its success in meeting the objectives which the authors set themselves. In the introduction to 'Working Partnerships' three specific objectives are identified, viz: to 'show what local authorities are doing in this field'; to 'make the local authorities difficulties better understood among voluntary organisations and

community groups'; and to 'help local authorities to understand the grounds on which they ought to extend their activities in this field'. These objectives are pursued in the hope of stimulating interest in and debate over community development as a means of promoting more responsive service delivery and empowering neighbourhood groups through the enhancement of democratic pluralism.

The objective of demonstrating what local authorities are doing in the field of community development accounts for chapters three to seven. Chapter three provides an overview of the variety of initiatives being undertaken, based on the responses of 109 local authorities who 'stated that they were carrying out community development in one guise or another'. It considers these initiatives under ten broad headings (and not according to the original six-point classification), and is packed with information and specific examples of innovative activity. Unfortunately, the requirement to cover such a wide range of activity in a relatively brief format occasionally detracts from the clarity and style of the piece.

Chapters four to seven present more detailed information on the community development work of five local authorities which the authors consider exemplary: Crewe and Nantwich, Thamesdown, Newcastle, Cambridge, and Cambridgeshire. No formal framework is adopted for the presentation of this information, the authors feeling that both their original six-point classification and the ten headings utilised in Chapter three, would be too restrictive given the diversity of activity going on between and within local authorities. The information does, however, provide us with some insights into the respective conceptions of community development implicit in the work of these particular authorities.

There is no doubt that chapters three to seven of this book provide extensive and unique coverage of the 'community development' work currently being undertaken by local authorities. As such, they constitute a source of information and ideas which is of potential value to: local authority officers and members; members and representatives of voluntary services and community organisations; and indeed, anyone sympathetic towards community development. It must be said, however, that the information presented may have been a little more accessible if the original six-point classification scheme, once established, had been retained throughout. The subsequently required discussion of the practical and conceptual limitations of such a scheme could only have leant an analytical edge.

The objectives of establishing the grounds on which local authorities should extend their community development activities, and of clarifying the difficulties which they face, are the concern of the final chapter. In terms of establishing the case for community development, sound arguments are advanced concerning community organisations as a potential source of ancillary service provision, and as a source of innovative service ideas. Additionally, the virtues of community development in terms of promoting civic awareness and self-help, and of concentrating attention on priority groups, are extolled. In terms of clarifying the difficulties faced by local authorities, acknowledgement is made of: the potential threat to the traditional roles of the local authority and its elected members; the resource implications of discovering previously unmet demand; and the difficulties of establishing and maintaining representative community groups with whom to

form partnerships. The implications and potential problems of community group power for the democratic process are given only partial and brief consideration. This might be expected given the practical emphasis of the book. However, the fact that the authors' case for community development ultimately rests on its ability to enhance local democracy, arguably calls for a more comprehensive treatment of the political implications of its different forms.

Perhaps the single most telling impression given by this book is that, despite the wide-ranging activity being undertaken in pursuit of community development, there is a distinct lack of coherence and direction in the approaches of most local authorities. Community development, it seems, is open to many interpretations. Hence, there is a need for local authorities to be fully aware of their objectives and to identify and adopt a form of community development which is consistent with these objectives. The strength of 'Working Partnerships' lies in its coverage of the many possible areas of activity open to a local authority committed to community development. By highlighting the existence of these largely untapped methods of working and citing examples of their successful adoption, it lays down a challenge to all local authorities and will hopefully stimulate further debate as a precursor to action.

Barry Hague,

EDUCATION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKETS

P. Brown & D.N. Ashton (Eds)
The Falmer Press 1987
£11.50 pbk, pp 259

FINDING WORK: CROSS NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

R.C. Rist (Ed)
The Falmer Press 1986
£9.50p pbk, pp 264

The two books considered here present contrasting approaches to the dilemma created for society by youth unemployment and the concomitant 'broken transitions' from school to work. **EDUCATION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKETS** consists largely of several fascinating chapters exploring the 'adaptations' that young people make in facing unemployment and unmet expectations. It concludes with 4 chapters which provide a useful summary of the nature of the youth labour market, youth rates of pay and the pattern of unemployment in the United Kingdom from 1979 to 1984.

FINDING WORK has a very different flavour to it and appears more of a manual for civil servants in the MSC (or Training Commission). I concentrate here on the first three fifths of the book which consists of the analysis of various unemployment and training policies for young people in several nations. The final section of the book covers similar ground but with a focus on adults. The emphasis of the different contributions is firmly located in terms of their efficiency at reducing unemployment and they pay little attention to the

processes by which certain sections of the community are over represented amongst the young unemployed, or the nature of the labour market that they are being 'placed' in.

Therefore, we have two books, ostensibly similar in subject matter, but radically different in their approach to the problems of unemployment and vocational training.

The first seven chapters of **EDUCATION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKETS**, although exploring very different aspects of young people's experience of work and unemployment, share a common emphasis on the 'adaptations' that young people are making. Philip Brown, for example argues convincingly, that 'ordinary kids' continue to make an effort at school because they feel it improves their chances of getting 'any' job, it gives them a sense of personal dignity, and it is only when they are nearly ready to leave that the problem of unemployment becomes apparent to them. By that time it isn't worth giving up! Brown's research also argues the point, echoed elsewhere in the book, that educational attempts to breakdown stereotyped attitudes to 'male' and 'female' occupations will fail until employers cease to discriminate on gender grounds. Young people are not ignorant of alternative jobs but don't feel that genuine opportunities exist that warrant them taking the risks involved, particularly as they see stereotyped roles as offering them dignity and status within their working class culture.

This theme that education cannot compensate for discriminatory practices within the labour market is continued by Blackman in his consideration of the continuities between previous vocational training initiatives in schools and the TVEI. He puts the radical case for TVEI in terms of the laudable moves from passive, academic to active, experiential learning, from a differentiated subject-specific curriculum to an integrated curriculum and from external examinations to pupil assessment and profiling. However, the research suggests that despite these radical aims, the results are less convincing. Pupils' adaptations to the new opportunities suggest that TVEI will continue to confirm inequalities in the transition from school to work. Blackman argues that high unemployment means that young people are not in the right frame of mind to try new ideas. They enjoy work experience but use it to try the 'safe' occupations that they know about through first-hand experience of their locality. Consequently pre-vocational opportunities in school, rather than widening choices, are used by young people to gain entry into the secure, familiar, yet discriminatory labour market. Young people are colluding with, rather than resisting, the existing divisions of labour in order to find work.

Furlong's research also indicates the coping strategies young people are adopting to deal with the mismatch that has occurred between occupational aspirations and actual achievements. Previous research on the transition from school to work indicates that young people's early experience at school and with their family and friends prepares them to aspire to the sort of job they are likely to achieve. Those achieving work as hospital porters don't leave school planning to be brain surgeons! Therefore the transition from school to work is seen as smooth. However it would be reasonable to argue that the rapid rise in youth unemployment and reduction of opportunities in the market place will have caused a disjuncture between aspirations and achievements and Furlong's research confirms

this. He suggests various strategies by which young people are resisting the damage to their self-esteem that follows from an admission that they can't achieve their aspirations. He refers to these as 'image-maintenance' strategies and they include seeing your current job as only a 'temporary stop-gap', postponing entry to the employment market through education or training, or remaining unemployed. The latter is seen as an 'external' constraint on them achieving their desired job and is preferable to accepting a lower level occupation.

Furlong's study is useful in pointing out that it is not just unemployed youngsters whose lives have been disrupted by the economic recession, but also the large numbers of young people (62% of his sample) who have found work but have to cope with dashed occupational hopes.

Church and Ainley's study of the Docklands area also shows how young people's behaviour adapts to the changing local job market and Hutson and Jenkins work illustrates the way family life is adjusting to the challenges of unemployment. The latter study, based on qualitative research in south Wales, questions many of the previous assumptions about the experience of unemployed young people. They suggest that although there was some evidence of the postponement of adult roles such as parenthood, marriage and leaving home, the young people had obtained a degree of adulthood, conferred on them by their family and friends and by the limited financial independence (compared with pupil life) of social security benefit. The evidence emphasises families adapting to unemployment rather than disintegrating under the pressure of joblessness.

Wallace's empirically based chapter on young adults on the Isle of Sheppey confirms the support role of mothers identified by Hutson and Jenkins, but contradicting their view that young women were not pushed into isolating domestic work while unemployed. Wallace presents a new multi-stage model of the transition from family of origin to that of destination where employment careers play a strong part in young people's decisions about their domestic, family and housing careers. For Wallace, 'adult' roles are far more clearly contingent on employment than they are for Jenkins and Hutson.

Lee and others contribution complements the earlier chapters in examining the 'micro-sociology' of inequality as experienced on YTS. Again, they show the actual way that the YTS in one town operates to confirm the differentials in the labour market, rather than compensate for them. The range of schemes and training places offered reproduces the segmentation in the market (i.e. gender, race and class differences) because there is inequality between the sellers (young people) and the buyers (employers). Just as in the real labour market, the employers can stipulate the terms on which they are prepared to take young people.

As mentioned before, the final chapters of the book take a different perspective in providing a clearer picture of the 'youth labour market', youth rates of pay and the incidence of unemployment. Ashton and others argue that there is a segmented youth labour market, differentiated on the grounds of sex and different occupational groups. They show that the segment a young person enters initially will have a strong effect on their future career histories and job movement. Turbin and Stern try to identify differences between the rural and urban labour markets although the major feature they appear to find is the strong influence

on recruitment of informal networks.

Roberts and others offer a tightly argued thesis that higher rates of pay for young people are not a cause of unemployment and lowering wages has not proved to be a useful means of increasing employment for young people. Conversely, he argues, the market is creating an 'under-class' of long-term, potentially life long claimants whose employment prospects are so poor that they will choose the alternative of unemployment. Finally Raffé dissects the unemployment figures over recent years and considers the conflicting explanations for the incidence of youth unemployment. He argues that a survey over time indicates that the only unequivocal explanation for youth unemployment is a declining demand for youth labour.

This book is not a 'primer'. It assumes that the reader has a basic understanding of many areas and, for example, you should look elsewhere if you want a clear description of the structure and delivery of YTS. However, if you wish to look beyond simple description to the analysis of the impact of youth policy on young people and their families, this book will prove stimulating and insightful. As someone with a responsibility to help youth and community workers develop their understanding of the experience of young people and the employment, domestic and economic context in which they live, this will be a useful source of information and ideas.

It is very comprehensive. No doubt many of the pieces of research described briefly here will shortly appear as full-length books and occasionally I felt that a more selective presentation of the material, particularly in the early chapters would have proved less confusing. Overall, the contributions selected interlock well and often develop similar themes in different directions. The studies sometimes contradict each other but this is useful in reminding the reader that research results are small pieces of information which contribute to our overall understanding of a situation, they are not undisputed facts. Nevertheless, we can have some confidence from the range of work here, that young people are far from passive recipients of their social condition. On the contrary they are actively taking decisions and making choices, albeit within highly reduced and limited circumstances.

As mentioned at the beginning FINDING WORK has a very different perspective. Its emphasis is on the design and cost effectiveness of different policies for the unemployed from an economist's point of view. Rist argues that economic growth is not sufficient to create jobs and needs to be accompanied by a thoughtful employment and training policy that targets resources in such a way as to 'achieve maximum benefits for those most in need'. The different chapters explore such policies in different national settings, yet remarkably, the problems appear to be very similar to those experienced in the U.K.

Dehnhostel and Rau's study of the 'Dual' system of vocational training in West Germany is most interesting in this respect. This system has served as a model in the past because it has involved the majority of German young people in apprenticeship training after they leave school in contrast to the small number of British young people who have previously had the benefit of training. However the authors point to many weaknesses in the scheme including the poor match between the

trade apprenticeships available and the kind of vacancies available in the job market. They suggest the system has created unemployment by training young people for jobs that don't exist.

As in British unemployment policy, studies of USA and Denmark stress the importance of achieving work experience opportunities for young people in the 'private sector' where there are greater opportunities for being offered permanent work. Likewise there was also evidence from other countries that employment and training initiatives are also stratified and the most disadvantaged members of the community end up in the lowest status, poorest quality schemes.

FINDING WORK is written by individuals operating in many different educational structures. Consequently the language and jargon present some difficulty for readers, and introductory summaries, free of national jargon, would have been helpful. The book, does however, provide some interesting insights into the practice of workers in other countries. Elmore, for example, echoes some of the concerns expressed by youth workers who become involved in MSC initiatives in the U.K., when he indicates the tension workers in USA found in reconciling their desire to work with the 'whole' young person, against the agencies limited aim of placing them in work.

These books both fall firmly into the 'academic' category, and neither could be considered bedtime reading (unless you want to fall asleep). However they do offer some useful ideas and information for those working in the 'youth' field and I particularly recommend EDUCATION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKETS for those working alongside young people in the transition from school to adulthood.

Sue Bloxham

BREAKING NEW GROUND — COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WITH ASIAN COMMUNITIES

Jean Ellis
Bedford Square Press 1989
ISBN 0-7199-1238-5
£6.95, pp 166

As an Asian woman involved in community work in the North East of England and in particular working with Asian women and young girls, I looked forward to the prospect of reading this book. Judging from the title 'Breaking new ground — Community Development with Asian Communities' and the comments on the back cover I expected it to be of practical relevance to my own work. Unfortunately I was soon muttering to myself the old proverb 'Don't judge a book by its cover'.

This book is a collaboration between Jean Ellis, a freelance writer with a special interest in equal opportunities and several community workers who are involved in working with Asian communities in the North of England — collectively known

as the 'Community Development with Asian Communities Project Group'.

The book attempts to draw upon the experiences of Asian community development work in Cleveland, Manchester and Rochdale in order to present an analysis of the issues involved in this field of work. Indeed it is the hope of the authors that

... this book will talk directly not just to community workers and local activists but to their managers, supervisors and trainers and to the policy makers, management committee members of community projects and non-statutory agencies, local government officers and politicians (Introduction Page IX).

Evidently with such a wide audience this book has great hopes of becoming a best seller!

What immediately struck me when I began reading the book was the inaccessible style of the writing. It soon became apparent that any affinity I may have found with my own experience was lost in a swamp of painfully academic prose. The following quote is a bemusing and not untypical example of this:

... the experience of workers in this study would indicate while the horizontal relationships may be less visible they necessarily inter-relate to vertical developments (Page 15).

Considering how essential the ability to communicate is in community work and particularly when working with Asian communities where differences in language and culture are prominent, I found this style of writing totally inappropriate. Even allowing for the complexities of the issues involved, I felt that Jean Ellis's academic and jargonised style of writing merely serves to obscure rather than clarify the issues.

Perhaps the abstract nature of the book's style can be attributed to the way in which it was written. Jean Ellis was brought in as a 'specialist' to assist the community workers with the writing. Although this method of bringing in an 'outsider' can have the merit of adding an objective perspective to the project it has its disadvantages, not least that the writer lacks the intimate knowledge and grass-roots experience of the situation.

However, it must be noted that Jean Ellis's role has not simply been that of a ghost writer. She has after all been credited with the book's authorship and it is evident that her own experiences and concerns haunt the text. The group as a whole acknowledge in their introduction that:

the writer brought to the project extensive experience of voluntary and community organisations as an organisational development consultant and saw the need continually to place the particular detail within an analytical framework. (Page XIII).

Whilst there is clearly a role for this type of analysis, I found that all too often in this book the experiences of the community workers were lost in a welter of generalised analysis of the organisational structures of community work. As a consequence, the experience of working with Asian communities became marginalised and the

issues discussed were no longer of specific relevance to these communities. However, in making these criticisms it would be unfair not to point out that those directly involved in the project found the collaboration with the author to be a positive and rewarding experience. Whether she has been successful in communicating the results of this collaboration to the reader remains an open question.

However, an even bigger question mark hangs over the way the book deals with the issue of racism. Firstly, it has to be noted that the author and most of the community workers involved are white. In addition, nearly all the supporting material is drawn from white academics. Thus it is difficult to escape from the fact that this is a book on a black issue written from a predominantly white perspective. Consequently, the awareness of racism in this book is not nearly as acute as it might well have been if it had been written from a black perspective. Jean Ellis notes that when she first joined the project she found it necessary to confront the male orientation of the material which had been produced to date. A black worker, had one been brought in, might have felt the same need to confront the white orientation of the material.

The focus throughout the book is on a multi-cultural solution to racism. This approach, though not without positive attributes, is insufficient in itself to tackle the deep rooted inequalities engendered by racism. The major limitation of this multi-cultural approach is that in order to work, it demands that black and white workers co-operate on an equal basis without fully recognising the effects of the institutional inequalities which exist in a racist society. Despite the fact that this book raises many of the problems which arise from this approach — the extreme isolation often experienced by black workers, the sense of powerlessness engendered by working in predominantly white organisations, the feelings of ambivalence between black and white workers when confronting black issues and racism — it fails to point out that all too often an ill conceived multi-cultural policy can amount to little more than tokenism.

This is clearly illustrated in the book's attitude to the funding of Black/Asian community projects. The book consistently fails to criticise the types of funding most commonly allocated to Black Asian work such as Section 11 money, Community Programme, the use of unpaid volunteers.

A further example is the author's assumption that white women, because they suffer sexual oppression, will have a natural affinity with those who suffer not only sexual but also racial oppression. The book then goes on to criticise Asian professional women for duplicating the power structures found among Asian men and for resisting moves which might threaten their position (Page 57). I found the context in which this statement is made a clear example of racist stereotyping. It totally denies the struggles Asian women workers have to make in a racist and sexist society where they are essentially powerless.

Unfortunately therefore this book did not live up to the promise of its title. After all, there is nothing new in the mediation of the black experience and black issues through a white perspective. I would have preferred a greater emphasis on Black/Asian initiated projects and on the experiences (good and bad) of those involved. It is those who suffer

the debilitating effects of racism who are in the best position to assess what is required to counteract it.

However in my own experience, when it comes to doling out funding such projects are passed over in favour of the multi-cultural approach. This book, in its academic approach to racism, in the language it uses and its adherence to a predominantly multi-cultural approach clearly fails to break any new ground.

Tia Khan

LEISURE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Sue Glyptis

Open University Press 1989

ISBN 0 335 15882 X

£7.55 pbk, pp 180

The optimism of the 1960's seemed to promise an age of leisure with greater economic prosperity being taken in the form of more leisure. However the persistently high unemployment of the 1970's and 1980's shattered these prospects. If there is no work to be had, then people must find identity and purpose in a work substitute.

The core of the book is the question 'To what extent can leisure fill the void left in people's lives by a lack of employment'. In attempting to answer this Glyptis draws on theoretical and empirical research.

Chapter 1 is general in nature, examining definitions of leisure, the historical and contemporary development of leisure and the changing relationship between work and leisure. Glyptis defines leisure as any activity (or inactivity) undertaken freely for the enjoyment it yields. The historical section succinctly describes the relative recentness of the separation of work and leisure, the importance of Calvinism to our attitudes towards work and leisure and the contemporary forces which have increased the time and resources available for leisure.

Glyptis goes on to describe leisure provision and policies, particularly relating to the public sector. Glyptis argues that 19th century public provision arose from a) concern for improving the quality of life in deprived urban areas, b) a need to maintain the productivity and health of the work-force, c) a wish to promote education and self-improving forms of leisure, d) a commitment to promoting participation as a method of social integration. These concerns and aims continue to underlie much of post-war leisure policy. For example, a D. of E. white paper in 1975 claimed that increased participation in active recreation would reduce boredom and urban frustration, and thereby reduce hooliganism and delinquency among young people. The Urban Programme has continued to focus resources on recreation related projects accounting for 25% of U.P. social category spending in 1985/6. There are however significant omissions from this section. First, there is no consideration of the impact of Compulsory Competitive Tendering on leisure provision. Secondly, there is insufficient consideration of the role of leisure as a vehicle for urban regeneration and job creation,

particularly in view of the resources and powers given to Urban Development Corporations and the prominent position given to leisure in their strategies.

Glyptis then proceeds to a large section on unemployment. First, to a largely quantitative section covering definition, causes, scale and distribution of unemployment, followed by a concise and useful review of public policy and attitudes to the unemployed. Secondly, the effects on daily life and well-being of the unemployed. While stressing that the effects of unemployment vary from individual to individual, Glyptis asserts that certain generalisations can be proposed. Glyptis produces a useful balance sheet of gains and losses, stressing the non-financial losses, especially the loss of social structure, self-esteem and well-being. The description of the cycle of adjustment to unemployment is particularly useful and the section on the effects of unemployment on women is very welcome and highlights the need for more research. Glyptis suggests that leisure could make a significant contribution to offsetting the losses of unemployment. If the financial barriers to participation could be removed then leisure participation might help to establish social contacts and build up self-esteem, confidence and well-being.

Drawing on a considerable body of empirical data (much of it her own) Glyptis examines how unemployed people use their time compared to the pattern for the population generally and comparing the pattern of one unemployed person to another.

Conventional wisdom has it that the unemployed tend to lead largely home-centred lives, going to bed and getting up late, watching a lot of television, smoking and going to pubs. Empirical evidence shows that the caricature contains a measure of truth, but not the whole truth. Compared to the general population the unemployed tend to sleep slightly longer, spend more time in the home, watch television only slightly more. However the pattern varies very much with age, gender and class.

In relation to the young unemployed the main empirical findings were that whereas for adults unemployment reduces social intercourse, unemployed young people spend more time with their peers than when they were working. Most of their leisure activities are of the 'hanging around' variety. Many unemployed young people felt they were trapped in a limbo between youth clubs they had outgrown and 'adult' leisure provisions that were too expensive.

Traditional gender roles emerged strongly in the way unemployed people used their time. Whereas boys might become active job hunters or leisure seekers or 'street corner boys' the girls adopted, or had imposed upon them, the role 'domestic servants' or became 'pretend' shoppers.

Unemployment, for most people, curtails the range of leisure activity, means more time spent in the home and less in sports participation, trips and entertainment. However, as Glyptis points out, since the unemployed are drawn from social groups which tend not to participate, not to have a car, are poorer or are from an ethnic background, we should expect them to be non-participants anyway. Unemployment tends therefore to compound tendencies which are already there.

Glyptis goes on to look at leisure provision specifically for the unemployed, the rationale of the providers and the responses of the unemployed.

The increase in the numbers of unemployed in the late 1970's and early 1980's gave an impetus to provision for the unemployed. The motivation for action was mixed, partly coming from an 'equal opportunities' philosophy and partly from a welfare or social control viewpoint, as a way to divert energies and frustrations which may become disaffected and disruptive.

The Sports Council supported a number of experimental schemes of sport and recreation opportunities for the unemployed and their families. It was hoped that the schemes would produce local unemployed people who would take a leadership role, motivate the next intake, producing more leaders and that there would be a long term snowballing effect. In practice most people were only interested in participating and those who attended leadership courses soon fell away when the next programme of activity sessions started. However at least these schemes seem to have reached their target, for example in the Leicester scheme as many as 98% of users were unemployed people and to have achieved reasonable participation rates, although higher among the young and males.

In the 1980's many local authorities have also taken action to encourage leisure participation by the unemployed. The most common action has been to give price concessions to the unemployed on the assumption that price is a major barrier to participation for the unemployed. Some required sight of a UB40 to obtain the concessions, others, more sensitive to the stigma involved, used leisure cards or offered free or cheaper services at times which the employed would be unlikely to use.

The motivation for local authority involvement varied. Some expressed it in terms of 'positive discrimination'. Some that it gave the unemployed something to fill in their time, others were merely trying to reduce revenue loss by increasing daytime usage, while still others felt they had to be 'seen' to be doing something.

General price concessions appeared to be the least successful in attracting unemployed people, most of the price benefit going to the already regular users.

In the final chapter Glyptis attempts to pull some threads together. She argues that even if the unemployed had enough cash to maintain a reasonable standard of living it is unlikely that many people would see leisure as the desirable option. Leisure cannot substitute for the structure and purpose provided by employment.

Glyptis argues that if there is not enough work for all, in the sense of conventional employment, then work as a concept needs to be re-examined. It needs to be redefined to include voluntary work and the many activities of the self service economy, where people give expression to their resourcefulness. This would involve a change in the financial and social rewards of conventional employment, compared to work as redefined above. Leisure can play a part in contributing to the lives of the unemployed, the rest must come from the reform of social and economic systems.

I found this an interesting and useful book exploring questions which are relevant now and likely to be

so for the foreseeable future. Glyptis provides a clear description of the present leisure provision and unemployment and attempts to make policy recommendations from the application of empirical research and theoretical analysis. However, given the increased emphasis on leisure industries as a source of employment and economic regeneration I would have liked to have seen some consideration of this interconnection between leisure and unemployment.

Hugh Smith

THE POLITICS OF CHILDHOOD
Martin Hoyles, illustrations by Phil Evans
Journeyman, 1989
ISBN 1-85172-011-1
£4.95 pbk, pp. 127

As a reviewer, it behoves me to come clean and admit my prejudices at the outset. I am a great fan of Martin Hoyles and Phil Evans and agree with much of the main argument of their short, but highly engaging, book. Martin Hoyles' earlier work **Changing Childhood** (1979), is still one of the most thoughtful and radical surveys of the development of the institution of childhood. In the context of a sparse and often dull British literature on the rights of children, Hoyles' book was a welcome contribution. Phil Evans' **The Jokeworks** is simply one of my favourite books. One of those rare volumes which can delight every time it is taken from the shelf. It is a collection of some of Evans' most insightful political cartoons, many of which appeared originally in **Socialist Worker**, and featured the legendary and irrepressible 'Our Norman'. Given the previous work of Hoyles and Evans, I read **The Politics of Childhood** anticipating I would enjoy it; I did, but with some reservations.

The underlying theme of the book is that children live in a state of suppression, excluded from the adult worlds of work, politics and sexuality. They are denied basic human rights and indoctrinated into racist, sexist and heterosexist attitudes. Age, it is argued, is a potentially significant plane of social cleavage which can 'cut across' class, gender and race, thereby creating complex patterns of power relationships. There are, the author has acknowledged

political contradictions such as the white child who uses the language and institutional underpinning of racism to harass a black adult, or boys who harness society's sexism to insult and attack women. But mainly children are fighting against oppression, they are struggling to be subjects who think, feel and act in the world, rather than being objects of study, emotion and control (p. 58).

Childhood, however, is not a 'natural' or 'fixed' state of any given duration, but a socially and culturally structured phase of the life cycle which varies across different societies and, within the same society, across different historical periods. In the west, childhood began, 'with the change

from feudalism to capitalism' (p. 13), was accompanied by 'an unparalleled middle class investment in education' (p. 13) and reflected the needs of the emerging bourgeoisie to educate their sons in the newly developing sciences and technologies to prepare them for their adult jobs and to challenge the power of the aristocracy. Girls learned their future work at home, working class youngsters in the mines, potteries and mills and, consequently, 'the first modern children were middle class and male' (p. 13).

It was these broader, structural, socio-economic shifts, which generated 'childhood' as a distinct social state, separate from the adult world and invested with the mythical and usually negative attributes of innocence, weakness and dependence.

Some of the myths about childhood are explored in the book's eleven chapters which include historical and cross-cultural perspectives on childhood, children's exclusion from work, the suppression of sexuality, political action, schooling, racism, sexism and heterosexism, disability and the position of children internationally.

Inevitably in any book, some sections are stronger than others, and I found very noticeable imbalances in both the quality and length of the different chapters. Chapter 6 for example, 'Political Action', has 20 pages, replete with useful material and well illustrated with quotations and graphics, whereas Chapter 3 was woefully inadequate in many respects. Three pages including a half page photograph is simply too short a space in which to conduct a discussion of cross-cultural perspectives on childhood. Moreover the content misses the target. The chapter focuses on how adult attitudes towards children and the gender roles of parents, especially concerning child care responsibilities, may in non-industrial societies be at variance with western norms. There is little here about childhood, with children appearing as the supporting cast rather than the main characters in the chapter. It represents a lost opportunity to reveal the variety of 'childhoods' manifest in different societies and cultures. In many developing countries, economic necessity requires very young people to work and contribute to familial income in a range of trades from newspaper seller and shoe shiner to thief and prostitute; activities which undermine the comfortable western notions of childhood as a period of innocent pleasures and learning. It must be conceded of course, that other chapters deal with some of this comparative material — for example the discussion of the role of young people in political struggle and war in Vietnam and South Africa in the chapter, 'The International Picture' — but it would have been helpful to undermine readers' western assumptions about childhood by providing a sustained and clearly focused discussion of cross-cultural perspectives at the beginning of the book.

Chapter 4, 'Exclusion from Work', also represents something of a mixed bag. There is an extremely interesting and well informed historical account of children's involvement in the work process, but the chapter largely ignores the contemporary situation. There is, for example, no discussion of the Children and young Persons Act 1933 which, until recently, regulated the hours and conditions of child labour, or the Employment of Children Act 1973 which has never been fully implemented and tacitly endorsed the low paid and largely unregulated child labour extant. The chapter moreover fails to tackle the issues arising from society's ambiguous attitudes towards working

children; on the one hand child labour is judged to be exploitative, on the other it is considered a worthwhile and valuable activity, training for adulthood which allows children to 'earn a few quid' while 'keeping them off the streets'. Equally, there is no mention of the impact of Thatcherism on young people in the labour market and the development of training schemes like YOP and YTS. This may be because Hoyles does not consider 16 and 17 year olds to be children, but adolescents, young people or some other designated social category. The important point here is that the book's central concept of 'childhood' is nowhere adequately defined.

Chapter 6, 'Political Action', is by far the most thoughtful with marvellous examples to illustrate the fact that historically, children have been very active participants in the political life of their community. The children's crusade of 1212, for example, when 20,000 children marched from Cologne to Genoa, was led by a 12 year old, Nicholas. Similarly, King Richard II was only 15 in 1381 when he betrayed the peasants' revolt and had Wat Tyler, John Ball and 7,000 others killed, while Henry V served as a general in his father's army in the war against Wales when he was only 14. The matchgirls' strike of 1881, 13 year old Violet Potter's leadership of the striking children in support of the teachers at Burston School in 1914 and young people's support for the miners in the coal dispute in 1984/5 are all documented in a powerful and evocative way. It is a fascinating account of young people's political past and present.

A number of points about the book's style and presentation are worth mentioning. First, the book preaches to believers rather than trying to convert the heathens. It is a book for those who already subscribe to the views it expresses. It asserts a position and does not seek to explain or accommodate rival perspectives. This gives the book a confident and assertive style, but those who do not fully share its argument may find its unwillingness to enter any caveats into the argument, frustrating. But vice can become virtue depending upon ideological posture. For my own part I found it refreshing to read a book which had not had its life blood wrung from it by a concern to achieve an ill digested liberal notion of balance.

Second, the book is written in a clear, non technical and easily accessible style and this perhaps reflects one of its greatest strengths; it serves as a vehicle for the views of others, especially young people. There are many quotations drawn from varied interesting and often quite rare and obscure sources, which give young people, from the 13th century through to the present day, a voice with which to express their own sense of injustice about their circumstances.

Third, there is extensive use of graphics throughout the book to break up the text. They are well selected and generally I found them to be appropriate companions, complementing and highlighting themes within the text. My only criticism here would be that not enough of Phil Evans' own excellent work was included; some new drawings by Evans would have been much appreciated.

Fourth, I found a number of features of the bibliography curious. For example, while it included some very valuable, but not necessarily well known work, like Jenny Kitteringham's 'Country Girls in 19th Century England' (1973), there

seemed to be some inexplicable omissions. I was surprised not to find Michael Freeman's **The Rights and Wrongs of Children**, listed especially since Hoyles claimed that one of his criteria for selection for the bibliography was his intention to include 'recent books'. Moreover, although only one of the 11 chapters focused on 'Sexism and Heterosexism', there is a substantive and separate bibliography on lesbian and gay fiction and gay, non-fiction. Clause 28's prohibitions and the fact that gay literature is typically not referred to in most books, or may not be so well known to readers, may provide the rationale for this additional bibliography, but surely this emphasis requires some explanation.

But these are small complaints about an otherwise clearly written, strongly argued, well illustrated and highly provocative book. Its forceful advocacy of democratic and egalitarian participation for young people in their communities is not a line of argument guaranteed to win favour in Thatcherite Britain with its ideological reassertion of Victorian values. The book is therefore a brave as well as a deserving and worthy read.

Bob Franklin

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU? INFORMATION, ADVICE AND COUNSELLING FOR GAY MEN AND LESBIANS

**Malcolm Macourt
Bedford Square Press, 1989
£5.95 pbk, pp 145**

Perhaps aimed more at the paid and volunteer professionals rather than those to be helped, Malcolm Macourt's book examines the philosophies and principles underlying procedures and practices of Lesbian and Gay Switchboards. His enterprise rarely ventures significantly beyond the organisational parameters of the helpline nexus of volunteers — callers. Religious and medical models appear briefly and fleetingly but political issues of class, patriarchy and ethnicity have no place in the irritatingly conjured 'mythical regional centres' Macourt insists on inventing instead of describing the reality, and thus the vast geographical and social isolation which is the daily experience for millions of people.

Developed in an era with vastly less media discussion (of any kind) about lesbians and gay men (i.e. before the Gay News trial, gay spy scandals and the Murdoch media missionary zeal) an awkward dilemma faced many volunteers: the opposing needs of publicity for the Switchboard and privacy for themselves and callers. Other tensions at the individual level, included the nature of the volunteer-caller relationship and at the political level, the balance between evangelism and caring. Macourt concludes, the aim of helplines is to facilitate 'empowerment without exploitation'.

Although there is much of interest here, covering all aspects of Switchboard operations, his self-conscious public-relations exercise, illustrates well how the 'professional' is the perfect antidote to the 'political'. More a pedestrian manual than a political manifesto, procedural action rather than political analysis is emphasised. This is starkly revealed in chapter three, What Do Callers Ask? 'Am I gay' is

a common question, Little more than a page fails to offer a sufficient introduction to the relevant political issues. Some people, we are told, believe gayness is about identity, *being gay*; others believe gayness is about doing acts. Noun or verb, the answer appears trapped in the form of language rather than the essence of political relationships.

Macourt eschews explicit reference to the prevalence and power of biological determinist explanations of lesbianism and gayness but implicitly betrays his predilection for them rather than social constructionist perspectives when he declares that '... in the absence of any other test, the masturbation test must suffice' when deciding the answer to Am I Gay? After all, he says, one cannot expect the average volunteer to be up-to-date with the 'complexities of current scientific and theological debates'. Of course, concluding that men fantasising about men while masturbating is *being gay* rather than *doing gay* things side-steps the issue of choice and therefore, blame.

The 'we were born that way' biological determinist perspective paves the way, at best, for pleas for greater understanding, for more social tolerance, for a leasehold space for good (i.e. hidden) behaviour. At worst, of course, it leads to the extermination camp for the incurably deficient, biological determinism is still pervasive; it possesses a powerful apparent plausibility where biologically given sex identity is spuriously equated with politically constructed gender identity.

The power of biological determinism is such that its own foundations in political discourse are obscured. The perspective itself *appears* to be biologically determined! Naturally, (sic!) if biological determinists can convince you that what they are saying is natural, not man(sic)-made, then their essentialist perspective commands a trans-historical, sometimes divine, power. It offers a permanence, a matter of (natural) factness, elevated above the squabbles of human factions and it frees the individual from difficult ideological debate, where thought and discourse are reduced to ritual repetitions.

A second major weakness concerns his briefing on AIDS. Rather than leaving one with the dubious injunction that '... sex, to be fulfilling, need not necessarily be tied closely to orgasm with its attendant notions of dominance and achievement' he would have been better advised to explain and explore key issues covered in some of the very good books he includes in a footnote but ignores in the text.

I cannot help thinking that his decision to use 'the phrase *gay helpline* for ease of expression' has more to do with his political perspective and practical experience rather than the need 'to avoid a more cumbersome phrase' by which I imagine he means *lesbian and gay!* The general content and tone is male orientated, nowhere more accentuated than his reference to the 'masturbatory test' rather than a 'same-sex desire test'. In addition to this third major weakness I am inclined to add a fourth, miscellaneous category.

To state that 'some activities concerning *cotting* are illegal, others are not' is a real cliff-hanger! I for one have been left wondering what they might be. 'Most non-commercial groups seem to consist of only a small core of people, many of whom have difficulties in large groups or pubs or clubs', claims Macourt, who continues: 'the enthusiasm and commitment of the few keep the groups going,

often without considering the value of the exercise'. I can't help feeling that had he been less coy about the target of this criticism it would have been more helpful. But the accolade must be given to this one, in answer to the question why do lesbians and gay men socialise separately from heterosexuals: 'for most the answer is about avoiding hostility in a *natural* environment', (my emphasis!) What happened to heterosexism? That brings us back to Macourt's obsessive avoidance of political analysis.

The form of one's response to questions such as am I lesbian, am I gay, will vary according to circumstances but the essence of the response is always the outcome of a particular political analysis. The failure to expose different political foundations and their relationship to different professional frameworks contrasts sharply with the political pluralism of the bibliographies.

Peter Kent Baguley

BASIC INCOME: FREEDOM FROM POVERTY, FREEDOM TO WORK

**Tony Walter
Marion Boyars 1989
ISBN 0 7145 2882 X
£7.95, pp 175**

Poverty is a fundamental and inescapable feature not only of British capitalism but of the international economic order of which we are all, and increasingly, an integral part. Its dimensions and its consequences in terms of human indignity and suffering have been well enough charted, even if many of us often fail to pay notice. It is an economic, social and political problem of immense magnitude and destructiveness. Against the scale of this, this book doesn't make a dent.

The framework for the various proposals there have been over time for Basic Income is easy enough to understand. In place of all existing state transfers of income — principally social security benefits and tax reliefs — it simply proposes that all individuals should be allocated an unconditional basic income by the state. That is, each person would receive the same regular payment regardless of their other income, age, sex or marital status or employment. Anything that individuals earned (or received as unearned income) beyond this would be taxed in the normal way.

Thus Basic Income would get rid of the complex maze of social security benefits and tax reliefs. It would end the problems of low take-up since everyone would receive the benefit. It would get rid of the poverty trap, as people would not lose benefit as they started paid work. It would be unconditional, and hence would not require the various tests imposed on the unemployed of their availability for work. And it would put an end to the financial dependence of women upon men insofar as it is embodied in the present system.

For that, there is much to be said for it, which is why it will probably never be implemented, even in its mildest and least redistributive forms. There are also problems with it, some of which we shall return to. Put like that, however, Basic Income sounds like a more attractive if unlikely alternative

to the existing social security and tax system. It is when such a scheme is proposed as a way of getting rid of poverty, as this book ambitiously does, that the real problems begin.

We can begin with definitions. Poverty is relative. It is simply wrong to state, as this book does, that 'what matters for the poor is how much they receive, not how much others receive' (p 29). Poverty is relative; of course it always matters to the poor how much they get today; but if in twenty years time the living standards of the poor have fallen from one third of the average to one quarter of the average that others get, they will feel (and will be) poorer. Poverty is relative. A society in which some receive a Basic Income, while others receive the same Basic Income plus what they may earn from paid work or get from private insurance and other sources is not a society that has abolished poverty. Basic Income may make the income of the poor less unpredictable and more secure, but they will still be at the bottom of the heap.

More fundamentally, the claim that Basic Income will 'prevent poverty at source' fundamentally misunderstands the nature and causes of poverty. To give money to the poor — ironically giving the same money to everyone else — is not to prevent poverty or to tackle its causes. The poor and poverty will continue to be created and recreated. Lack of money is a consequence of poverty; its causes lie much deeper in the very structures of societies which deny to the mass of their populations any control over the means of producing income and wealth. It is because of this that the majority of the population has to work for those who do control the world's wealth. Some do very well out of it, bolstered by their privileges of race, gender and class; many do all right; but many more struggle constantly, seemingly condemned to a lifetime of poverty, whether in or out of work.

And there lies the rub for Basic Income. If it is to provide enough to live on for all those who cannot or choose not to work, it must challenge this edifice: the great pyramids of wealth and power built upon a mass of exploited, degraded and dehumanised labour, both in Britain and wider afield. For under the domain of capital, the spur of poverty remains absolute. Remove it — give people the choice not to work, except on terms and conditions of their own choosing — and the whole edifice crumbles.

That is the real challenge. Anything less than that should have no pretence at abolishing poverty and restrict itself to tinkering with the existing system of relief.

There is much else that could be criticised in this book. Politically, it doesn't know where it stands, appealing to both the left and the far right, radicals and traditionalists, and seeing in the diverse support offered to Basic Income (from Milton Friedman through the SDP to a small number of European trades unions and socialist parties) the grounds for optimism rather than, perhaps more realistically, scepticism and the need to hesitate before jumping on such a bandwagon. Economically, its naivety is remarkable if it would have us believe that with Basic Income 'wages can be fixed entirely by supply and demand... unemployment will be abolished'. Its consideration of the position of women, conducted in the guise of equality, fails to take account of the power of patriarchy. Its silences abound. In the end, it's not worth it.

As for Basic Income, I remain to be convinced that, even as a short-term tactical move, it is something that is worth fighting for.

Tony Novak

A nalysis

Boarders and hostel-dwellers: implications for young people of the 1989 benefit changes

This issue Analysis focusses on benefits, issues for boarders and hostel dwellers and has been prepared by Geoff Fimmister.

GEOFF FIMMISTER

personal expenses and meals allowances and, since 1985, the notorious 'moving on' requirement, whereby benefit

was drastically cut to the non-householder rate for most young boarder claimants under 26, if they remained in the same area for more than a few weeks. The Government had, moreover, fallen foul of a number of legal challenges to hastily-concocted regulations, and had become determined that this was one of the 'messy bits' of the benefit system which was best addressed by dumping it onto the local authorities. The proposed income support system (due to replace supplementary benefit in April 1988) would make payments of ordinary income support, while the local authority — administered housing benefit (HB) scheme could worry about housing costs. HB, though, is not a flexible system, being highly constrained by central government regulation. It is especially not suited to situations where substantial non-housing elements are included in the charge. Could the 'messiness' of the B & L sector **really** be accommodated by ordinary income support + HB? Clearly, some 'rough justice' was intended. The proposed change was announced to the Local Authority Associations (LAAs) somewhat hastily in November 1986, a consultative paper following in December⁽¹⁾. My own view is that there is indeed a case for trying to integrate the B & L sector within the mainstream of benefit provision, in the interests of diminishing the marginalisation of this group of claimants. However, such a change should not have taken place until the structural problems entailed had been addressed and solved. No such happy outcome was intended: there would be a pattern of 'gainers and losers', and readers of this journal are offered no prizes for guessing which group was to feature prominently amongst the latter.

Readers of **Youth and Policy** will doubtless not need reminding that Government policy in respect of young people is highly problematic in a number of areas, not least of which are housing and social security, and especially the territory in which these two overlap. Various policy strands become tangled up with each other here: the need to address the effects of a housing policy which does not attach much priority to affordable accommodation for single people; the desire to restrain benefit expenditure; the danger of 'milking' of the benefit system by private sector landlords and board and lodging proprietors; the restructuring of the benefit system in readily 'computerisable' form; training, employment and wages policies in respect of young people; the unloading of supported lodgings and hostels funding onto other agencies. Add to this a few simple prejudices concerning the need for young people to live with their parents; and the need for them not to live by the seaside at taxpayers' expense — and you have a labyrinth of policies which manifest themselves in a bleak scenario for those young people who, defying the official vision of the right and proper way to live, persist in seeking independent accommodation.

In this article I shall concentrate particularly on the current state of play in respect of board and lodging accommodation and hostels. But it should be borne in mind that these represent only one aspect of a wider set of state policies which impinge upon young people. In particular, the roots of the problem lie to a great extent with the aforementioned neglect of affordable housing for single people, creating a vacuum into which have been drawn both the 'caring services' and (often disreputable) areas of the private rented sector, with a consequent knock on effect into the social security system. These are not 'straightforward' tenancies, and the benefit system has responded to them with a blend of muddle, panic and complexity.

Board and Lodging

I shall not seek to trace here the complete history of benefit provision for boarders, but shall pick up the tale towards the end of 1986, when the decision was first taken to shift boarders' benefits over to ordinary income support + housing benefit (a change finally effected in April 1989). We had by this time experienced several years of growing problems with the supplementary benefit board and lodging (B & L) formula, including inadequate 'ceilings', deficient

The switch to ordinary income support would mean a much higher level of personal living expenses, compared to the B & L formula. However, the switch to HB would mean that various elements of the charge not met by HB would have to be paid out of that income support — notably meals, fuel, 20% of general rates, water rates, most care costs and any other ineligible service charges (such as cleaning and laundry). Therefore, the higher the income support entitlement of a particular claimant, the less likely he or she would be to lose — and vice versa. Two groups in particular were identified as likely to lose: substantially disabled people, because of the likelihood of high non-rebateable elements, notably care costs, within B & L charges; and young people, because of their lower rates of income support. It is to the key issue of the 'under-25' income

support rate that we now turn.

Lower Scale Rate

One of the main objectives of the April 1988 changes to the main means-tested benefits was to render them more suitable for computerised administration. This meant getting rid of those aspects which required very individualised assessment — such as whether a person was a 'house-holder' or not. The abolition of the old 'non-householder' status would cost money, though, unless all householders were paid less, or some way could be found of continuing to pay non-householders a lower rate. It was decided that, as non-householders were concentrated amongst the under-25s, a lower scale rate for that group could act as a rough proxy for the old distinction. This would be a bit of a windfall for non-householders aged 25+ and rather tough luck on householders aged less than 25. Such is the nature of 'rough justice'.

A lower rate for the under-25 age group also accorded well with training and employment policies, where an emphasis on training allowances at around benefit level and the desirability of lower wages for young people were both being promoted. The ill-effects on householders aged under 25 required some sort of ideological rationalisation, so homilies followed on the virtues of living with Mum and Dad, ignoring the importance of housing in the transition to adulthood, and skating over the fact that many young people in independent accommodation have fled home for very good reasons, including overcrowding and various forms of abuse.

The problem was of course exacerbated by the abolition of income support, in September 1988, for most 16-17 year olds. This was very much part of training and employment policies aimed at forcing young people onto the Youth Training Scheme. There were various exempt categories in respect of this change, mostly based around notions of vulnerability; but incredibly (until you identify the hidden agenda) most exemptions are temporary (normally 12-16 weeks). The hidden agenda could be perceived as the Children Bill wended its way through Parliament in 1989. Local authorities' duties and powers to provide accommodation for this age group are to be considerably strengthened, paving the way for further 'dumping' of 'problem' areas from within the benefit system.

Those 16-17 year olds in independent accommodation who have been able to gain temporary access to income support are now able to obtain the 18-24 benefit rate, following some modest concessions secured from July 1989. This is of only limited help, however, as — quite apart from the temporary nature of the benefit award — this rate is itself very low (£27.40 1989/90), having indeed been determined with **non-householders** in mind.

The effects of low scale rates on the ability to meet accommodation charges are twofold. Firstly, as HB needs allowances are now aligned with IS scales, HB starts to be withdrawn at a lower level for single childless under-25s. It is **not** true, as is sometimes suggested, that under-25s on income support will get less HB: as long as they get **any** IS, they will get the maximum HB allowable. But those who are on very low incomes, but above IS level, will find that HB is

sharply eroded, at a rate of 65% of the difference (rent) and 20% (rates), at a lower level of income than would be the case if they were aged 25+.

Secondly, non-rebateable elements such as meals, fuel and the other items listed above, have to be paid out of income support. So a lower IS scale rate means that these costs will be that much harder to meet. This especially hits boarders. The transfer of boarders to ordinary income support + HB marked the end of the 'moving on' rules: but given the financial obstacles to young people's ability to afford B & L accommodation under the new system, this is a limited gain indeed.

Hostels

The 1986 proposals for B & L did not include hostels, but notice was given that they were under consideration. The transfer of hostels to ordinary income support + HB would present similar problems to the B & L proposals, exacerbated by the fact that virtually all hostels incorporate a care element, which is rebateable only in certain limited circumstances.

Research was commissioned from the Policy Studies Institute (PSI), and a useful report resulted which shed much light on the hostels sector, and which put forward proposals to tackle the 'care costs' problem (by making some of them rebateable)⁽²⁾. The Government responded in a curious fashion: hostel dwellers would be switched to ordinary IS plus HB, the care they received being 'little more than the kind of estate management and advice any concerned owner of multiply occupied property might well operate'⁽³⁾. This latter claim was in flat contradiction to the PSI findings, which put average care costs at about £60 per resident per week.

Not only did these proposals threaten hardship and homelessness to many individual claimants, but they also threatened to destabilise the finances of those hostels which relied heavily on charges for their income. The resultant outcry caused Ministers to 'think again', but they came back in March 1989 with a very similar package, the main difference relating to **transitional protection (TP) for hostels**. TP was to be provided to existing **claimants**, freezing their incomes until ordinary benefit rates eventually caught up, as long as they stayed put in the same hostel. (NB that young people under 26 subject to the 'moving on' rules were excluded from TP in the April 1989 B & L changes). Moreover, TP was to be paid in respect of **hostels** themselves: compensation would be provided by the Dept. of Social Security until April 1991, when '... the money involved will be transferred to other Departments for redistribution to hostels via traditional funding sources including local authority social services departments'⁽⁴⁾. These 'traditional funding sources' would thus be left to sort out which hostels survived and which did not. With this promise of tenuous and temporary protection for hostels and claimants, the Government has bulldozed ahead with the changes scheduled for October 1989⁽⁵⁾.

The Future

This article has examined Government policy towards board and lodging accommodation and hostels as an

example of the problems caused by the interaction, lack of co-ordination and, indeed, conflict between housing and social security policies. It is clear that many of the problems highlighted stem from the lack of a comprehensive set of policies for young people. Such policies are needed if issues such as housing, care costs and the rates of benefit payable to people under 25 are to be tackled properly. In particular, pressure needs to be kept on the Government to abolish the lower rates of benefit payable to this group and Opposition parties should be pressed to commit themselves unequivocally to this objective⁽⁶⁾.

References

1. *Help with Board and Lodgings Charges for People on Low Incomes: Proposals For Change*, DSS, London, 1986.
2. Berthoud, R. and Casey, B. *The Cost of Care in Hostels*, PSI, London, 1988.
3. *Help with Hostel Charges: Proposals For Change*, DSS, London, 1988.
4. Letter from Dept. of Social Security to LAA's 16.3.1989.
5. These changes will also affect a substantial number of hostels provided by local authorities under the 1987 National Health Service Act. Many of the hostels will be reclassified, from October, as 'residential accommodation' and as a result residents will receive lower rates of benefit.
6. Encouragingly, with regard to Income Support, Robin Cook has said that: 'the priority for action plainly has to be under-25's, and scrapping this idiotic new junior rate of benefit'. (Interview in 'Poverty', No. 70, Summer 1988).

YOUTH & POLICY

The Journal of Critical Analysis

Following the continuing development and expansion of the Journal, the editorial group feel that it is important to increase the number of people involved in the Journal's production. The collectives are voluntary and its responsibilities are varied and include such areas as: Finance, Membership, Marketing, Articles, Reviews, and Advertising. Apart from the carrying out of specific responsibilities, members of the group are also involved in attending monthly business meetings and the 4/5 day meetings organised through the year, all of which are held in the North East. It is envisaged that new members would not only share the collective's commitment to a critical analysis of issues in Youth Affairs and the related policy response, but also possess the enthusiasm needed to take on some of the tasks mentioned above.

Anyone interested in becoming involved in YOUTH AND POLICY should write to the editorial group at the following address:

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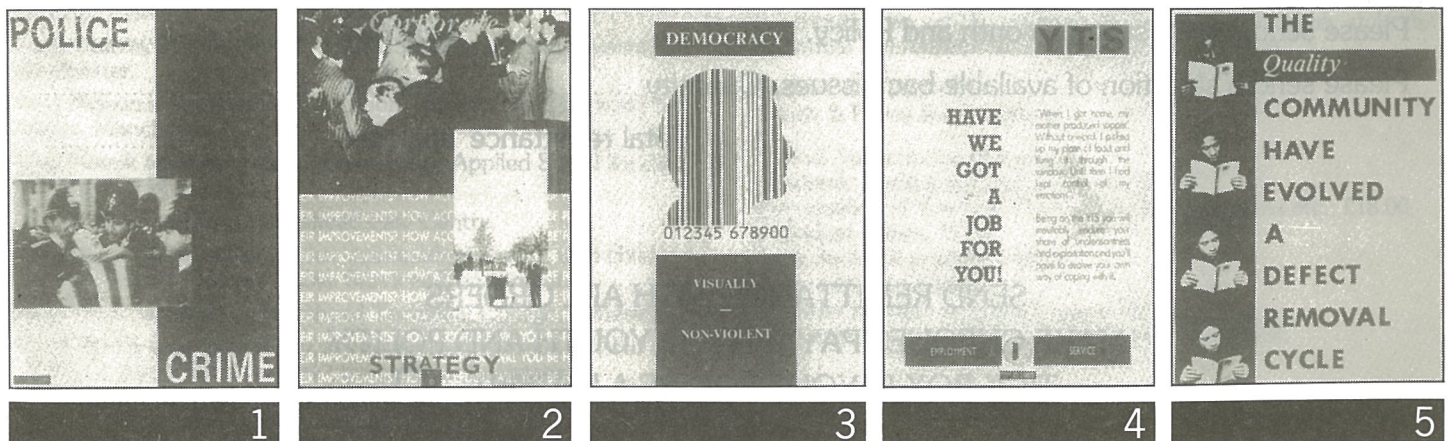
Growing Concerns is a posterwork project produced through collaboration with groups of 16-19 year olds and 33 ARTS CENTRE. The project consists of five, A1 posterworks each having been printed to an edition of 400.

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The posters were born out of group discussion and collaboration over a four month period. The range of opinion and concerns expressed have been diverse and yet similar, with a common strand of thought emerging concerning the erosion of civil liberties. To this end, the posters are provocative and contentious, but above all pertinent.

Each of the posters has been constructed using image and text, the images and texts used either having been constructed by the groups or appropriated from various sources. It has been an approach which has enabled participants to interrogate and question the very real problems that their generation face in a lively contemporary and critical manner. Seen within the context of a contemporary UK society, the posterworks provide a worrying, articulate and engaging vision of the country's future, as seen through the eyes of its future.

33 ARTS CENTRE would like to thank all those who participated in Growing Concerns 89 and hope that the 'follow on' project will attract even more 16-19 year olds as clearly the concerns of this age group will continue to grow as we enter into the 90's.



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