POWER: PARTICIPATION OR CONTROL IN YOUTH WORK PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Power: participation or control in youth work practice.

The research presents the tension between participation and control in the youth work setting. The ethnographic studies, conducted with two contrasting groups of young people, were used to look at

- the centrality of power in the values of the youth worker, the youth work agency and the young people;
- the way power was used in different cultural settings;
- how the conflict between control and participation could be resolved when working with young people within the brief of the funding agency.

The contrasting groups, formal and informal, of young people were from the North and South West of England. The studies were carried out consecutively over a period of three years. The first was a broad sweep and the findings provided a theory which formed the basis of the second study. Power emerged as the key concept and was seen to be operating in three distinct ways through control, self determination and changing attitudes.

The findings show that in most situations control is dominant and self determination can be negotiated. The youth worker in the role of informal educator may introduce the third and be seeking to change attitudes. Intervention strategy, when informed by this theory, could go some way to resolving the tension between participation and control.

To place the study in context the policy, theory and practice of youth work are reviewed together with an overview of the areas of youth studies which informed the work and includes a critical discussion of research on deviance. Different understandings of power and how these affect relationships within the group and in the local community viz. gender, territory and aggression are also examined.
CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ......................................................................................................................... 1

CONTENTS .......................................................................................................................... iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..................................................................................................... vii

CHAPTER 1 ......................................................................................................................... 1

A CONFLICT OF VALUES BETWEEN YOUTH WORK AGENCIES, YOUTH WORKERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE .......................................................... 1

   Who sets the questions.................................................................................................. 1
   Experience ....................................................................................................................... 3
   Participation .................................................................................................................... 5
   My own values in question .......................................................................................... 6
   Identifying the questions ............................................................................................. 7
   Change or control? ........................................................................................................... 8
   Normal or Deviant? ......................................................................................................... 9
   Outline of the study ....................................................................................................... 10

CHAPTER 2 ......................................................................................................................... 12

AN EXAMINATION OF THE JOURNEY OF ENQUIRY AND THE METHODS USED ........................................................................................................ 12

   Where do I begin........................................................................................................... 12
   A holistic approach ....................................................................................................... 13
   The Method ..................................................................................................................... 14
   Methods and Techniques ............................................................................................. 15
   Action Research ............................................................................................................. 16
   Dangers in the Chosen Method .................................................................................... 17
   Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 20
CHAPTER 3

WHO WRITES ABOUT YOUTH WORK? WHO'S INTERESTED IN US?.. 22

Introduction ..................................................................................................................22
Policy documents/policy debates .............................................................................23
The birth of the present Youth Service ......................................................................23
Historical context, pre Albemarle ...............................................................................24
Post Albemarle ...........................................................................................................26
Thompson review group ............................................................................................27
The Youth Service .......................................................................................................29
Volunteers and voluntary provision ...........................................................................30
Distinctiveness of the Youth Service ..........................................................................32
Social Education .........................................................................................................34
Post Thompson ............................................................................................................37
The Curriculum Debate ..............................................................................................38
Youth Work Theory, Practice And Philosophy.........................................................40
Youth work theory post Albemarle ............................................................................40
Youth Studies ..............................................................................................................44
Conclusion ..................................................................................................................54

CHAPTER 4

POWER: WHO IS IN CONTROL?.............................................................................. 57

Introduction ..................................................................................................................57
Power............................................................................................................................57
Gender issues and power ..........................................................................................63
Aggression, violence and power ................................................................................64
Territory and power .....................................................................................................65
Class and power .........................................................................................................66
Power: control ..........................................................................................................68
Power: taking control/self determination ..................................................................71
Power: changing beliefs and values .........................................................................73
Conclusion ..................................................................................................................73
CHAPTER 5 ......................................................................................................................... 76

FIELDWORK: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TWO SITES.............................................. 76

Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 76
Background to field work: Willow Dene .............................................................................. 78
Meeting the Group ............................................................................................................. 79
Beeches ................................................................................................................................ 81
Tensing ................................................................................................................................. 82
Role of Researcher/Youth Worker ..................................................................................... 83
Introducing the Characters - Willow Dene ........................................................................ 84
Young People's Group ........................................................................................................ 84
Residents of Estate ............................................................................................................ 85
Local Authority ................................................................................................................ 86
Beeches - Tensing Group .................................................................................................. 86
Youth Workers and Volunteers ......................................................................................... 87

CHAPTER 6 ............................................................................................................................ 89

A CASE STUDY OF EMERGING ISSUES: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ................. 89

Introduction to the Issues................................................................................................... 89
The Problem ....................................................................................................................... 90
The Meeting ...................................................................................................................... 90
General observations and comments ............................................................................ 94
Emerging theoretical issues ............................................................................................. 95
Control: confrontation ..................................................................................................... 96
Control: territory ............................................................................................................... 98
Resolving power issues through discussion and negotiation ........................................... 99
Taking control through use of personal power ............................................................... 100
Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 101
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would not have been possible to complete this piece of work without the cooperation and encouragement of many people. Everyone involved in the process always appeared to share my enthusiasm for the topic and were willing to talk about their own experiences openly. The realisation that the problem I was exploring was not only mine but shared by many other youth workers convinced me that I had to complete my work.

I am indebted to the young people with whom I worked for more than two years during the field work. Without them the study would not have been possible. They gave me insights which helped me understand the differences in our cultures and be less afraid of aggression and violence. Prior to this study there were many other normal young people with whom I worked. If it had not been for the challenges they made to my own values and beliefs there would have been no initial questions.

My association with the Educational Studies Department of Surrey University provided me with the research skills and academic structure to carry out the study. The rigour which had to be applied to my often vague thoughts was gently encouraged by Dr Karen Evans and Dr Shane Blackman who helped me to see things clearly. They were patient as I journeyed through each stage and were supportive when I was discouraged and wanted to give up.

There are many colleagues in the YMCA who have listened with interest when I shared my embryonic ideas, typed parts of the manuscript, read some of the drafts and offered constructive criticism and always been around to encourage me to complete the study.

Finally I have to thank my sons and close friends who have lived with the research and the researcher for the four years. Without their support and conviction the task would have been impossible.
Who sets the questions

In this study I will be exploring some of the conflicts which have arisen during my work as a youth worker in voluntary organisations. These conflicts centred on the discrepancy between my own attitudes and values and those of the young people with whom I was working. There was a clear clash of cultures. Participation by young members in the management and club programmes was advocated in the most recent Ministerial Report, Experience and Participation (HMSO, 1982). However this could lead to situations in the club which might be untenable for the youth worker. When I shared my concerns with colleagues I discovered that others had the same kind of doubts and questions about the work they were engaged in. But no one had any answers to the questions. At this stage even the actual questions were not clear.

So began this piece of work. First I had to try to discover the central question which needed to be addressed. I wanted to understand on what terms young people are able to participate in the youth work process. Do I, as the youth worker, expect them to conform to my own values of right and wrong thus ensuring that when they do make decisions those decisions will be acceptable to me. Having been trained post Experience and Participation (HMSO, 1982) there was an emphasis on greater participation by young people in the youth work setting.

Young people themselves will participate in and exercise responsibility for the planning and management of their own activities and the facilities available to them. On this basis the service will create a forum in which young people can develop and express their views of society.

\[(Smith\ 1987,\ p.21)\]

However, as well as young people and youth workers there are the Youth Service providers. When the Local Authorities decide which projects to fund they set their own criteria. In general the Youth Service is part of the education committee or the
leisure services. Annual budgets are often set by councillors and officers who have little understanding of either young people or youth work. Circular 1/85 was issued by the Department of Education and Science in January 1985 it sought to collect information from Local Authorities on how they were intending to respond to the main recommendations of the Thompson Report. The reviews carried out largely focused at the level of policy, structure and provision and spoke little of the content of the youth work curriculum and of practice.

The effect of this is to leave a gap in our understanding. For example, work with girls and young women emerged as one of the developing areas but what, in youth work terms, will be done and to what extent remained largely understated and possibly even unknown.

(Smith 1987, p.5)

In the current financial climate there is less money available while there is the move towards greater accountability. Projects now have to show that they have targets, measurable outcomes and can be evaluated. If the young people say that they only want somewhere to meet and 'hang out' then a project will not attract funding. The youth worker becomes 'piggy in the middle' between the young people and the local authority.

There was a significant change in funding during the three years I worked in the North of England. The voluntary organisation which employed me received a large grant from the local authority to provide the only youth centre on a council housing estate. When I first started this was a 'blanket' grant subject only to annual application. By the time I left I had to apply for funding for the 'projects' I was planning to run. This meant that the staff team had to plan the next year's work, how each club night would operate, which groups we would target, the programme, and the expected outcomes. We also had to show how we would evaluate each piece of work.

The organisation received the same amount of grant as before but now we had to show how the youth centre would target the work. The young people who only wanted to meet at the 'Youthie' every night and 'mess about' did not understand this change in policy. Nor did many of the local people and the Centre management committee whose understanding of youth work was 'to keep the kids off the streets'.
In another town in the North of England I was able to carry out my first piece of field work on a council housing estate where there was no Youth Service provision. The group of young people I worked with just wanted somewhere to meet and the older residents wanted them off the streets. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. Only to say at this point that although the local authority officers supported the work I did, and gave me six youth work sessions to help set up the work, there was no money in the education committee's budget to respond to a community's initiative to work with a difficult group of young people who were causing problems in a local community.

These are only two examples from my own experience of this tension between the needs of young people and those of youth service providers. Not only is there conflict between the young people and the project funders but also between the youth worker and project funders.

The dilemma was expressed that the value base and principles of the individuals and small groups of workers are frequently found to be in conflict with the agency and power structures in which the workers operate.

(NYB, 1990, p.57)

I wanted to try to identify from this confusion what exactly were the central issues which caused the confusion and whether these could be resolved. I began to suspect that the confusion arose from my interpretation of the term participation in the Thompson Report, Experience and Participation.

Experience

Experience was easier to understand than participation. When considering how a young person develops it is defined in terms of progress in relationships with one's self, other people, wider society and an ultimate being. Personal development from the dependency of childhood to a state of independence or interdependence comes through changes in these relationships. The change comes through experience.

- it is experience which fashion men and women, not teaching and not native wit.

(HMSO, 1982, p.13)
The Youth Service was recognised as one of the agencies which can offer a wide variety of different experiences to young people throughout their adolescent years. These experiences will contribute something to the social and personal development of the individual.

The following diagram was used in 1980 (pre-Thompson) to show the 'traditional' relationships between education and training services and the approaches to social education. It illustrates the place given to youth work - between school and training where activity based learning and group work are the key areas of work.

Approaches to Social Education and where they can be found

(F.E.U. 1980, p.61)

In the Thompson Report Experience and Participation it is pointed out that there is no hidden agenda in this experiential approach to education. Part of the experience for the young person is the experience of reflection (HMSO 1982, p.15) and this is non directive giving the young participants opportunity to discover what they have learned for themselves. The report points out that the experiential approach should not be seen as a one-way form of social control.
Participation

During my career with the YMCA I have worked with many different groups of young people. With some it was easy to encourage them to take responsibility for the programme but others raised difficult questions for my practice. This was true particularly in one of the working class areas which I found it most difficult to work in. I had my own set of values and beliefs to which I worked. When these were challenged by the people I worked with who was to say which were the right ones. My values came from the lifestyle I had developed and included honesty, non violence, negotiation and talking about current affairs. The dishonesty, aggressive attitudes and occasional violent behaviour towards me, the staff of the youth centre and each other were contradictory to my own. Which were the ones we worked to in this situation? I was the outsider.

In the Thompson Report it was acknowledged that:

It is an essential principle of the Youth Service that young people should be accepted for what they are, without any labels such as "delinquent" or "at risk".

(HMSO, 1982, p. 50)

If this were the case then these young people with whom I was working at that time were accepted for what they were and that they participated in the planning and management of their own activities and the facilities available to them.

In reports and training this has always seemed good practice and what youth workers would want to achieve. The reality is that in some situations the implications are quite daunting. It was encouraging to read towards the end of my study that at least one other worker had the same fears as me:

Other sources of tensions were identified as:

- tension between what young people say they want and what they have perceived to need . .
- tensions between defining what young people want and assisting in defining what they need . .
- tension between supporting young people to take control and needing to protect the interests of others by maintaining a semblance of order.

(NYB, 1990, p.57)
My own values in question

As a middle class graduate with a well thought out system of beliefs and values which was supported by a three year Youth and Community Work Training I found my own values and attitudes being questioned by the young people I was working with. There were not only conflicts of role and expectations there were also conflicts between different cultures. As an adult in their world I was someone like teachers, the police, parents and social workers who had to be at best ignored or at worst baited, wound up, tested and tried. I was committed to starting from where the young people were and as close as possible to their own social networks.

But as I worked with these different groups there was a gulf between how I expected them to behave, based on my own experience, and their actual behaviour which was often violent and aggressive. There was a lot of petty vandalism within the club, graffiti on the walls, broken equipment and defacing posters put up by other groups which used the centre. They were aggressive with each other as well as with the rest of the community. It was alien to my own experience of and commitment to non violence. The aggression and violence within the group were destructive not only to physical things but also in personal relationships. The aggressive attitudes were to be found in the wider community, the young people were simply replicating the attitudes shown towards them by family, neighbours, the police, teachers and other professional workers. The residents meeting in the first field study illustrates this and will be examined more closely later.

I also found it difficult to come to terms with the lack of trust, deception and dishonesty. I felt that honesty and truth were basic to all human relationships and I assumed they would be there. I also believed that it was possible to resolve any conflict by talk and discussion when in fact for most of the people I worked with it was only through physical contact that problems could be resolved. There was consequently a lot of fighting and the strongest had the most power in any situation. It was generally accepted that one particular person or small group had control. Their word was law within their territory. This was rarely challenged. The fighting tended to occur lower down the pecking order when the most powerful were not present.

To work as close as possible to these social networks would be working not only with a value base in contradiction to my own, but sometimes outside the law. It might
also mean that as the 'youth worker/leader' I would have to become more aggressive to gain respect. This is sometimes seen as a gender question, the male youth worker having more authority with the young men in the club if he is tougher and stronger thus able to maintain control. I could never adopt this role and have always had the reputation of being 'too soft', believing that my strength was not in physical aggression but in being firm but fair through negotiation.

**Identifying the questions**

These experiences raised a number of fundamental questions about youth work. On the one hand the philosophy is for young people to take responsibility for themselves and their development into adulthood while on the other youth work provision seems to be about providing places for young people to meet on youth workers terms. Then in addition there is the introduction of a national core curriculum for youth work which will also have some control over the kind of work offered by the youth service and have some implications for styles of working.

The problem was to find out how other youth workers had explored these kinds of issues. In the literature available there are the Ministerial Reports, Conferences and papers relating to these official statements, a limited amount of articles in current journals which often focus on policy issues in the youth service and a few books by practitioners. More general studies of young people are to be found in many of the related Social Sciences. Ethnographic Studies I found particularly useful (Whyte, 1943, Polsky, 1967, Coffield, 1986) in understanding the young person - but they were not from the perspective of the practitioner youth worker. Most of the teaching during my training course had been in the form of study notes which related directly to practice. The importance of our own values, attitudes and beliefs was explored and how these affected our practice. But the discrepancies or huge gaps between the values of the worker and the young person were never addressed. This is one of the contributions that I shall attempt in undertaking the research for this study.

In the part of the training course about culture the youth workers role in relation to it was described in the following way:

> This makes culture fundamental to the progress towards adulthood. It suggests that one of the important functions that youth workers can perform is the provision of an environment in which young people can name and recognise their culture, explore how that culture has shaped
them, and make decisions about that which they wish to change. That is to say, youth workers can help young people develop a more reflective and conscious understanding of their selves and culture.

(YMCA College, 1988)

Change or control?

The critical element of youth work is that the choice to change or not is the young person's. The youth worker's role is to help them develop a greater understanding, but with the understanding that they can continue to live with their original values and beliefs. Problems can then arise in the youth centre when there is a conflict between the values of the youth worker and the young people. For example when a member of staff is given verbal abuse and after discussion with the young people concerned it continues. In the context of the dominant culture, which is both racist and sexist, the behaviour is normal and quite acceptable. However I find it offensive and unacceptable. My opinion is supported by the equal opportunities policy of the Local Authority, who employ the worker. Their code of practice forbids racist or sexist abuse of both staff and clients. How is the situation to be resolved?

Rose Saunders, a youth worker writes about her own experiences in Youth Clubs (March 93). She describes the first year in a new post where every night was a 'bad' night and she was sure changes had to take place. She felt the staff had to establish some social control before any kind of social change could take place. They agreed standards of behaviour which would be maintained in the club.

Unacceptable behaviour included swearing, spitting, verbal abuse, sexist and racist remarks, breaking equipment, defacing the walls and posters.

(Saunders, 1993, p.29)

On occasions she closed the building down and peer pressure from the majority meant that the few offenders left the club.

Having established the ground rules the staff were then able to work with the young people in a much more positive way, the building was redecorated and the atmosphere has changed. In her conclusion Saunders is reluctant to say how the change came about. It was either through changes in relationships or changes in behaviour she says and asks the readers to draw their own conclusions. From her description of the year's work there can be no doubt that before the shift could be
made from policing the building every night to doing positive youth work the
standards of behaviour in the centre had to be changed. This meant a change in
values for the young people and this was imposed by the staff. It was social control
of both the staff and the members. It was confrontational, territorial and hierarchical.

Perhaps Saunders' hesitation to say how the transformation happened is because
according to the theory of participative youth work it should not happen like that.
Workers should accept young people for what they are and build up relationships
from where they are. However her experiences - along with my own, are common to
a lot of youth workers. What is perhaps uncommon is the confidence to share our
practice, questions and doubts with colleagues.

Normal or Deviant?

In this study the everyday youth work practice in the local youth club is the starting
point. It is an attempt to understand some of the tensions the youth worker
experiences so that practice may be improved. The next chapter will set out in
greater detail the way I went about this study and where it fits into the broad scope of
youth research in Britain. However in this general introduction there are some key
points to be made.

The central character in the study is the practitioner. Any theory which is developed
will relate specifically to the day to day work experiences of the youth worker. The
focus of the field work is the youth club where ordinary young people meet in their
leisure time voluntarily.

In order to carry out the research I have used other people's research, some of which
focuses on either the deviant behaviour or marginalisation of young people. (Marsh
1978, Willmott 1975, Hall 1975). There are also extensive reports on the physical,
emotional and psychological development of the adolescent in the family or school
environment (Siann 1985, Hurrelmann 1989) as well as the transition to the labour
market. This work has informed my own understanding of social and personal
development of the young person. However I have tried to keep in view the basic
premise that young people's lives are normal and that during their leisure time they
have the opportunity to explore, experiment, question and sometimes reject the
status quo as they negotiate the pathway to adulthood.
The other part of the study is concerned with the relationship between the youth worker and the policy makers. Experience and Participation, the report of the review group on the Youth Service in England presented to Parliament in 1982 not only influenced the training of youth workers in the last decade but also the response to the proposals to introduce a Core Curriculum into the Youth Service in 1988 (NYB, 1990, NYB, 1991). The Education Reform Act 1988 changed the face of the formal education sector but it also restated in Section 120 the basis for youth provision which first appeared in the 1944 Education Act. Youth workers and their managers were able to resist suggestions that it was possible to have a core curriculum in a non-compulsory service where each unit took its strength from the fact that they worked with the local young people who have the right to:

choose who they are - to become autonomous individuals with their own identity, their own sets of ideologies and an understanding of self that acknowledges their own history.

(NYB, 1990, p.56)

However in some situations this may turn out to be 'a double edged sword' for the youth worker when there is a huge chasm between the values and beliefs of the young people and those of the policy makers. The local authorities are the primary funders for youth services and since the Ministerial Conferences '89 - '92 there has been a demand for greater accountability for the delivery of a curriculum based service.

Young people are part of a community. It is with this social grouping they learn how to live in an adult world. Models of behaviour have already been adopted and these are reflected in the young people's attitudes and own sets of values. However social change is possible and as was said earlier one of the roles of the youth worker is to enable the young person to recognise their own values and decide for themselves how they want to change their lives.

Outline of the study

Chapter 2 gives an overview of the process undertaken as the questions are identified and a way of exploring them is mapped out choosing a qualitative approach to the data collection. The next two chapters review the literature. These are the theoretical basis of the study, chapter 3 contextualises the youth work approach in
official ministerial documents as well as the limited writing on youth work theory and practice. To conclude there is a critical look at deviancy in youth studies. Chapter 4 introduces literature on the theme of power and is used to develop a theoretical understanding of this key concept.

Chapters 5 to 7 present the field work and include a description of the two sites and the main characters. The selection of incidents from the field diary illustrate aspects of the theory and includes in chapter 6 the residents meeting on the housing estate where the field work was carried out. The meeting is attended by the representatives from youth work agencies, the local community, young people as well as the youth worker and raises many of the questions set out in this first chapter. Following this there are a number of moments taken from the two sites which illustrate the key categories used in the theory.

The theory is developed and presented in chapter 8 with the implications for youth work practice presented in the conclusion.

In the next chapter I shall explore the methods I used to carry out the study.
CHAPTER 2

AN EXAMINATION OF THE JOURNEY OF ENQUIRY AND THE METHODS USED

Where do I begin

I did not know where to begin. I felt a lot of tensions, knew there was conflict in my work but it was difficult to formulate any kind of thesis about the issues because as I described in the previous chapter I was not clear what was the root of the problem. I knew there were three different groups of people involved, the young people, the youth workers and the policy makers, but the reasons for the tensions were more difficult to identify. The questions about the purpose and nature of youth work were pertinent to me as a worker because they influenced the kind of work I did, the situations I worked in and how I carried out the task. It was only when I was offered the opportunity to do research at Surrey University whilst doing a piece of research for the YMCA that I began to make sense of the conflicts and tensions in my work.

I began by trying to express the conflict I had in question form. These questions were about the nature of Youth Work, the role of the Youth Worker and formal structures. I did not know where to begin. Then, by chance, I found a group of young people who were meeting regularly outside the church on a housing estate in a Northern town. The group was not attached to any agency, did not have an adult working with it and seemed to provide an opportunity for me to observe an informal friendship group. I thought this might provide an interesting insight into the behaviour of young people who were outside the usual restrictions found in the youth centre environment.

What began as a pilot study developed into a major piece of field work. When I began to analyse some of my data an interesting theory began to develop. I was then able to work with another group and test our some of the developing theory. This field work was much more focused because I was using a different group of
young people in a more formal youth environment to see whether the emerging theory was transferable.

The method I used was ethnographic. Why did I chose this way of working? Really I think the method chose me. Not only did it seem most appropriate to the study I wanted to do of young people in a social environment, but also because at the outset I was not at all sure about the specific questions I needed to address. I recognised the symptoms - but had not diagnosed the problem. At this stage I did not have a theory which could be tested. The holistic, descriptive, qualitative approach of the ethnographer, despite the limitations which I will discuss later, gave me a way into the maze I wanted to explore. The theory eventually emerged from my work.

A holistic approach

A qualitative method has many advantages for this study especially since one of the underlying questions relates to the differences in culture and how different people understand their world. This strategy for research has been used to observe individuals in their own settings. This method was developed by sociologists working at the University of Chicago in USA during the 1920's and 30's (Anderson, 1923, Thrasher, 1927, Shaw, 1930). Street Corner Society (Whyte, 1943) has become one of the classic texts which uses participative observation as the main method of research. Fifty years later many of the characters remain 'heroes'. This kind of research if well written is almost like reading a novel with real life encounters with people who become larger than life. It fits theoretically into my approach of wanting to deal with the cultural values of the young person from a different social class. This emphasis within ethnographies to present the cultural meanings of the researched was the field work strategy that I used and significantly employed at the theoretical level through Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) to develop a more analytical understanding of young people.

Hammersley comments about the style of this kind of research:
and it is true that a strong theme in much ethnographic research is what we might call an urbane romanticism that celebrates the diverse forms of rationality, skill and morality to be found among ordinary people, including (indeed especially) those who are conventionally regarded as irrational and/or immoral.

(Hammersley, 1990 p. 600)

This suggests that the sections of society studied by the ethnographer are deviant thus implying there is normality. One of my fears about using this method was that although not exclusively, it was considered to be a way of exploring deviancy. As I explained in the introduction, I did not want to study deviant behaviour, but considered that the young people I worked with were normal. I wanted to understand what the normal codes of behaviour were in one particular social setting. However, ethnography is a method widely used by anthropologist in the study of cultures and societies. (Erikson, 1977 p.150-169). Aware of these drawbacks the ethnographic approach did fit theoretically into the study. The starting point became the exploration of the cultural values and identity of a group of young people from a different social class, and not the professional worker nor policy makers. The field work with the group produced data which not only presented the cultural behaviour of the researched but because of my own role of participant observer it introduced an additional theoretical level through Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The Method

The researcher has to spend a lot of time in the field, working closely with the researched. David Hargraves (1967) describes his method:

The writer spent a complete year at the school. For the first two terms he was present for the whole day. He taught all fourth year boys at some stage, as well as other year groups; he administered questionnaires and conducted interviews; he used every available opportunity for informal discussion with the boys; he accompanied them on some official school visits and holidays; he joined some of their out-of-school activities. In a word, the researcher entered the school as a participant observer, armed with the intention of examining the behaviour and attitudes of the boys in school and their relationships with the teachers and with one another.

(Hargraves, 1967 p. ix)
At the first field work site I met with the group twice a week for fifteen months. During that time the members of the group changed but the location - a council housing estate in a Northern town remained constant. As well as meeting with the young people I also attended residents meetings, community centre committee meetings and informal meetings with local residents, church members and council officers who had responsibility for the estate. In addition to the field diary where I recorded the sessions with the young people I also collected data from the most recent census records kept by the planning, social services and the housing department.

Methods and Techniques

The method of inquiry used in ethnographic research employs a number of different techniques which can then be used to validate the findings in the particular piece of research.

a number of techniques - direct observation informant interviewing, document analysis, respondent interviewing and direct participation - are typically and to some degree necessarily involved in field study of any complex social organisations. We have also seen that each of these techniques is especially important for obtaining a particular type of information.

(McCall & Simmons, 1969 p.5)

I wanted to keep my research approach flexible and be open to influence, therefore the most appropriate method was to keep a field work diary. The first meeting I attended was the residents meeting. This will be the subject of chapter 6 so I will not discuss it in great detail here. It was only after leaving the meeting that I realised that there might be an opportunity to do some field work in this community. The meeting seemed to be presenting all the issues which I was concerned about in my work. There was a clearly defined community with an identifiable culture. It was similar to the community I had been working in another Northern city. There was a group of young people with specific needs and the involvement of the local council officers and councillors - the policy makers. I could be involved as the professional youth worker.
I decided to keep a record of the field work events - so initially I just wrote my own account of the meetings with the young people. At that stage I was able to observe, record and after analysis was able to identify areas which could be explored further.

The analysis came months later when I felt that I had gathered a substantial amount of data. Although during the field work fragmented insights and ideas began to emerge through regularly re-reading the field work diary and the on-going face-to-face work with the group. I had a lot of data, accounts of meetings with the group, meetings with other committees as well as the experience of working in the community and impressions, not written down but feelings, which needed to be examined.

The first reading threw up some general categories into which the data fell. These were about relationships within the group, between the older and the younger, between boys and girls. Also they were about relationships between the young people and significant adults. From this first analysis there seemed to be a recurrence of notions of power. This concept needed to be explored.

The next step was then to understand what other people had seen power to be and begin to examine whether these developing categories gave meaning to the observations I had made during my field work. As it was on-going I could also begin to be more focused in my field work recordings. This interaction between the development of the analytical categories and the work within the group was significant part of the method I was developing.

I was aware that there were some problems associated with this method and I had to explore these while I was involved in the process. They were related to my own involvement in the research and the role I was playing and my own value base or culture which needed to be explicit rather than implicit in the work. I will consider first my own role.

**Action Research**

There are significant problems related to this method of data collection. I was not a detached observer watching interactions between a group, the youth worker and the community. I was not a fly on the wall. I was actually involved as a participant observer with a vested interest in what was happening in the project. As the
research progressed I was affected by the process and my own role of youth worker within the group meant that there was a constant appraisal of practice. I was changing as I worked with the group, because of my own recordings of my work I was able to plan interventions.

To take this into account I decided to use a model based on Action Research. This method is used in educational research as a way of investigating professional experience which links practice and the analysis of practice into a single productive and continuously developing sequence (Winter, 1989 preface). To adopt this method would mean that as the research progressed I would be involved in the process as a practitioner and part of the outcomes would be influenced by my own involvement as a worker.

The model offered by Action Research is summed up:

Action Research might be defined as: the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it.... (The) total process - review, diagnosis, planning, implementation, monitoring effects - provides the necessary link between self-evaluation and professional development.

(Winter, 1989 p.3)

The Action Research method would give me the opportunity not only to observe my own practice but also consider the conflict between the expectations of the young people and the professional worker in the context of a providing agency. In the second piece of fieldwork this became even more significant as I then had a co-worker and I was to compare my own practice with another youth worker.

Dangers in the Chosen Method

Earlier I stated that the subject of research chose the method rather than the other way round. As the study unfolds the limitations of this kind of research will be recognised. The purpose of the study is to explore inconsistencies which I have personally experienced in youth work. The study has dramatically affected my own practice but it is difficult to move from this specific study to generalise about good practice in other situations. However it will be possible to offer guideposts to others who are faced with similar dilemmas.
One of the limitations of an ethnographic form of inquiry is that it is difficult then to generalise from a very local situation to wider application of the findings. Ethnology provides very detailed, rich material about actions within specific social context.

(Moore, 1993 p.17)

The close study of one neighbourhood, group or school is necessarily about that subject and the people who make up the study are seen as distinct individuals. The insights from such a study can be useful only in relative terms to the wider social structures.

Another danger is in the close relationship between the researcher and the researched. In field work this involvement of researcher and researched can be seen as a problem because interpretation of actions, words and reported speech can be varied depending on the values and beliefs of the interpreter. Therefore, not only is the collection of data from social situations difficult but methods of recording it and using it as a reliable source presents problems. The validity of such data needs to be carefully presented. In each case study the conclusions drawn may be valid but it is impossible for any other researcher to replicate the study because each study is time bound and the individuals have changed, including the researcher.

There is also a problem with bias in reporting the actions and interactions of the group. With an addition to any group, the group dynamic changes and when the researcher becomes involved with the group as an observer then the group's behaviour may change. I was acutely aware one Friday evening when I met with the first group that I was unwelcome in the group. I realised that Friday was the traditional drinking night and the young people did not want me around. They would be drinking illegally and it was not appropriate that I was present. This was the only occasion I felt this. Although I quickly went home and never visited them on a Friday again they did not speak to me about their behaviour on the said day.

Not only does the presence of another person make a difference but also who the person is will affect a change in behaviour. A different researcher in the same social situation would make a different impact on the people and they would react to him in different ways. No doubt different discoveries would be made, different aspects emphasised, different interpretations elaborated, even though the central analysis might be the same.

(Hargreaves, 1967 p. 205)
Another problem arises when the researcher sets out with particular questions relevant to him/her. They may in fact not be relevant to the researched. Actions, speech, conversations may then be interpreted to fit the researcher's own framework. Writing about the process Stanley and Wise claim that:

"...all research involves, as it's basis, an interaction, relationship, between the researcher and researched. We also believe that such a relationship exists whether the 'researched' are books, secondary data, other objects or people. Because the basis of all research is relationship, this necessarily involves the presence of the researcher as a person. Personhood cannot be left behind, cannot be left out of the research process."

*(Stanley & Wise, 1983 p.162)*

The conflict between the often divergent values of the researcher and researched has also to be taken into account. In ethnographic research a central method for getting at such an understanding is through close attention to and recording of what research subjects say about their activities, both in interview situations with the researcher and in typical social settings while interacting with other social actors. These social representatives can then be contrasted with observed behaviour as the ethnographer goes about his or her participant observation.

*Should there be large discrepancies between the two, the task of the ethnographer is then to record how social actors account for such differences. By constantly paying attention to what people say and what they do, and what they say about inconsistencies between what they say and what they do, the ethnographer slowly builds a picture which bears some relation (however partial) to the culture under examination.*

*(Moore, 1993 p.20).*

This interaction between researched and researcher goes some way to counteracting this problem.

Whatever the dangers and limitations of this method of research it is the one I embarked on for my study. Some of these cautions I took early account of as they related to the field work but as the study continued they took a lower priority. Now I am presenting my findings I have returned to them and I will become more critical of my interpretation.
I am a different person to the one who set out on this exploration and the research has affected my understanding. This method of interacting with the researched and being involved in the process is interactive and helps the researcher make sense of the world. Paul Corrigan sums it up:

It is thought important that most of these techniques are taught and written about in ways which separate them from the ways 'ordinary' people think. I will try and show the ways in which 'doing sociological research' is just a method of making sense of the world; as well in fact that 'doing research' changes the way in which the researcher sees the world; a different way of understanding emerges from the research.

(Corrigan, 1979 p. 6)

In his article on Ethnography and Illicit Drug Use Moore (1993) describes three issues which are raised in ethnographic research. These were also relevant to my own work and are therefore worth noting. First is the involvement of time, second is creating rapport with the group. Both of these require a commitment to the group and building up relationships with them. It did mean that I went out on rainy evenings, sat on cold church steps, walked around a lonely estate of high rise flats looking for the group and witnessed violent incidents, so that I could begin to understand the group. I also was privy, at times, to conversations which were incriminating and had information about criminal acts although I was not actually involved. There was one occasion if plans had come to fruition I would have been. This created a dilemma for me as a participant observer. As a researcher I would have wanted to gather the data, but as a youth worker I knew I would be lacking in 'professionalism'. In this context I am considering the problems of the researcher, I am also aware as a practitioner that many youth workers face this dilemma in their work with young people and often opt for the 'confidentiality' clause and 'harm limitation' approach to the work. In ethnographic research similar paths have to be found.

**Conclusion**

In my plans for this study I was unaware of many of the problems of ethnographic research. As the study progressed from the chance encounter with a group of young people hanging around the church steps on a housing estate, causing consternation in the local community I was presented with an opportunity to study at close quarters a group of young people, in a clearly identified working class locality and work with
them, with no intervention from the Local Authority, to enable them to ingratiate their position in that community.

Through my work with the group and keeping the field diary I was able to record data which later I used for analysis I was able to look at the social interaction, social construction of the working class culture of this small housing estate. This analysis together with Lukes theory of power (Lukes, 1986) helped to formulate the theory which will be presented in this study.

Along the way many other ideas have been sparked by the initial exploration field work and in a later chapter many of these will be explored. Notions of class, gender, aggression and violence as well as power have all contributed to the research. But essentially it was the risk of going 'into the field', becoming very vulnerable in an unknown territory which opened up the exploration. This is for me the centre feature of ethnography; Entry into the Unknown, the field is outside the laboratory conditions and the research is open to many uncertainties. Although I had experience of working in similar situations, previously I had a clearly defined role - the youth worker, as participant observer the role had changed and this gave new insights on which the subsequent study is based.

The next chapter will consider how this study fits into current research in this area.
CHAPTER 3

WHO WRITES ABOUT YOUTH WORK? WHO'S INTERESTED IN US?

Introduction

The central characters are young people and this study focuses on their place in society. The purpose of this study is to examine the role and function of youth workers in relation to some of these young people and to see what kind of service is being offered.

The aim of this review of the literature is to show how past and current thinking has contributed to the areas researched, the way theory has developed and the conclusions reached. The field work initially raised many questions about young people and their place in society as well as youth work practice, theory and philosophy. Whilst conducting that part of the research a wide range of topics were examined through the literature. Only when certain issues began to emerge from the study was it possible to focus on relevant texts from the extensive reading.

The current debates about youth work theory, practice and policy fall into three main areas of concern: (1) policy statements which are found in ministerial documents; (2) the youth work debates from practitioners which are found in specialist books and journals; and (3) work from other related disciplines which have young people as their focus, e.g. social work, psychology, sociology, especially youth culture/sub cultures. A serious allegation has been made by some in the field that there is an absence of academic literature in this area as well as an absence of a coherent theory of youth work practice”. (Jeffs and Smith, 1987 p.1). Youth workers have been dependent on many other disciplines to inform practice - to provide a theoretical position for youth work. Many of the documents accessible to the worker are concerned with either formal policy or practice at ground level. A theory of youth work is then developed by the individual or centre or agency arising out of their own practice and experience but remains implicit. These youth workers or agencies
intuitively use Glaser and Strauss's (1967) model of grounded theory but rarely develop their critical analysis to share with others. In this survey of the three main areas identified which affect the theoretical basis of youth work and the different strands which contribute to developing theory will be presented to show how they inform, either overtly or covertly, practice.

Policy documents/policy debates

The birth of the present Youth Service.

The Report of the Review Group on the Youth Service in England, Experience and Participation, was presented to Parliament by the Secretary for Education and Science in October 1982. (HMSO, 1982). The Ministerial report was the response to a Government request for a major review of the Youth Service. This had not been done since 1960 when the Albemarle Report, The Youth Service in England and Wales, was presented to Parliament. It was the recommendations from the Albemarle Report that formed the foundations of the Youth Service today.

The Albemarle Committee recommended the development of clubs and centres and very soon a sizeable building programme was launched in a partnership between the Local Authorities and the voluntary sector. It included recommendations for the training and supply of full time professional youth workers which was to raise the status of youth work, and also recognised the needs of 'unattached' young people and an experimental programme was recommended to reach them. However the report covered a vast area of concerns and as Thompson comments although

in physical terms, including staffing the Albemarle Report did an immense service to the youth movement: conceptually it left behind it a host of loose ends which were to emerge rapidly as major problems in the following decade.

(HMSO, 1982, p. 5)

Before looking at what happened after 1960 it is worth having a brief glimpse at the background.
In 1939 the Board of Education issued Circular 1486 creating the Youth Service which then became a statutory responsibility for local education authorities. It was significant that the Youth Service was placed in the remit of the then Board of Education. It undertook "a direct responsibility for youth welfare". (HMSO, 1960 p.4). The concern was for young people affected by "the black out, the strain of war and the disorganisation of family life... which have created conditions which constitute a serious menace to youth". (HMSO, 1982, p.4). Prior to this some local education authorities had been trying to help and co-ordinate the voluntary work in their areas through juvenile organisations committees.

In general boys and girls clubs were a response to signs of deepening class division, growing working class dissatisfaction, the emergence of a section of the population which could be identified by age and an increase in leisure time (Davies, 1986). The motivation for the work varied. For some it was from compassion and sympathy for the squalor people living in the new cities and came from a powerful social conscience to relieve suffering. As Davies and Gibson (1967) comment:

There is no need to doubt the sincerity of the founders of Ardwick Lads' Club, Manchester, for example, who wrote: "It was incumbent on us, fortunately placed as we are, to do something to help those who had to spend their lives in the mean and sordid districts and slums of our city".

(Davies and Gibson, 1967, p.34)

For others there was a strong desire to control the increasing working classes which were not developing to fit the labour force needed for new industry.

In the eyes of the new employers many of the habits brought from the agrarian and rural background needed to be eradicated. Irregular hours and absenteeism, drunkenness and a liking for distracting amusements fitted ill with the requirements of the factory bell, complex machinery, heavy capital outlay...

(Davies & Gibson, 1967, p.36).

There was a pressing need to strengthen and protect the existing social and political structures which were developing in favour of the ruling classes. They needed to ensure that the working classes were loyal, obedient, respectful of law and order and disciplined. The scouting movement was also promoting the greatness of the Empire...
and was deeply embedded with notions of Britain's racial superiority. (Davies 1986, p.93).

There was the notion of character building activities especially in the healthy outdoors in preference to the 'materialism' of the society around them. Commercial provision including cinema stars, test matches and cup finals and commercialised sports were condemned as 'interest in false values'. (Davies & Gibson 1967, p.43). The ideological impact of the religious and the Protestant ethic meant that leisure time became a time for self improvement and self advancement.

From these beginnings the foundations of modern youth work were laid. There were three strands: social control "to socialise young people into the prevailing social and political values" (NYB, 1990, p.7); social welfare which was influenced by patronage prior to 1939 and provided relief for young people in dire social conditions. (Paraskeva, 1992 p.89); and social change in young people's lives. A Working Girls' Club demanded legislation regarding the working conditions of underground work rooms (NYB, 1990 p.7). Running through each of these strands was a powerful education aim. It was felt young people needed some stimulation to become fuller personalities but within the social context of the providers. They often condemned the social situation and the culture of those they worked with and defence of their own self interests was a prime motivator. This was a form of social control. The programme often removed the young person from their familiar world as the values implicit in most early youth work were in direct opposition to the background of the young people whom it sought to serve. "They offered a powerful and sustained propagation of the ideology of the middle class" (Harrison, 1961, p.89).

When the Albemarle committee reviewed the Youth Service in the middle of the 20th century it was struck by how often the evidence it had received used such words as service, dedication, leadership and character building "as though they were commonly accepted and valid currency." Yet it was forced to conclude,

these particular words now connect little with the realities of life as most young people see them: they do not seem to 'speak to their condition'. They recall the hierarchies, the less interesting moments of school speech days and other occasions of moral exhortation.  

(HMSO, 1960, p.39)
It recognised that there was a huge gap between voluntary and paid workers who saw their work as 'training young people in citizenship' and 'communicating Christian values' and the young people themselves who "if they feel the need must have the liberty to question cherished ideas, attitudes and standards, and if necessary to reject them". (HMSO, 1960, p.38,39).

There are here confusing messages. The report recognises young people's ability to set their own values and life styles but also affirms the need for young people to accept their place in society. It dealt with this conflict of aims by establishing the notion of social education through leisure time activities. (NYB, 1990) Social education became a 'catch all' term within the Youth Service and will be explored later.

Another question Albemarle raised was the status of youth work. As the committee recognised much of the theory and practice was based on influential philanthropically inclined sponsors who still maintained Victorian values. Much of the work is done by voluntary agencies and volunteers. The implications of this will be taken up later. By setting out to train youth workers to a professional standard as recommended (HMSO, 1960, para 239ff) there was subsequently a potential for change within the service. However professionalisation came late to youth work (Kitto 1986).

Post Albemarle

In the years between the Albemarle Report and Thompson's review of the Youth Service other committees were set up to iron out some of the questions raised by Albemarle including training of full time, part time and volunteer youth workers as well as work with ethnic minorities. (Hunt 1967, Milson-Fairbairn, 1988)

By 1982 Parliament was asking for a total review of the Youth Service. It was recognised that there had been many changes in both society and government services in the twenty years since Albemarle and that there was a need to review how the Youth Service was resourced. During the 70's there had been four private members bills before Parliament asking for a more secure and comprehensive basis for the service, but all had failed. Setting up the Thompson Committee was a response to the concern about the resourcing of the service.
Thompson review group

The terms of reference of the review committee chaired by Alan Thompson were;

- to report on present provision, both statutory and voluntary;
- to consider whether available resources could be deployed more effectively; and in the light of this,
- to assess the need for legislation.

This approach put the needs and situation of the young people first. This reflects the basis of the report, Experience and Participation, which is centred on the development of the young person. This focus on the potential clients and their specific needs rather than the provider emphasised the fact that it was a service to young people. Therefore if it did not meet their needs, simply the needs of the workers, of the Local Authority or Government then it was not an adequate service.

Smith (1983) made a response to Experience and Participation and identified a central tension running through the Review Group’s work between participation and control. There was a fundamental assumption that young people would be incorporated into the existing social and economic structures and the associated institutions. But at the same time the main purpose of the Youth Service was identified as personal development through social education. The Review Group boldly state that “It is no part of the Youth Service as we see it, to be simply an instrument of cultural reproduction”. (HMSO, 1982, p. 15). Instead the Service is seen as “deeply educational” and should be concerned with “helping young people to become whatever it is in them to be”. (HMSO, 1982, p.15)

The weakness was that even though they recognised there were class, gender and ethnic differences young people were considered as an homogenous group. However if the young person does not successfully progress into ‘maturity’ then alienation occurs. “This may lead in extreme cases to a rage against society, which may find expression in delinquency or violence.” (HMSO, 1982, p.12) Smith (1983) comments that
In other words expressions of frustration or more conscious opposition to the existing social order are clearly seen as individual pathologies. And the role of the Youth Service through social education becomes essentially remedial and is pitched at the level of the individual.

(Smith, 1983, p.10)

A contradiction emerges between enabling the young person to develop in their own way and ensuring the individual fits comfortably into society even though in the conclusion to Part 2: A Youth Service for the 1980s the Review Group state quite clearly that

Social education does not mean social control any more than personal development means anarchy. The twin aims of this process are thus affirmation and involvement - affirming an individual in his or her proper identity and involving the individual in relationships with other individuals and institutions.

(HMSO, 1982, p.68)

How does this apparent contradiction arise? The situation of young people in society is surveyed and the gap between the ‘ideals’ of society and the realities is identified. The Review Group do not make value judgements about this but comment,

The experience of unemployment may be a test and a challenge, but it may equally produce a strong awareness of the futility of growing up society’s “ideal person” - well educated and hard working when neither good education nor employment are real possibilities.

(HMSO, 1982, p.11)

The contradictions may arise because the class, gender and ethnic differences, although acknowledged, are not taken seriously and throughout the report young people are considered as the same group. The irrationalities and inequalities in life can lead to alienation of the young person. The review group recognised that a caring personal relationship can help alleviate the feelings associated with alienation and adults within the Youth Service are able to offer this kind of relationship (HMSO, 1982, p.12). These relationships with significant adults “can guarantee a growth in both freedom and responsibility” (HMSO, 1982, p.11).

The double edged sword freedom and responsibility is the tension between participation and control. The role, therefore, of the youth worker can been seen as
a contradiction, holding the balance between freedom and responsibility. It was said above that the committee do not make value judgements but perhaps they do not need to as the assumption is that an individual's responsibility implies compliance to commonly held values. The focus on the worker's ability to establish relationships with young people and influence the individual's behaviour.

The Youth Service

Thompson had to address the question of what is the Youth Service. There were a wide variety of clubs, centres, recreational facilities and other services provided by local authority and voluntary agencies it was in fact broader than that. In some areas it had extended into a Youth and Community Service where the needs of the young person was placed in the context of the community not separate from it (Milson-Fairbairn, 1969). There were also other statutory services working with young people both in groups or individually. Social workers, probation officers as well as school and college staff made use of informal, personal development models of learning. Also with the rise of youth unemployment the Manpower Services Commission provided training for jobs and included an input on personal development and social skills. The Youth Service therefore has to fit into the more general scope of provision but has its own distinctive service to offer. These developments created uncertainty about the extent, scope, future and relationship with other bodies, but not the central core of youth work.

However wide the scope of informal education with many agencies working with young people the Youth Service remains a leisure-time provision by both statutory and voluntary agencies. In their review there is criticism of the lack of good management but on the other side "much brilliant and effective work has been carried out by gifted individuals". (HMSO, 1982, p.50) The strength of Youth Service is in the practice but little of this was written up, theory has not been extracted from past good work. Consequently it not only goes unrecognised but there is no development in either practice or theory. The absence of literature in the field is an indication of this.

In addition to this Thompson also points out that the Service as a whole has been hindered by four factors: uncertainty and irregularity of funding; shortage of personnel; confused policies, especially as regards the proper relationship between
crisis and normal activities; and uneasy and ill defined relationships with other agencies and services mentioned above. (HMSO, 1982, p.50)

Four years after the Report was published NYB carried out a survey of the Youth Service from documents supplied by local authorities in England and Wales. It also identified the problems in management and administration of the service and it was felt there was a lack of clear objectives; unclear or conflicting policies; poor forward planning; confusion about the management structure (Smith D. 1987, P.8). Poor management seems indicative of the service. The reasons for this are complex but perhaps one of the contributing factors is the voluntary element within it. As was described earlier the Youth Service emerged from a tradition of voluntary, philanthropic provision where often good management is weak. Bloxham (1993) maintains that this is also the case for the statutory youth services and the move towards greater centralised control has meant that the professional workers have less contact with the face to face work or workers. The part time workers responsible for youth club sessions do not have the "benefit of working alongside their largely absent manager to watch him cope with the difficult youngster or start a discussion on a challenging topic".

Volunteers and voluntary provision

The Youth Service grew out of voluntary provision and a lot of work is done by volunteers and part time staff. It was estimated that in Local Authorities there were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full time officers</th>
<th>Full time workers</th>
<th>Part time workers +</th>
<th>Unpaid volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Authorities *</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary bodies</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>16,500</td>
<td>400,000 workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23,000 officers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* a number of those employed by authorities work in the voluntary sector

+ full time equivalents

(HMSO, 1982, p.88)
The Review Group comment that this is one of the most striking features of the Service. However it does have implications for the work of the full time workers and officers, as well as reflecting the lack of development of the 'profession', when so much of the work is done by volunteers and part time workers. The volunteer was usually an untrained but enthusiastic recruit described in the following way.

The popular image was of youth leadership as a lay activity which anyone with a good heart (and probably good lungs!) and honourable intentions could take on. How could such a workforce be given sufficient professional expertise to fulfil the ambitious objectives set for social democratic youth work.

(Davies, 1986, p. 104)

Historically there was a resistance to professionalisation and Albemarle (HMSO, 1960, para. 170) stressed the importance of volunteers in the statutory as well as voluntary Youth Service. These were seen as parental surrogates who brought "basic kindliness, simple common-sense and unlimited patience" (p.106) to the club. It was also recognised that senior members who 'have graduated through the youth movement' and at 18-20 have something to give back (HMSO, 1960, para. 175).

Following the Albemarle Report there was an urgency not only to train full time staff but also part time and volunteers. There was some resistance in the voluntary sector to Local Authorities taking control of the training and there was a fear in some people's minds that the statutory authority might gradually 'take over' the youth service. (Department of Education and Science, 1966). It still operates like this - and there are still questions about professionalisation and lack of clarity about the purpose of the Youth Service.

When so much of the face to face work is done by untrained or poorly trained voluntary staff the consequence is a lack of policy, poor forward planning and confusion in management structures. When the work is unplanned and there is no objective and authoritative theoretical underpinning it is difficult to develop any coherent theories and good practice, however brilliant and imaginative it might be on the night. Depending on voluntary, part time staff has implications for supervision and developing staff teams for the full time worker. Especially if the motivation of the volunteers is to satisfy their own needs, i.e. to make them feel good. This also has implications for supervision and developing staff teams for the full time worker.
The dependency on volunteers and voluntary provision within the youth service can be seen as a reason for the lack of professionalism and poor management. However it also indicates the high degree of participation within the service of young members, part time staff and volunteers. This often leads to personal satisfaction and development for the individual, thus achieving one of the main aims of the youth work. However this has to be carried out within a formal structure and the concern for the review committee is that the limited resources are used effectively (HMSO, 1982, p. 126). This implies a form of social control in that policies need to be developed by the Local Authority into which the voluntary organisations need to fit. This again raises the question of freedom.

**Distinctiveness of the Youth Service**

In the discussion of the relationship with other agencies Thompson identifies the contribution the Youth Service can make. This is especially the case when working with young people at risk or in trouble when social services, probation or the police are also involved. An essential principle of the Youth Service is that young people should be accepted for what they are, without any labels such as "delinquent" or "at risk"", and that their participation in any activity or group must be entirely voluntary. When the Youth Service works with other agencies and services which deal with young people at risk in trouble then it needs to make its position clear and that it is not, "for its part, concerned with "surveillance or control". (HMSO, 1982, p.51) The contribution the Youth Service can make to the work with young people at risk or in trouble is in the following ways:
by providing places where such young people can become involved in activities in an informal atmosphere;

by offering young people personal counselling and sometimes intervention on their behalf;

by providing constructive relationships with adults and other young people;

by offering alienated young people alternative ways of putting over their points of view and enabling them to play an active part in altering their condition; and

by representing young people’s needs and interests to the other services and negotiating appropriate referral arrangements.

(HMSO, 1982, p. 52)

The review committee recognises the distinctive contribution Youth Service makes to statutory provision for young people. It is from this assessment that this piece of research has developed. It emphasises the point that the young people involved are normal and not deviant. By working with them in the ways outlined above they are treated as normal and are encouraged to think for themselves, and take control of their own lives and not be controlled by the worker.

Thompson (HMSO, 1982, p.33) sets out clearly the objectives of the Youth Service, but criticises it for not stating these clearly in the past. The Youth Service focused on great achievements but what is lacking is a public acknowledgement of and a general consensus about what it is trying to do. This fits in with Smith and Jeffs (1987) criticism of youth work post Albemarle but does not answer the question why it has happened or why has no one written about it. This will be examined later in this chapter. The balance between welfaring and education is critical in understanding the objectives of youth work.

Summarising the objectives of the Youth Service the Thompson Committee see the fundamental purpose of the Youth Service is to provide programmes of personal development comprising social and political education. The twin aims of this process are affirmation and involvement - affirming an individual in his or her proper identity and involving an individual in relationships with other individuals and institutions. The term social education was the selected and not political education. Probably because it was already part of the current terminology and less threatening than the word ‘political’. It also softens the question of the purpose of social education. Is it a
method of control which relies on changing the individual to fit into society as it is or is to encourage the individual to effect social change in society (FEU 1980).

Social Education

This term is widely used by the Thompson Committee and they have been criticised for not actually defining the term clearly (Jeffs and Smith 1987). However it is possible that the meaning is assumed because it is a term that was used of youth work throughout the 70’s. Social education is the process youth workers are involved in. It was introduced in the Albemarle Report

There is a striking lack of logic in an arrangement which gives the benefit of social education to those who remain with the ordered society of an institution for full time education, but gives only the most niggling provision to those whose need for such resources is so much greater.

(HMSO, 1960, para 132)

and implies that the young person acquires experience and knowledge of society through involvement in formal institutions. This was interpreted as social conformity by some

instances where youth workers use friendship and personal example as a vehicle for the education of young people in both structured and semi-structured settings. The main purpose of which seems is to teach young people better behaviour and social graces.

(Evans, 1965)

The focus of this type of education is the relationship between the youth worker and the individual and the power of the worker to influence. The young people adopted the values and attitudes of the workers or the dominant culture. However there were others (Davies and Gibson, 1967) during the 60’s who placed a very different emphasis on the term and saw it as a client centred approach to youth work practice as opposed to the model centred approach described above. This difference in understanding social education is critical in the development of Youth Work in the ensuring 30 years. Smith (1988, p.89) notes in his overview of the use of the term within youth work, degenerated rapidly into nothing more than a rhetorical device.

The client centred approach is described by Thompson
We repeat here that we see social education as essentially an experiential process, as opposed to the passive reception of ideas, impressions and norms. It involves experimentation - trying out new modes of behaviour and styles of action in a way calculated to help young individuals to know themselves and be able to cope with (though not necessarily to accept all the implicit values of) the society of which they find themselves a part. From this premise it follows that the process of social education must above all be participatory. It is not enough to provide places to go to and things to do. The Youth Service must make it its business to create opportunities for young people to have a say in their affairs and to organise their own activities. This is one of the oldest themes in discussion and writing about the Youth Service: its effective realisation remains one of the keenest challenges for the future.

(HMSO, 1982, p. 68)

During this period prior to Thompson other education institutions were pursuing social education in different educational settings. The Youth Service has been described as "an incorrigibly heterogeneous and contradictory field of activities" (FEU 1980 p. 17).

The emphasis within the Thompson Report is that it is through experience and participation that young people develop into mature adults. It is the role of the Youth Service to provide these experiences and the opportunities for reflection on them. However the experience of reflection must follow a line freely chosen by the young participants themselves. The Youth Service should be helping young people to become whatever it is in them to be. "This means that the process of reflection and learning from experience must be open ended and so far as possible self-directed."

(HMSO, 1982, p. 15)

It was this understanding of youth work which formed the basis of my youth work training and this concept is fundamental to this study. The College's aims state:

...his (sic) {the trainee worker's} main concern will be with young people and young adults, helping them to enrich their quality of personal life and to make appropriate relationships in the wider community. His (sic) function will be . . . that . . . of informal educator.

(Kitto, 1986, p. 63)

Informal education began to replace social education in the youth work literature. The YMCA National College now offers a certificate of Informal Education and not Youth and Community Work. Those who have been dismissive of the notion social education (Jeffs 1992,) have put forward the notion of informal education (Jeffs and
Smith, 1990) defining it as "a special set of processes which involves the adoption or certain broad ways of thinking and acting so that people can engage with what is going on."

Informal education also emphasises certain values and concerns: the worth placed on the person of the learner, the importance of critical thinking, and the need to examine the taken for granted. There is no particular content but arises out of the processes and the values they express.

These elements of the informal education process are similar to the client centred approach to social education presented by Davies and Gibson (1968 p.140). Foreman (1990) extends the definition to include political education and makes it distinctive from life skills training which she claims focuses on individuals and their personal effectiveness.

Whilst the youth work curriculum takes into account the life experiences of young people and external factors which affect their lives. She says the content of the curriculum will fall into place when there is a dialogue between learner and educator. Informal education needs to be underpinned by a philosophy of political education (Foreman, 1990, p.33 - 35).

This seems to be proposing a very similar approach to that suggested in Experience and Participation.

Young people need freedom to chose, to experiment, and to reflect. It should be the aim to bring these freedoms within the grasp of all; and this means that the service is committed to variety of provision and to putting the young person in the position of both determining that variety and choosing from within it.

(HMSO, 1982, p.15)

Thompson acknowledges that in other areas of young people's lives, the family, school and work this is contrary to their experience but maintains that for young people to develop into mature adults there is the need for one area of their lives in which they can have this kind of control and power of self determination. This discussion is central to the study in particular the fieldwork analysis. The next chapter will take up this theme when the concept of power is explored.
The Review Group recommended that the Youth Service continue along the same lines funded by local authorities in partnership with voluntary bodies and with greater participation at all levels. Political education and counselling and information should be a normal part of the Youth Service Curriculum. The style of working through experience and participation should be developed. The overall aim of the Service should be seen as affirming an individual's self belief and encouraging participation in society.

Post Thompson

The Thompson report began a process of reassessment within some Local Authorities and in 1986 D. Smith undertook an analysis of material supplied by 27 authorities. This review of the Service was on the level of policy, structure and provision, although did not include the actual content of the youth work curriculum and practice.

However it did indicate that the language used by Thompson was readily adopted by local authorities and there was a broadly consensual view that the main purpose of the Youth Service was "personal development which is generally concerned with assisting in the process of maturation and the formation of rewarding social relationships leading towards healthy and active young people at ease with themselves and with others." (D. Smith 1987, p.19). This was largely individualistic but there were two further strands emerging. Firstly the recognition of the social and political context of young people's lives in a collective rather than individual sense and recognition of the inequalities which exist and secondly to adopt an advocacy role. Political education, as recommended by Thompson "should be a normal part of the Youth Service curriculum" (1982, p. 48) and in some Local Authorities it began to emerge in a more formally accepted incorporated way. This opened up an open debate about the role of the youth worker and brought them into positions of ambiguity and dilemma. The emphasis in the Thompson Report is on participation within the club, local youth council or local community as well as "beyond the confines of the Youth Service itself to take part in wider issues" (HMSO, 1982, p.46).

Local Authorities interpreted this in different ways. For some it meant young people could gain access to political theory although not be involved in political action, whilst for others it meant that youth workers could support young people in their own
projects or campaigns as part of the youth work process. Leek Action to Combat Homelessness (LATCH) was a pressure group of young people formed to lobby local housing authorities and associations to provide decent, affordable housing for young people in Leek. The HMI Report (DES, 1990 p 11) used the project as a good example of participative youth work. Although this group has now dispersed those who were part of the process were involved in political education. Their campaign for better housing enabled them to learn more about housing law, how to deal with landlords and the local council and also develop personal skills and gain confidence. It illustrates how the campaign for better housing is part of a process which includes many facets. The youth worker role is to manage this process, not run a campaign. There was also a move by Local Authorities to begin to identify priority groups to be targeted by the Youth Service. Unemployment, women, ethnic minorities and the handicapped had been mentioned specifically in the Review and many Local Authorities developed pro-active policies and strategies in relation to youth issues.

It was recognised by both local government and youth work agencies that there was a need for a coherent and manageable remit for the Youth Service. There was a common agreement that there were three areas which needed examination; identify current and potential requirements of young people; the nature and content of appropriate curriculum; how to make it accessible to a range of young people. It is the second of these which became the major issue at the end of the 80’s.

The Curriculum Debate

In 1988 the National Youth Bureau had set up a consultation process with a commitment to the bottom up approach. The Curriculum Development Team set out to consult with both local and central organisations involved in the youth work provision about the desirability or possibility of a national or core curriculum for the Youth Service. The Thompson Report recognised the need for the Youth Service to look more critically and systematically at what was offered to young people. It was this fear of conformity which lead many youth workers to respond negatively to these discussions. Having a national curriculum seemed to contradict the client-centred approach of social education. In his address to the First Ministerial Conference Alan Howarth said:
Let me hasten to reassure you, however, that I am not suggesting that the Youth Service should adopt the type of structured, national curriculum which, as you know, ministers have introduced for schools. I recognise fully the value of the flexibility and innovatoriness of response to young people’s needs which the voluntary and statutory youth services, at their best, can offer.

(NYB 1990, p.68)

There was a misapprehension in the service about where this move towards a national curriculum came from. I would argue it came out of the Thompson Report and the interest created by the review of youth provision. Not only did NYB set up their curriculum development team which was made up of experienced youth workers, but the FEU also set up a project which was completed in 1988 (FEU, 1989). In fact this was not a new debate in the Youth Service NYB had produced an occasional paper in 1975 on Curriculum Development in the youth club.

Whilst the NYB were undertaking their review of the curriculum the DES announced that in December 89 there was to be a national conference, to be followed by another two such conferences, with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Science and senior practitioners. This was a change from the committees of Albemarle and Thompson which had met previously to deliberate on the role and function of the Youth Service. NYB took on the administration and organisation of the conferences and were able to contribute to the work that had already been done on the core curriculum (NYB, 1989). Why this change in the consultation process came about is not easy to establish from the literature.

Between the first and second ministerial conferences there was opportunity for youth workers to respond to recommendations from the first - to feed into the second. This process involved many grass roots workers in the discussions and youth workers were talking about the aims of youth work, through a Statement of Purpose. The Statement of Purpose includes a section on what youth work offers young people; opportunities which are educative, designed to promote equal opportunity, participative and empowering. Each of these reflects the proposals in the Thompson Report. Delivery is through partnership between voluntary and statutory agencies which provide “informal education programmes which challenge young people and enhance their personal development, social and political education”’ (NYB 1991, p.16).
During this decade there was a lot of activity on the policy front, the practitioners were continuing to work with the young people, the training was being upgraded to degree status, but moving into the next section it would seem that the theorists were having a lean time.

**Youth Work Theory, Practice And Philosophy**

Jeffs and Smith (1987) claim that post Albemarle as youth work expanded there was a great gap in the literature on the theory of youth work. It is not clear from their work what existed before then. They claim that no single text has attempted to gather together in any sustained way the divergent experiences of practitioners and this gap has hampered the development of a coherent theory of youth work practice (Jeffs and Smith 1987, p. 1). Their criticism of youth work which as a profession has borrowed ideas from social workers, probation officers and community workers and receive them into a “theoretical void” is unsubstantiated. Jeffs and Smith (1987) pursue a similar theme claiming that there is also reference to “what little theoretical literature there is dates from the 1960s and earlier. Valuable in its time, it has now been overtaken by events and the development of theory and practice in other areas.” (p 5). However the writers do not indicate what this means and it is not clear what they are actually referring to. The institutions who have the responsibility for initial and continuing education of full time workers are to blame for the “appalling lack of scholarship, rigour and commitment” (Jeffs and Smith 1987, p.5). I find this difficult to understand from two people actually involved in this process. Are they criticising themselves for not producing the theory?

**Youth work theory post Albemarle**

Practitioners continued to work with young people in many and varied situations and used whatever methods were accessible to them through training and tradition of the place of work. Post Albemarle there have been ministerial documents which review some part of the Youth Service. Within these documents there was, at least implicitly, some youth work theory. It was one way of defining what the work entailed. The service must fit into some accepted raison d'être. The Thompson Report not only affected the way Local Authorities managed the Youth Service and developed policy but it also gave some impetus to practitioners who were concerned with delivery.
One local authority youth committee which re-examined the thinking behind its work with young people was Kingston upon Thames. At this time and in the light of the Thompson Report the Youth and Community Advisory committee admit that “the Youth Service in Kingston upon Thames appears to reflect a lack of specific policy” (Kingston upon Thames 1987 p.13). Kingston was not unique and many other Local Authorities began this process to establish more clearly a policy for their Youth Service.

It included much of the philosophy of Thompson’s Report and this was being interpreted into programmes, groups and young people in clubs. This theory was being articulated in the interaction between philosophy and practice. The problem was that this was not being recorded. Youth and Community work students were being taught it, but with few exceptions (YMCA 1987) this was not written down. However practitioners as well as policy makers were involved in developing theory especially those who were working with a non-directive, informal, participative process as discussed in the proceeding section on social education (Kingston upon Thames 1987, Dare and Appleyard 1988, Tate 1988).

The other move by policy makers was into pro-active work which focused on specific inequalities. The emphasis on addressing inequalities especially around work, gender and race was met by some opposition from some theorists (Jeffs and Smith 1989, 1990, Nelson 1992), this is perhaps the irresolvable contradiction on tension which runs through youth work theory and practice, who see it restricting practice rather than enhancing it. It can be interpreted as re-acting to a problem rather than being pro-active. Thus asking whether it differs in any way to the Victorian/Edwardian character-building youth work which was a response to ‘moral pundits’ of the day. Targeting groups or issues has created a restrictive climate as well as putting greater value of their skills and expertise of the professional worker. This means that it is more difficult to offer a service for any young person who chooses to be involved and the use of voluntary workers. In both of these ways of working there are tensions and it is in these irresolvable contradictions that youth work theory is developed.

This process, while requiring a break from the restrictions of its own past and its own traditions, is nevertheless apparently taking with it much that was of value (Smith D. 1987, p.3). He considers possible dilemmas in the development of the Youth Service
and raises the "principle of participation" (Smith D. 1987, p.35f) as one possible dilemma. This is an example of where theory, practice and policy are in tension. There were two broad overlapping perspectives on the task of connecting Youth Service provision to the needs of young people. The first approach was concerned with establishing the position and needs of young people as the starting point. From this, the type of provision required was determined and then the delivery framework was established.

The second approach was to take as the starting point the organisational framework of the Service and devise means by which it could be made responsive, consultative and participatory. These two approaches illustrate the central tension which permeates the reviews of the Youth Service and the principles on which they are based (Smith D. 1987, p.37). Jeffs and Smith, M. (1989) were identifying the same contradictions in their paper Taking Issue with Issues. The issues selected by the professional worker or agency are the ones which from their perspective see as the root cause of inequality and it could be seen by some as 'moral righteousness' and 'social imperialism'. They equate this kind of provision with the Victorian 'social welfare' traditions.

Nelson (1992) gives an example from a women's project in Wythenshawe. The women who attended the project had agreed together that a quarter of an hour before the end of the session men were allowed into the centre for a cup of tea and to meet their partners if they chose. Students visiting the project criticised this and said allowing men into the group undermined the project. The political comment put forward by the students did not take into account the local situation and local needs. The decision was made by the group of women themselves after careful consideration. This example illustrates the dilemma faced by many workers who work in working class areas, with ethnic minorities, the unemployed or women's groups. The 'issue' as identified by the professional worker or the agency is likely not to be the 'issue' faced by the group.

Nelson's conclusion is to return to person centred work and to allow the lives and opinions of young people inform the issues about inequality. His accusation that "much youth work practice is based upon second hand assumptions with origins and inconsistencies that are significantly unacknowledged" (Nelson 1992, p.27) is not really borne out in the examples he gives of proactive work. It would seem the
practitioner does respond to the needs of her group - it is the students who are learning the theory who are taking a more aggressive stance.

Giroux (1989) identifies the problem of the relationships between theory and practice in formal education which has some parallels in youth work theory: "The theorists who produce the knowledge are limited to the university, those who merely reproduce it are seen as school teachers, and those who passively receive it in bits and clumps at all levels of schooling fulfil the role of students" (p.163). If there is no interaction between the theorists who train the youth work students, the practitioners and the young people then the theories can become oppressive. The development of theory and related curricula should allow the different voices and experiences to contribute to social construction and not social conformity as seen above.

Here again the contradiction raises its head; "starting from where young people are and setting aims for practice which arise from a concern for and appreciation of the young person as a person. Giving major attention to their view of the world.... and to the process of their experience - its social context" (Davies 1991, p.5) or "the attempted imposition of the practitioners viewpoint" (Jeffs and Smith 1989 p.18).

The debates continue between theorists, practitioners and policy makers. They are significant because they do affect funding in a very poorly resourced service. There was a need for a central body which could hold these concerns and enable clarity and development. Since 1973 the National Youth Bureau had acted as a national resources centre for information, publications, training, research and development and as a forum for association, discussion and joint action, for those involved in youth affairs and social education of young people.

Thompson (HMSO, 1982) proposed that a new advisory council which would "act as a national forum for development of new policy and thinking" was needed. This should be supported by a government department viz. DES. The NYB would continue to respond closely to the field to give support and disseminate information. It was recognised that the two bodies would have to work closely together and complement each other. The information from the practitioner, through NYB, would be essential for the policy makers.

The reasons why the contradictions continue in youth work theory and practice is not only through lack of communication between practitioners and policy makers or
theorists but because of the confused messages practitioners took from other related
disciplines about young people. Youth workers have available wide and diverse
sources of literature about the adolescent, youth cultures, problem youth and so on.
For the most part they are electric and read that which informs their own situations or
practice. In the next section I will take a look at these traditions.

Youth Studies

As I have indicated in the previous chapters my own work is a study of young people
in their chosen environment. I have emphasised that they are not deviants. This
was also reflected in the ministerial reports which presented a Youth Service for all
young people not only those who are seen to be on the margins of society Workers
constantly made the point that the vast majority of young people involved in the
Youth Service do not see themselves as having problematic lives” (NYB, 1988,
p.15). MacDonald (1993) claims that

throughout all post war discussions and theorising about youth it has
rarely been noticed that young people follow their parents on the pathway
to adulthood and make relatively smooth transitions which do little to
unsettle the stable patterns of social and cultural reproductions.

(MacDonald et al, 1993 p.1)

The study of youth is multidisciplinary and the research covers a multitude of areas
examining the conditions of young people from sociological, biological, psychological
and educational perspectives. Much of this work is the product of the different
professions working with young people e.g. teaching, social work, psychology and
medicine where particular outcomes are expected. The interest is, therefore, in
those whose behaviour is deviant from the norm. There is an obvious danger in
using this kind of work when it focuses on abnormality or deviance. All young people
come to be regarded as problem cases which need to be brought under control.
Unfortunately the popular press collude with this presentation of 'youth as trouble'
and as a result quite normal young people growing up within their community appear
to threaten the rest of the community. (Cohen, 1980)

The editorial of the 10th anniversary edition of Youth and Policy suggests that:

Perhaps the dominant theme which has informed and underwritten
accounts of youth in the past fifty years is that of youth as a social
problem. From psychologists to politicians and from sociologists to social
It draws attention to the notion that in society's eyes young people are a 'problem' and that the reason for studying youth is to understand the nature of this problem. The motives for wanting to understand it will vary according to the enquirer.

Unfortunately the problems are themselves sensational and when youth workers share stories it is always the 'sensational' which is listened to and not the everyday youth work. Thus working with difficult groups raises the profile of the worker but does nothing to maintain the status of the fairly mundane youth centres where most work is done. Willis faced a similar dilemma when describing the everyday activities of the young people he was studying. Recognising that antisocial behaviour like excessive drinking and fighting are part of the everyday experiences of many white, male working class youth but also that this is sensationalist he did not want to "fan the flames of sensation" (Willis, 1990, p.99) but try to understand the real human contexts and meanings.

Michael Banks (Brake, 1985) adds his voice to the position that most young people are conformists and probably adopt fashions of their generation but not 'deviant' behaviour. As do Coffield et al (1986) in their ethnographic study of conventional working class youth in the North East of England in the early 80's. They point out the discrepancy between the media presentation and the conformity of most young adults.

Hendry's (1993) longitudinal study between 1987 and 1991 of young people in Scotland also contributes that adolescence is less stormy than supposed. "Adolescence need not - and typically does not - mark the onset of either open or covert conflict as young people seek to establish a sense of autonomy." (p.179) As
far as basic values and attitudes are concerned there is generally agreement and "many young people accept their parents as behavioural models and develop a lifestyle compatible with their subcultural upbringing and experiences." (p.179)

The classical (Coleman 1989) approaches in youth studies are derived from psychoanalysis or sociology and are concerned with the individual's development during adolescence or their role and position in society. Both of these are seen to cause the storm and stress during the time of transition. In accounting for this and resultant deviant behaviour the debate was between those who 'blamed the victim' for the anti-social behaviour or deviancy where misbehaviour in juveniles being seen as pathology or maladjustment and individual rehabilitation being the pathway to reform and those who blame the breakdown of the social system, "realistically a hungry boy will steal". (Brake, 1985, p.32) Both of these approaches maintained the view that the dominant culture was the norm and other behaviour was deviant.

From the beginning of this century the study of adolescence has developed. Initially in the USA under the influence of Cooley, Mead and Thomas the Chicago School devised a methodology for studying urban youth and working class life styles which provided insights into urban social systems. In their close studies of slums and ghettos they discovered that they each had their own social structures with specific norms and patterns of behaviour. These life styles were uncovered and given validity even though they were researched in the context of middle class values. Their social disorganisation theories made the assumption that the dominant society was the correct one and there was no social diversity. They were committed to a model of society in equilibrium and although the links between neighbourhood, class, ethnicity and culture were hinted at they were never developed. (Brake 1985)

Whyte (1943) found in his Chicago slum that the street corner boy subcultures were more than simply delinquent. It was where local boys organised their social life whilst unemployed and that their behaviour was considered normal. The underlying values of that part of society differed from the respectable middle class values including those of the researcher. These early ethnographic studies highlight the problems which can arise when the move is made from the actual study and the interpretation to using it to explain deviant behaviour.
Following from the early work of the Chicago School the working class male became the object of much research and youth culture, a term first used by Talcott Parsons in 1947, became a post war phenomenon. There were those who argued against deviancy and delinquency subculture theories and included Matza. In his early work (Matza and Sykes, 1957) he shows that the young men he studied were committed to wider values but not, perhaps, conventional morality.

Delinquents use ‘techniques of neutralisation’/linguistic constructs which make an appeal to special, mitigating circumstances. These act to neutralise pre-existing normative constraints, and five types of neutralisation are seen as operative. These are denial of responsibility (I didn’t mean it), denial of injury (I didn’t really hurt him), denial of the victim (he was only some queer), condemning the condemners (everyone picks on us) and appeals to higher loyalties (you’ve got to help your mates).

(Matza, 1961)

Matza argues that these responses are no different from other young people - whatever their status. The underlying values are actually the same it is the activities which are probably different. Pursuing this argument, Matza and Sykes (1961) suggest that some delinquent values such as seeking excitement, toughness, disdain for work are male values and held by many of the male population. Whilst the more acceptable value system presented by Weber in his notion of the Protestant work ethic incorporates ambition, responsibility, respect for property and honest hard work which have become part of the dominant value system. The concealed deviance of the “swashbuckling leisure values” held by many and indulged in during “competition in games, drunken orgies and gambling” are accepted as normal within the right setting. Rather than judging behaviour in relation to the dominant value system it needs to be contextualised.

In Britain similar research was being pursued and Mays (1954) in a study of Liverpool working class life found an overtly delinquent tradition which emphasised toughness, daring and defiance of authority which also offered emotional solidarity. Delinquency was “not so much a symptom of maladjustment as adjustment to a subculture which was in conflict with the culture of the city as a whole”. (p.147). Values were not absent but they were based on different positions in the class structures which had different traditions.
The Institute of Community Studies continued this work in the 50's and 60's and included Willmott's (1966) study of the lives of adolescent boys in East London. This and other studies (Morris 1957, Kerr, 1958) presented normal life in working class neighbourhoods which added to the understanding of the cultural patterns and led to a different interpretation of behaviour.

These ethnographic studies highlighted the differences in attitudes and values in working class communities and how young people's behaviour was affected by them. In addition to this work the 60's generated an interest in the diverse experiences of students in the comprehensive secondary school where young people from different family backgrounds shared a common experience. Education was the most central experience for all and school provided a distinct social system for adolescent society. Hargreaves (1967) in his two year study of the final two years in a secondary school found that there were different subcultures which reflected the streaming. Those in the higher educational streams who were academically able were able to identify with the pupil role, whilst those in the lower stream disassociated themselves from the school forming a 'deliquescent' sub culture. School values were seen as effeminate and masculinity was celebrated through the tough manliness of hard, unskilled manual labour.

The values which help the 'lads' cope at school Willis (1977) maintains are the same ones which ensure their entrapment into manual labour when they leave. Taking up the notion of different sub cultures operating within the school he argues that identification with a sub culture will determine how life choices are made.

The danger in this approach is that it could be regarded as deterministic and Matza (1969) asks why some chose deviance and others do not in the same social situation. As well as social circumstances permitting 'affinity' a deviant has a predisposition towards deviance because it has an attractive force. A person is attracted and then chooses (Matza 1969, p.169). Warwick (1993) reflects on his own life as a juvenile criminal in his mid twenties after many years in custody. For him the attraction was the excitement and money regardless of the consequences. Despite many attempts by Intermediate Treatment agencies and remand centres to offer alternatives it is only when

**a young person is ready to give up crime nothing or no one can stop them. They need to reach a certain level of maturity, and with that maturity often**

48
comes a rationality that overrides and dampens any high one would have previously got from an act of crime.

(Warwick, 1993, p.38)

He cannot explain why he chose his particular life style at 12 and asking the question how can adolescents be prevented from reoffending he maintains that once they start "going out of control, they also start to lose control of themselves, and there is little anyone can do to stop them." (p.35)

However, despite the recognition that individuals within a particular cultural group can and do make their own choice it was useful to try to understand the pressures to conform which arise from belonging to a particular class within society. In the late 60's the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) developed this work and moved away from a global view of "youth culture" to "restore class to the centre of sociology of youth". (Murdock, 1972 p.24). This meant that sub culture theories were developed which depended highly on class analysis. The "symbolic leisure style" say of the skinheads was interpreted as a response to the erosion of some expressions of working class culture. (Clarke and Jefferson 1972)

For the skinheads, whose experience was grounded in some of the crucial nexi of this economic and cultural conflict (e.g. housing, education and employment), their style attempted to revive, in a symbolic form, some of the expressions of traditional working class culture which could articulate their social experience. This we take to being the process behind what Cohen describes as choosing the 'downward option', a 'choice' which is grounded In, and structured by, their experiential situation.

(Clarke and Jefferson, 1972 p.156)

This structural and cultural analysis of behaviour offered a more formal analysis of young people's groups which explored how the role they played in the dominant culture. It should be noted that CCCS developed a fairly sophisticated analysis of society which used hegemony (Gramsci 1971) as a central concept.

In the conclusion of their article, Clarke and Jefferson (1972), comment on social reaction recognising that this aspect is important. It is also significant for the youth worker because it considers the significance of understanding behaviour in terms of sub cultures. This means quite simply that having recognised the distinctiveness and significance of young people's groups then they can be incorporated into the dominant social system exerting some form of social control. This is often translated
into morality by the state or commercial enterprise which attempts to universalise the style of a sub culture so that the dress and artefacts associated with it become available to all. The affect of these two reactions to fairly small sub cultural groups is to increase public awareness in general and as a consequence ordinary young people who adopt a particular fashion or style are regarded as part of ‘youth culture’ and its negative connotations. This is not to deny that this work on youth sub culture was not valuable especially Cohen’s (1972) work on the inter-relationship of youth culture, mass media and public reaction in his study of mods and rockers.

CCCS did raise a significant issue for youth cultural studies and that was the absence of young women in the ‘whole of the literature’. (McRobbie and Garber, 1975) The invisibility of women in most sociological research was being noticed (Oakley, 1974, Rowbotham, 1973) as the women’s movement infiltrated academia. The recognition of the absence of young women from the public place and the enquiry into their own sub cultures, rather than on the margins of those of the men affected youth work eventually. Thompson specifically refers to the need to work with girls (HMSO, 1982 p.62-64). Young women were present, but in relation to the boys. Male sexuality is a dominant feature of adolescent studies and the girls were defined by their relationship to this as ‘sex objects’. Lees (1986) study of adolescent girls looked at their developing sexuality in the context of social relationships and examined how female sexuality was constructed. She argues that the problems for girls arise because it is not acknowledged how femininity and masculinity are understood in social rather than biological terms. Women’s sexuality is contained within the family and the domestic world of the home. For the adolescent girl the “bedroom culture” (Griffin, 1985 p.60) is not visible and within the private sphere as is the move into domestication and the marriage role. Girls behaviour is seen in biological terms rather than sociological and comes to be seen as ‘natural’ and therefore unalterable.

It is regarded as natural for girls to be attracted to boys, unnatural for girls to have intense relationships with the same sex; natural for them to enjoy domesticity and want to get married and have children but unnatural to want a career that would conflict with marriage or to put their main energies into sport of creative activities. Most of all a girl is expected to put others before herself and to be caring and unselfish. Sexuality is looked upon as the epitome of natural behaviour. It is natural for men to be promiscuous but unnatural for women to be so, natural for the woman to
try and 'catch' a man and entice him into marriage, unnatural for a woman to live without a man.

(Lees, 1986, p.17)

The biological changes which happen during puberty belong to a quite separate discipline but what the feminist researchers where advocating was an examination of these in relation to the sociological and psychological studies recognising that for young women these physical changes and the meanings attributed to them by society were significant. Puberty, when the body develops rapidly with the onset of menstruation for girls and the physical signs of male adulthood for boys, gives rise to a greater sexual awareness and often brings with it a period of turbulence while these new experiences are translated into what it means to be a woman, or a man. Here the social, psychological and biological meet and often there are conflicting messages given by society about adult roles and the actual experiences of the young person.

A useful approach for my study is from an anthropologist who is studying the adolescent in their own cultural setting and takes into account observed behaviour. Here behaviour is 'normal' and set within the context of the local community and is interpreted within the culture of a specified grouping. James (1986) spent two years with a group of young people, observing the processes, undergoing "a rite of passage to adulthood which adolescents construct for themselves in the absence of any institutionally constructed transition to the adult world" (p.156).

James refutes the proposition that in contemporary British society being 'adolescent' means 'doing nothing', having 'nowt to do' and 'nowhere to go'. The focus of her work is on the use of bodies in adolescent behaviour particularly testing the boundaries, the limits and strengths, of the physical body. The exuberance, mayhem and riot of the group seem to mirror the upheavals in the physical changes of puberty.

It is a style of belonging, a way of using the body, which to the untutored eyes of the adult world appears aggressive, violent and potentially dangerous. It is these outward signs of disorderly conduct which reinforces to popular conception of adolescence as a turbulent anomic period of life . . . But gradually during my fieldwork I came to understand such bodily techniques as symbolic acts of violence, as experimentation upon and with the boundaries and limits of the physical body: rarely were any of the children involved in damaging acts of aggression. Their
‘disorderly’ conduct represented a recording of the use of the body, the playing out of power relationships through the medium of the physical body for those who feel themselves to be powerless.

(James 1986, p.168)

Coming to terms with the changes in the body and the awareness of their sexuality is not easy and as James observes what is seen as aggression or violent behaviour by adult observers is often no more than this process. This is not to say that there is no real violence or aggression in people, and this will be explored in the next chapter, but some apparently aggressive behaviour is normal when seen from a cultural perspective.

More recently the transition from school to work has become a major focus of research. The protraction of this period and the contraction of the youth labour market has resulted in a disruption to the move into adulthood and taking on adult roles within society. For those who went into higher education this was always a long process when education was completed post 21. "In the 'old' model, the transition from school was regarded as a relatively smooth process because trajectories were highly predictable with most young people managing to enter jobs which confirmed their prior expectations."(Furlong 1993 p.24) Although now it is possible that the better qualified still find jobs with long term prospects those who leave education with few or no qualifications are left to “negotiate a dangerous route between school and work”" (Furlong 1993). Furlong, along with others argues that Government Youth Training Schemes do little to assist those who are educationally disadvantaged. No longer do the working class boys follow their fathers into the same type of jobs (Willis, 1977) and career trajectories (Roberts 1987) were not as well signposted for young people in the 80's and 90's. What does remain consistent is “the inappropriate nature of much of what was taught in many secondary schools” (Hendry, 1993 p.76). For the generation which followed Willis (1977) and Corrigan’s (1979) the relevance of the statutory education system had changed little. Many working class boys regarded their school experience as a waste of time, whilst the young women, who did not feature in the earlier work, were more positive about school and less resentful of authority (Hendry 1993).

As part of the ESRC 16 - 19 initiative (Banks et al 1992, Bates, 1988) looked at the work transitions of a group of YTS trainees. The girls in the study were asked what they planned to do before they left school. A wide range of previous ambitions were
recalled e.g. beauty therapist, typist, working in big department stores, laboratory technician, working with people particularly children. The girls are now training to be care attendants for the elderly and it was suggested that they would never have chosen this training as a first choice.

However Bates concludes that the limitations of choices offered by YTS training may appear to be the socialising influence and the girls experience it as such. There are other factors including the structure of the labour market, occupational culture, working class culture, youth culture and gender which play just as significant a role.

Banks et al (1992) major study of 5,000 young people entering the labour market widens the debate to include the socialisation process as well. Wallace (1986) shares a similar concern for this broader process of social reproduction. The actual transition is not simply school into work but it is the way in which one generation of children become the next generation of workers with values and attitudes appropriate to their position in the occupational hierarchy."(p.94) From her research in 1979-80 she argues that rather than the school system and training for being the social reproductive force it is the domestic life cycle.(p.110) The ideology of the home appeared to effect the behaviour of men and women as they grew up. It ensured social reproduction in three ways, materially - paying the rent required regular income, socially - family expectations to set up home and symbolically - the home represented security and adult status.

The transition to work marks not only economic independence but also individual autonomy. This offers the young person the opportunity to develop into a mature adult and take on responsibilities of citizenship. The consequences of being out of work are noted by Walker and Barton (1986)
In capitalist societies, it is difficult to preserve a distinction between the ‘worth’ of an individual, as conferred by their wage, and their identity. Of course, the wage provides purchasing power and the capacity to participate in competitive consumption. . . But the social power of the wage derives from its mediating power. It has gradually evolved to become the major mediator in the relentless drive for individuals to compare themselves against each other; it is used to articulate and to explore differences in rank and status, rights and ‘worth’. To be out of work, and out of wage means you are also outside of that crucial form of discourse that is the accepted framework for the expression of identity and for the assessment and comparison of individuals’ social status, accomplishments and achievements.

(Walker and Barton, 1986, p. 3)

From the wealth of research in this significant area which affects the majority of young people I have selected the aspects which can contribute to understanding the development of the young person and which will affect the kind of work that can be done in the informal education setting. I am aware that I have only been able to include some of the topics in this very complex area of work.

**Conclusion**

The tension between social control and personal development has been evident in the history of youth work and continues to be a point of debate amongst practitioners and policy makers. In this chapter I have tried to explain how this tension can be creative as theory evolves and policies are made. The Victorian social reformers saw young people as victims of social evils from which they needed protection whilst needing guidance when taking on the responsibilities of adulthood. These nineteenth century values continue to motivate some youth workers and policy makers in the late twentieth century. This is in spite of the Albemarle and Thompson reports and ministerial consultations on the core curriculum which present youth work as giving young people the opportunity to question current attitudes and standards and “if necessary reject them”. This approach focuses on the development of the individual and encourages their participation in society. It encourages personal growth and realisation of their full potential by offering new experiences and opportunities to those who chose to take them. The key element in youth work is that it is not compulsory and it is a leisure time activity for young people.

It may be that the policy makers believe that they promote experience and participation as the two pillars of youth work but the young people interviewed by
Gillespie (1992) had a different understanding. When they were asked why there were youth clubs the most popular answer was for social control. Social control meant discipline, keeping the kids off the street, avoiding bad company, an alternative to fighting and to prevent burglaries. The youth workers were also asked for their view and for them social development rated highest. Social development included working together and understanding others (p. 66). The interpretation of a piece of youth work can be different depending on the perspective or motivation of the individual who may be a young person, youth worker or local authority officer. The question posed by Jeffs and Smith about social education has not been answered, perhaps because there is not one but many depending on who is replying. But the question always needs to be asked. Social and personal education can be a form of social control complying to the values of the dominant culture but it can also encourage individuals to make informed choices about their own life styles. These ideas will be examined more closely in the next chapter by considering different experiences of power in young people’s lives.

Another factor which contributes to the lack of a clear answer to this question is the voluntary character of youth work. This is not only for the young people but also many of the staff are volunteers and as was seen in both the historical survey and ministerial reports is a significant influence on the delivery of the service. The lack of professionalism and poor management has lead to confusion about the purpose of youth work (Jeffs and Smith 1987). It has encouraged individual workers to develop their own styles of work with the emphasis on building relationships with young people. The qualities looked for in a worker were personal skills and the ability to relate to young people not good management skills. It was the threat of the national curriculum for the youth service that forced both professional and voluntary staff to recognise the value of the work they were doing and were able to state clearly the purpose, outcomes and identify performance indicators for their work. Here again we need to ask whether the work being done is a form of social control or whether it contributes to the young persons social and personal development.

In the final section of this chapter selected areas from the extensive literature on youth studies were refereed to in relation to my own study. The absence of youth work literature became obvious and the consequence is that the perspective of the youth worker does not contribute to this field of study nor to the development of youth
policy in society. As informal educators working with young people in their leisure time, youth workers could be better advocates of the young person's point of view. The Thompson report reiterated the fact that young people were accepted by the youth service for what they are, without labels. It was encouraging to discover that some ethnographic studies presented young people as normal and not as deviant (James, 1986, Coffield, 1986, Hendry, 1993). I was particularly interested in this research as it supported my own premise that the young people in my study were just normal young people living in a working class community who met on the streets. What I am now aware of is that youth work theory and practice should be contributing much more to youth studies because youth workers are meeting, relating to and working with normal young people in today's society. They can, perhaps, represent the position of young people in the youth policy debate, for example, on sexual health, crime prevention, use of illegal substances and so on. The response of youth workers to these issues will reflect their position on the question of social control or social and personal development. We need to do more thinking about the relationship between practice, theory and policy to be clear about the work we are doing.

Before presenting my own practice in the field study I want to look more closely at the key concepts which are central to the development of my theory.
CHAPTER 4

POWER: WHO IS IN CONTROL?

Introduction

Having examined the literature on young people, youth culture and youth work agencies I want to turn now to a more specific area which affects young people's lives and one that is central to my thesis - power and control. I will focus on the theoretical debates that inform and shape young people's lives and the manner in which they are regulated and influenced through informal education during their leisure time. When young people are together with their peers they have the opportunity to experience greater control over their own lives and experiences away from the constraints of the adult world they are about to enter (Rapoport 1989). They can explore their personal power in contrast to the more structural hierarchical power systems which operate in the workplace and the familial experience.

However, in order to look at this I will begin by examining certain understandings of power and particularly authority and control as they have been explored by sociologists and educationalists. Then to see how these theories relate to the specific areas of gender, class, aggression and territory, as these were important in my fieldwork and seemed to be the critical points where young people were at odds with the community. Finally, I shall examine concepts of power in terms of control, self-determination and changing beliefs and values through education.

Power

Power has been seen as an individual or group carrying out their own will over another individual or group of people. Often within these understandings of power there is also the implication that it is often against the will of the powerless group or individual. The term power has the connotation of imposition in the traditional understanding. Lukes (1986) summarises Weber's (1964) stance as "the chance of a man or a number of men to realise their own will even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action" (Lukes 1986 p.2). Dahl also pursues this
understanding of an individual's power seeing it as "A having power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something B would not otherwise do" (Lukes 1986 p.2). Both of these concepts of power focus on the idea of power over and is perhaps the most commonly held view of power, especially in the area of personal, individual power.

However distinction has been made between individual power and that of large corporations in the modern business world. Galbraith presents this kind of analysis of power within the market place and how choices are limited by the producers of goods. This way of looking at power through control of the market forces is related to some of the debates about youth culture and how these are instigated and sustained.

Power as a 'system resource' which operates to the benefit of the dominant class and supports the class system is presented by Talcott Parsons. It is summarised by Lukes as "a generalised facility or resource in the society which enables the achievement of collective goals through the agreement of members of a society to legitimise leadership positions whose incumbents further the goals of the system, if necessary by the use of negative sanctions." (Lukes, 1986 p.3) This is power exercised by consensus or coercion - depending on whether the individual is part of the dominant group or not. This way of looking at power is helpful when considering class, education, leisure activities and unemployment. These are sub systems within our society. I will consider later a practical example of how this understanding of power was used as a means of empowering those normally disempowered in the class system in the educational work of Freire in Brazil.

Weber (1964) distinguishes between "imperative co-ordination" as described above as "power over" and authority which legitimates within the bureaucratic system Parsons was writing about. This type of authority is official and fairly impersonal. The role and function of an individual endows them with authority within the system. The individual is selected for their specific competence to carry out that function and their authority is part of that function. Thus the head teacher in the school system, the chief constable in the police force and so on has authority to ensure the system i.e. education, law enforcement is carried out in accordance with the regulations which operate within that particular system. These governing regulations are considered by the bureaucracy to be right for everyone and organisations run so that these rules are perpetuated. A clear hierarchy of power is developed and a multi-
level pyramid of authority clearly defines how each level supervises the other. Promotion within the system is based on qualifications and ability to do the job.

In recent years attention has focused on the way organisations work and in these studies different theories of power are applied. Some have their roots in political theory which is either concerned with maintaining the power base of a society or with the revolutionary analysis, which want to change the nature of the power structure. Whilst other work has been more applied to actual organisations and the way they work. Handy (1985) in his work Understanding Organisations uses many of the theories about power and authority to look at individuals in organisations. In addition to the terms Weber uses he develops another concept, influence. For him authority is similar to that of Weber's "authority is used when the power is legitimate and has some recognised official backing." (Handy 1985 p.119) He distinguishes between authority and influence

- To say that someone has influence is therefore, in my thinking, a shorthand way of saying the power to influence. To say that someone has authority is a shorthand way of recognising and accepting his or her power source.

(Handy 1985 p.119)

Influence works in two ways, through socialisation and through attitude change. Socialisation operates through either compliance, identification or internalisation. The first is effected by learning the traditions of the organisation and accepting them freely or being forced to conform. The second goes with co-option or apprenticeship when the individual starts to adopt the values and norms of the organisation. Internalisation is evident when the individual has some hand in shaping the values norms and practices of the organisation. (Handy 1985, p.143-45) Socialisation is concerned with behavioural changes whereas changes in attitude are more difficult. Handy does not have such a clear analysis of how this might happen but he does argue from Cohen (1962) that the less an individual is paid the more likely she/he is to change their views. Those who have high rewards will formally agree to change their method, but not necessarily agree with the principle.

I have included this here because I think it links with the earlier discussion of power as a system resource and the place people have in the system. For the management agencies it relates in a practical way to staffing in the Youth Service, which employs a very large percentage of voluntary staff and part time workers in youth centres.
This is a large group of workers who have low wages or non payment. Their motivation is the desire to be part of the organisation and identification with the perceived values and norms. As these have changed recently with the discussion of the national curriculum and the need for greater accountability the organisation has had to instigate changes in attitudes amongst part time workers. For the youth worker it has different applications, particularly to what is considered anti-social behaviour by some working class young people in my field work. They have less status in the organisation and where there is a conflict of values attitudinal change is difficult. This will be explored further in the fieldwork and is central to the development of the theory in chapter eight.

In his work Handy does not question the role of the bureaucratic system in society but seeks to understand the variety of organisations and how individuals can manage within them. In contrast to this view I want to look briefly at Paulo Freire’s theory of dialogical action in Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire, 1972). From a position of wanting to change the existing structures/organisations he considers how change can be brought about. His theory is based on the notion of praxis where reflection and action are in constant dialogue and that this dialogue takes place between everyone involved in the process and not simply the elite. His concern is that leaders in a revolution might simply substitute themselves for the deposed leaders within the same oppressive system. The theory presents a different way of organising society which allows participation by all especially those who have been powerless within the old system.

He uses the term antidialogical to refer to an imposed structure and dialogical to describe situations which allow a social structure to emerge which has both authority and freedom. Communication is the basis of dialogue and implies each part of the organisation listening to the others. In addition to this co-operation and unity are also recognised as key elements of the process. This contrasts with the hierarchical organisations where experts retain most of the power and influence because they control the primary resources. This connects with Freire’s presentation of education in which the teachers bank the knowledge and allow access to it in a controlled environment. Freire’s own dialogical theory is based on his theory of education which centres on problem solving. The ‘world’, real experiences or individual’s lives throw up the questions which then the teacher and student together try to solve. This
style of working is more akin to the recommendations of Experience and Participation (HMSO, 1982) where the young people are central to what happens in youth work. However, for the most part, the more bureaucratic forms of power/authority operate in the community, the formal group as well as the youth centre itself.

Weber (1964), in addition to authority within bureaucracy, also identifies authority within patriarchal structures in the tradition of a society where one person is designated the chief, usually though the tribe or family. The leaders are not selected democratically or for their particular competencies but because of their birth. The chief is all powerful and obedience is owed by the subjects. Appointments and leadership positions are granted by the chief personally and not necessarily on merit as in the bureaucratic system.

The third type of authority identified by Weber is charismatic when an individual personality is set apart from ordinary people and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman powers and qualities. The individual is treated as a ‘leader’. This is a direct antithesis to the former two and appeals to common sense. When people say leaders are born, not made this is the kind of leadership to which they refer. It could be that in both other types there is an individual who has these qualities, but that is not requisite for those positions. The source of charismatic power is within the individual not their role or function.

Whereas all of these definitions of power have been considering different situations in the workplace, family, state or community settings Foucault takes a more general and all pervasive view of power in modern society. He calls the process normalisation which is coercive and affects behaviour. Self understanding, presentation and even gestures conform to a particular pattern. He moves away from the power over concept to total social control. This is not only from outside by others control and dependence but also from within when their own identity is formed by consciousness and self knowledge. In this understanding of power its internalisation is as significant as its imposition. In my study the distinction is made between normal behaviour and attitudes within a particular community and the same behaviour being viewed as deviant by the dominant class. Social control is coercive not only through state intervention but more dramatically by the mass media however, there are many cultural forms which are clearly in opposition to the
dominant one. This was reviewed briefly in the last chapter and will be taken up again both in the analysis of the field work and in the development of the theory.

Lukes' (1974) theory of power is based on a political analysis which does not explore specific issues in their own right but as they relate to the concept. This was useful because it brought together many of the applied understandings of power in the previous section. In his theory there are three dimensions of power. The first two dimensions of power he argues are limited because they focus on the behaviour of individuals or groups which have control or influence over another individual or group as well as being based in the values and beliefs of a dominant institution or organisation. This can be seen as having deep historical roots in Weber's original work. They both are firmly rooted in the notion of power over and this is often confrontational and is focused on particular issues or behaviour.

The second dimension includes the view of power within institutions where the dominant group set the agenda within which conflicts can arise. This includes the view that conflicts do not arise because there do not seem to be any decisions which need to be made. The dominant group control the discussions at each level within the hierarchy. This is similar to the view of Freire of antidialogical action.

In the presentation of his third dimensional view Lukes brings into question the dominant paradigm which excludes some particular individuals or groups from the decision making process. The possibility of being part of this process may never be recognised and conflict remains latent. He describes this as "a contradiction between the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude" (Lukes 1974 p 25). There are many difficulties with this view because it goes outside the dominant structural system to consider how individuals might respond in situations if they had real autonomy.

In order to explore this concept Lukes refers to Gramsci's contrast between thought and action, i.e. the co-existence of two conceptions of the world, one affirmed in words and the other displayed in effective action" (Gramsci 1971 p 326). Freire (1972) uses an example of revolutionary change and shows how easy it is simply to substitute one oppressive regime for another after a coup if the there is no political restructuring. The words may have changed, but if the actions of the new leaders
are no different then little will change. Freire proposes a new structure which gives each person or group an effective place in the dialogical action.

It is difficult to present Lukes view of three dimensional power as a theoretical concept and not give practical examples. However, Freire also presents a theoretical notion which was developed from his own experience in education in Chile and Brazil where the power struggle was a reality for many of the poor. Both of these have contributed to theoretical development within the thesis and in the next section I want to look at some specific issues central in my field work, gender issues, aggression, violence and territory.

**Gender issues and power**

Maguire (1986) uses Lukes three dimensional views of power to analyse how power is being used against women in our society.

> The first face of power is visible direct action, where force or might are used, or in public decisions, taken on publicly discussed issues. The second face of power can be seen in attempts to stifle an issue as it emerges, or in attempts to redefine or reshape an issue into something less threatening. The third face of power is the hardest to discern. Power in this third dimension is used to manipulate people's perceptions so that they are unaware of having a grievance. The history of women's oppression is littered with all three.  

*(McDowell, 1992 p.20)*

Maguire in common with other feminist writers during the 1970's and 1980's is concerned about women's position in society and is looking for reasons why women are dominated not only by individual men through violence or the threat of it but by the repressive legislation, job opportunities for women and family structures (Smart and Smart, 1978). In the more liberal analyses of women's oppression these examples of power over women are overcome by changes in the law, changes in the job market, changes in education and training for young women, equal opportunities polices and so on.

However it is the third view of power which is much more difficult to locate, Maguire calls it insidious and "operates by controlling our perceptions of ourselves, our awareness of reality, by exercising manipulative control over our minds" (McDowell 1992 p 24). This radical view of power over women is the one less easily
acknowledged and it is only the radical feminists who advocate "deviancy from the accepted notions, the established values, the norms" (McDowell 1992 p 25). This is an attempt to create an alternative society which is better suited to the needs of women. When women take a course of action which deviates from the norms of the society this deviance is seen as a threat to those who hold the power. There may be two responses to this kind of action, the first to try to absorb it into the norm and make it acceptable, the second to label it as something undesirable and marginalise the individual or group. Further discussion of these approaches will form part of the analysis of the field work in chapter five, six and seven.

Aggression, violence and power

This would seem to be an example of Lukes' one dimensional power when one person or group is forced to behave in a particular way contrary to their will. It is also Weber's ‘having power over’ notion which is not necessarily aggressive or violent but carries the threat. When defining aggression "as the intentional process of subduing or achieving dominance over a rival" Marsh (1978) makes the link with power over another person. Aggression is one means of ensuring the dominant person or group maintain their control in both public and private life. In the study not only did the young people show aggression towards each other at times but other people and groups had aggressive attitudes towards the young people.

Aggression does not necessarily lead to violence, but it is implicit within it. There is always the possibility that physical injury could be inflicted. This experience of power over is the one that is felt most keenly in situations where the powerful exert their control. However aggressive attitudes are also used to cajole people into compliance. The aggressive salesperson can get results, the aggressive boss ensure the work force produce the goods. The value system of the particular society will affect the way these expressions of aggression are understood. In a hierarchical system the boss is the most powerful and it would be quite legitimate to ensure obedience through aggressive attitudes to subordinates. This fits into Weber's understanding of authority within the organisation and would be an acceptable form. However when this is transferred into family relationships where the male is the head of the household and the wife and children play subordinate roles this form of aggression has been legitimised in personal relationships.
Similarly with law enforcement or in schooling Corrigan (1979) notes that the power of the police and teachers to "do some very strange and arbitrary things". To the young person on the street the power of the policeman is seen as total: he can hit you, put your name in the book or put you on probation or in an approved school away from your home and mates". (p137) The action of the police and representatives of other institutions can be interpreted as aggressive within the dominant cultural values. They are seeking to have control over the young men in Corrigan's study. Marsh (1978) presents a similar view showing how the aggressive response of the media and the police to the aggro of different youth cultures in the 50's and 60's.

Both Marsh and Corrigan present a view of the aggressive or deviant behaviour of the young men in their studies which does not link aggression with power and control. What is perceived as aggressive behaviour, getting into trouble, smashing milk bottles and fighting, was for Corrigan's boys 'just knocking about' on the street corners. This kind of activity, studied in the 1930's by Whyte (1943) in Chicago, is an important element of the culture of the boys but at the same time is threatening to the dominant ruling group. "The major aspect of rules of society for these boys is the power of the enforcer rather than the existence of rules in the abstract" (Corrigan 1979 p.140). Their behaviour when they are hanging about the streets does not break any rules for them until the police arrive and interpret their behaviour as 'rule breaking'.

Finally in this section I want to look briefly at Marsh's theory that aggression is ritualised by groups of males and that this has historical and cross cultural links. Other societies have allowed this to be expressed and thus it has been socially controlled. One of the problems in recent years, especially with the football fans Marsh is studying, is that this aggro has been interpreted as aggression and as a challenge to power and control within our society. Consequently the formal controls have tried to crush these expressions of ritual aggression and this has changed the nature of them and they have lead to violence.

**Territory and power**

The saying an Englishman's home is his castle expresses a commonly held view that as a nation we are territorial, everyone likes to have area over which they can have
some control. Marsh (1978) in his study of football fans distinguishes between the conflicts between nations and the defence of personal space which includes the home and the immediate sphere of social control. The former have no equivalent in the natural world but the latter do and he argues that the aggression expressed in defence of territories is ceremonial, a show of power, rather than a display of violence. This has been the traditional role of the male. Robins and Cohen in their study of the working class community in the city also considered the significance of the living space.

What we refer to as territoriality is a symbolic process of magically appropriating, owning and controlling the material environment in which you live, but which in real, economic and political terms is owned and controlled by outsiders - in our society by private landlords or the state. It applies therefore, almost exclusively to working class areas.

(Cohen and Robins 1978, p.73)

Class did not emerge as one of the key concepts in the analysis of the field work or the development of the theory, even though initially it seemed it would, it was evident throughout the work. McRobbie (1991) raised the point after completing her study and commented that if she had to do it again she

would not harbour such a monolithic notion of class, and instead I would investigate how relations of power and powerlessness permeated the girls lives. . . . . . And from this I would begin once again perhaps to think about class.

(McRobbie, 1991, p.65)

It is therefore appropriate to briefly introduce the concept in relation to the theme of power.

Class and power

Here I want to focus on the idea of deviance, especially the debate concerning what is deviance and what is normality and locate the discussion specifically to an understanding of social class. This is because the field work examines these questions from this perspective.
Corrigan (1979) describes his study of school boys in Sunderland and his initial questions about truancy and why boys were non-attenders. Then he goes on to explain how the questions he initially asked were not the right ones. He started with two views of education: that it was a good thing and the more people have the better: and that it is the transference of "bodies of ideas from one group in society to another". His thesis was based on deviancy theories which interpreted truancy as "an action which is meant to attack the school values" (p.28). His field work led him to understand truancy as "an action which seems to have something to do with the boys protection of themselves from things that they don't like" (p.29)

There are two reasons I am interested in this aspect of his research. The first because Corrigan recognises through his work that the initial thesis he formulated within the middle class values of education was totally at odds with the reality of the working class boys he was observing. Also that the social worlds of each class is different as will be any interpretation of them by another. The middle class researcher assumed that the protest of young men in Sunderland might be similar to the protest of say university students who refused to attend lectures. (p23)

Secondly, it is the recognition that working class boys culture is developed in relation to the dominant culture, even if it is at odds with it. Using Corrigan's example here, compulsory education is enforced by the law and therefore most boys attend school to avoid punishment, however on the occasions when they miss lessons it is for self protection because the behaviour of the teacher is more threatening than the fear of the retribution of the law.

Dale (1986) points out that in recent years the school curriculum has changed to accommodate the aspirations and achievements of the lower streams in comprehensive schools with the introduction of practical subjects and more accessible exams. However the students continue to not like schools. The conclusion is to look for other reasons for non attendance than the actual curriculum. Dissonance within the system can occur when the authority lies within a different culture which is attempting to modify behaviour to support the status quo. It can be lack of understanding of the differences in values of one group to those of another. A team of middle class, Christian, volunteer youth workers were reflecting on their experience of running a Youth Club in a working class area of East London. One commented "I was bothered about our class difference. I think the team were
dominantly middle class and this made us manipulate situations." The workers were remembering their experience and talked about their fear of danger in that environment. It was by having a formally agreed constitution for the Club that they were able to maintain their control. But this was at the expense of not recognising the status of the working class members in society. The young people were seen as potential members of the middle class. Another volunteer expressed his understanding of the dissonance from his perspective:

I think we were very naive about what it means to be a working class young man. Some team members had a blinkered view of their entire social context, the sexual mores, their work and so on. The members were seen as individual human beings with individual potential but not as members of society.

(Bazalgette 1973 p.39)

In order to make young people conform in either school or youth club it is considered reasonable to adopt sets of rules. The punishment for disobedience can appear to be aggressive to the young person who refuses to comply. Gramsci (1971) in his notion of hegemony was interested in how value and belief systems contrary to the dominant culture were understood within it and how the behaviour of some groups interpreted. This was referred to in chapters two and three and here again it is useful in trying to understand how legitimate aggressive behaviour of the school or youth club is acceptable and normal whilst the rebellious aggression of the young person is labelled deviancy.

In the final section the three different views of power control, education and self determination which emerged in the analysis of the field diaries and form the basis of the theory developed in chapter eight are introduced.

Power: control

This is perhaps the most simple aspect of power to see happening in society. Maguire (1992) describes it in its most obvious form in direct action in violence against women. "For example, a married woman may give in to rape or a beating by her husband rather than face the sanctions that will follow if she publicly discloses the state her marriage is in." (p.20) However, she also identifies the power used by the medical profession in prescribing valium to the abused woman in an attempt to
keep the situation under control as an example of maintaining the existing social order.

Corrigan also gives examples of this kind of control within the education system. In response to being asked to complete the sentence 'I come to school because...' more than half the answers were expressed in terms of compulsion. This is extended into the legal powers which could imprison the parent of the truant child. In both the personal and public arenas this way of understanding power is the most commonly held. They are based on "civilised standards of living" (Corrigan 1979 p23) which it is argued by Corrigan reflect middle-class morality.

In the 1960's the Grubb Institute was involved in a major piece of work which practically examined how the issue of power could be addressed in the youth work context. The researchers were involved in the Lyndhurst Club in Kentish Town. This youth club was run by volunteers as a model for working with a young people's committee. One of the underlying precepts is summed up by Ann Reed who was the key person in the Club throughout the thirty years.

One of the major problems for young people who came to the club was their attitude to authority. The aim of the Club was to help them work out their anti-parent, anti-society, anti-God attitudes, by giving them a taste of authority themselves. All the decision making about the internal running of the Club is handed over directly to the young people themselves, with the support of adults.

(Neale 1974 p37)

An example is given that when a 'wild group' came to the Club causing damage to property and some of the older committee members left and the situation was managed by the volunteer workers. Working within the club structure they managed to persuade some of the wilder ones to be elected onto the committee and take on responsibility. They were given power/authority for running the club according to the constitution previously agreed.

At one level this may seem to be a sharing of power by participation but at another level it was incorporation. The behaviour and attitudes of the wild group were changed to fit into the already established social structure of the Club. This structure was not changed by the participation of the wild ones. Those who were willing to be co-opted became part of the mechanism for control. Their power was only effective when their values were the same as those incorporated in the Club's constitution.
The system was set up to control the behaviour and encourage taking responsibility for that control. The rules of the Club had to be maintained. In a study carried out by Bazalgette (1973) ex club members recalled their association with Lyndhurst. The committee members had to carry out the decisions made in committee and banning others, particularly if they were mates, could be difficult. But the young people had to accept this responsibility and Ann, the key leader, ensured they did.

However the control of the money was seen by one committee member in a different light,

You just got called Treasurer, but it's really only a name. There's no action or anything. They say the Committee really run the Club but the team and Ann do really.

(Bazalgette 1973 p.18)

But not all responded in the same way and for some of the young members of the Lyndhurst Club the structure gave them the opportunity to

‘discover how to take and exercise their own authority and how that authority relates to the authority of others - the team of volunteers, the management committee, the financial backers, landlords etc.’

(Reed 1987 p.15)

Throughout the thirty years of work the Lyndhurst Club was committed to sharing power and gave young people responsibilities within an agreed system. This is similar to the notion of citizenship described by Jones (1992). “Citizenship contains two elements which attracted different weights in different situations: rights and responsibilities.” (p 142) These two notions are often stressed by adults when dealing with young people, “You want your rights but you have to accept the responsibilities that go with them”. In this view citizenship implies the relationship of the individual to society and therefore focuses on determinism and forms of social control.

Given the inequalities in the social structure which present some young people with opportunities whilst others have to contend with constraints it is possible for some to make ‘informed choice strategies’ whilst others deploy survival strategies. Citizenship can present some difficulties and Jones (1992) having recognised rights and responsibilities as one way of understanding the concept goes on to see it as
self determination and takes the 'life course approach'. This leads into discussing power as self determination.

**Power: taking control/self determination**

This notion of taking power of one's own life, having personal control and being able to make informed choices in life is the central part of the youth workers' understanding of social and political education for young people. This was discussed in chapter three in the section on Social Education. Youth clubs are just one of the leisure time facilities available to young people during adolescence where there may be the opportunity to have some control. The family, school and work do not usually offer the freedom to experiment. Rapoport (1989) tries to differentiate between the notion of control and that of experimentation,

> Whereas control denotes the imposition of external pressure on the child to behave in a manner that is desirable to the adult, experimentation denotes the child's autonomous trial and error behaviour. Thus while control refers to the passive role of the recipient of socialisation, experimentation refers to the active role he or she plays in shaping his or her own socialising experiences.

(Rapoport, 1989, p 232)

However both control and experimentation co-exist within socialisation and adolescence is the time when the young person can explore alternative behaviour and roles before becoming fully committed to them. It is also possible for youth workers to intervene and provide opportunities for young people to experiment with new roles as in the example of the Lyndhurst Club. By encouraging young people to take control in certain situations and participate in decision making they are able to gain confidence and discover their abilities. I want to distinguish here between participation as described in the Lyndhurst Club above and young people having the opportunity to develop their own ways of running their club. The Youth Worker is available to provide information and encouragement but does not enforce the model. This is one of the aspects of participation Thompson presented in Experience and Participation (HMSO, 1982).

As well as experience there is also the concept of participation and this style of working is necessary to meet young people's needs. The Primary purpose of participation in the Youth Service is to give the young individual a sense of belonging, a sense of identity, and the skills,
confidence and assurance needed to participate not only in his club or organisation but also in society at large.

(HMSO, 1982, p.36)

Giroux uses the term "empowerment" to express a similar idea. He defines it as the process by which students acquire the means to critically appropriate knowledge existing outside their immediate experience in order to broaden their understanding of themselves, the world and the possibilities for transforming the taken for granted assumptions about the way we live. (Giroux, 1989, p.189) I have chosen to use the term self determination in my theory because of the difficulties encountered by using the terms participation and empowerment in the youth work field. These terms have become catch all words and mean different things to different workers. Taking control of one's own life implies that the young person is in control and not being given power by the powerful person or group.

Citizenship is also used in different ways. As referred to above it concerns 'rights and responsibilities' and this is a more recent interpretation of the term. Giroux argues that as a result of economic demands "students become citizens in a narrow clearly defined culture which is organised around economic growth and cultural uniformity." (Giroux, 1989, p.19) Where as at the beginning of the century citizenship is linked to democracy and in the middle of the century Childs (1935) writes,

Citizenship education was about empowering students to struggle against relations of power and privilege that transformed them and others into objects and instruments of oppression.

(Giroux 1989 p. 11)

The discussion of these terms is extensive and my concern is that I find a term which I can use which puts forward the view that taking control of one's own life and making informed choices which might lead to change in values and beliefs or not and I have chosen self determination. It incorporates some of the ideas found in participation, empowerment and citizenship, but as discussed above it favours social change rather than social control.

The final section in this analysis takes further the view of power as changing beliefs and values which arises out of the notion of citizenship education presented today and the previous discussion of Freire's dialogical education.
Power: changing beliefs and values

In the 1980's Giroux recognised that citizenship education in the USA shifted to greater formation and regulation of experience and in Britain in the 1990's this is clearly the case. The Conservative government assumes this position when it sees the role of schools as the place where the 'real values' of our society are taught and children will become well behaved, law abiding citizens. This is an example of Freire’s antidialogical education. The students do not have the opportunity to question and discuss the value base as the dominant culture makes it clear. This view of education can be seen as social control.

The media also uses this kind of power. Maguire (1992) gives examples of this kind of power operating through the advertising industry which presents “women either as alluring objects of sexual gratification or as the successful housewife and mother who tends her beautiful and happy family and house and still has time and energy to be a soft and gentle to her husband and children as the skin on her cleverly protected hands” (p 24). These images make women feel inadequate want to change their lives to fit these images. Women who then conform to the values held by society are effectively controlled. Those who chose not to become labelled as deviant and are also effectively controlled.

However there is another way of looking at this, potential changes in beliefs and values can also lead to empowerment. Freire’s dialogical education is an example of this. Jeffs and Smith (1989) demonstrate the fundamental contradiction in youth work and asked whether it was an agent of social control or social change. The Thompson report Experience and Participation implies the latter when it encourages young people to 'experience and participate' as some of the local authorities encouraged. But can also be interpreted within the dominant middle class value system to allow young people to participate within the current social structures - but this does not imply change - rather control as they learn to operate within the status quo.

Conclusion

Power is the central concept which emerged from the first analysis of the field work. It came out of the observations and recordings in the field work diary of the pilot study. As the awareness developed there were some situations where the use of
power was clearly seen; these included aggressive attitudes, violent acts, territorial disputes, and in relationships between adult/adolescent, Youth Worker/young people’s group, councillors/community, local authority officers/community. In addition to the incidents where power could be seen to be present there were also indications that power can be used in different ways and these were not so obvious. There hidden in the social norms for example in relationships between boys and girls.

From the preliminary reading in the area it was obvious that the subject was extensively written about and there was a need to be very focused in this part of the literature review and introduction of the key concept. Although the reading throughout the study has been more wide ranging this chapter presented the theoretical issues which will be referred to in the analysis of the field work in the following chapters and form the basis of the theory developed in chapter eight.

Lukes (1986) three dimensional view of power was the catalyst which helped to develop the three categories of power. This forms the backcloth and woven into these three views are the ideas of the classic thinkers including Weber, Galbraith and Foucault as well as the pragmatic work of Handy and Freire. This introduction to the notion of power provides the base from which to explore the particular categories which emerged in the field work. These were limited to aggression and violence, gender issues and territory which emerged as the main sites of power within the groups. The discussion of these is fairly limited and serve as a theoretical introduction to these key themes.

The interpretation of power will not be exhaustive, the aim is to establish the different understandings of power used in the youth work setting. There are a number of words used to describe the primary aim of work with young people in the informal setting. These include empowerment, participation, social and political education and imply a sharing of power and the possibility of social change. However in practice it is most probable that social control is the primary function of youth work despite the rhetoric.

In order to explore this I looked at power as control first. This was the dominant expression of power in most situations in the field work, as it is in society. In order to define the other view power, taking control, I needed to separate education/changing values and beliefs from self determination. Perhaps in later work this may not be
necessary but at this stage in the development of my understanding I needed to
distinguish between the individual young person being able to make his/her own
choice and the education system i.e. informal youth work, offering limited information
or expecting certain standards of practice which would restrict choice. I have tried to
draw out the differences between these two views which will be illustrated in the field
work.

This chapter and the previous one form the base from which to move into the
analysis of the field work. The two sites and the characters will be introduced first.
Moments have been selected which illustrate the key concept and the categories
which were developed. This will be followed by an account of the analysis and finally
the theory which emerged.
CHAPTER 5

FIELDWORK: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TWO SITES

Introduction

The field work was carried out over a period of two and a half years. I had the opportunity to work with two different groups of young people in two different locations. The first began as a pilot and developed into a substantial piece of work which I was able to use as a case study and from the initial analysis was able to draw together a theory. The second field study gave me the opportunity to test out the theory in a different location, with a more formal group and the theory was modified. This chapter will provide the background information and contextualise the study. It will also introduce the many characters involved and thus provide a reference for the two subsequent chapters. I have selected only a few moments from the extensive field diaries to give substance to the key elements in the theory. As I explained chapter two the field work, macro concepts and theory developed in an interactive way which is impossible to capture at this stage. The field work is therefore illustrative and I have had to be highly selective (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). The moments will illustrate the dynamics of the groups and where power is sited. The nature of the power will be examined so that I can understand what is happening in specific incidents. The role of the worker is also part of the study and this will also be examined. The emerging theory was tested out in practice and the final conclusion relates the theory to intervention strategies and policy making.

The first piece of work covered a period of eighteen months during which time the membership of the group changed as well as the meeting place. At the beginning of the study the group was meeting on the Chapel steps on a small council housing estate about two miles from the town centre. The group of young people were annoying the local residents. The ward councillors had called a meeting for a residents and local authority officers to try to find a solution to the problem. This response was not untypical. Two years later there was a similar situation reported in the local newspaper of another Northern town. A residents meeting was to be held.
on a housing estate where residents were fed up with gangs of young people roaming the estate, drinking, using drugs, riding motorbikes, having sex and so on. A meeting was to be called between some young people, the community education service and other organisations dealing with young people. A local councillor said:

"We want to try and find some way of giving the young people something to do with their spare time. That way they won't need to hang around."

(The Barnsley Independent, 9th June 1992)

The problem is a common one. Groups of young people in many areas hang around the bus shelter, a telephone box, the shopping arcade. They meet with their friends and mess about. Whilst adult residents, local councillors and Youth Officers think they should be "doing something" with their spare time the young people may probably be content "messing about". (Corrigan, 1979)

This notion of "messing about" is common in the Youth Club environment. The young people want to meet with their friends, "mess about" and do their own thing. Whilst youth workers are employed as informal educators they are more likely to be found in Youth and Community Centres or school buildings working as police officers or child minders whose role is to "keep the kids off the streets." This conflict of roles and expectations between the young people and the Youth worker can result in frustration on both sides as well as total misunderstanding by adults outside the provision.

This first piece of fieldwork provided the opportunity to work with a group of young people which

- was not associated with a particular club or organisation,
- was a friendship group meeting on the streets,
- had no other adult involved,
- was working class
- I could work with them outside a management structure.

It gave me the opportunity to work with the group starting from where they were, encourage the young people to work in a participative way. I wanted to find out how
the group would develop when the youth worker was not restricted by already established ways of working.

The second piece of work was subsequent to this and lasted six months, after some initial analysis had been done and the beginnings of a theory was emerging. It was an opportunity to work with a quite different group of young people and using the developing theory look for any similarities or differences in the two groups. This group was an already established group which met regularly at the Youth Centre with a history of very traditional youth work. It was a more structured group, there were other workers involved, a group of parents supported events and there was a recognised management structure at the Centre. The young people's group was part of a network of similar groups in Britain with which they share common aims and philosophy. It was also international and this type of group originated in Norway twenty years ago. The group was quite large with about 35 young people in total. For the purposes of the study one of the sub groups, the newly formed planning group, was selected. This was a smaller group with 15 members and met once a fortnight. Meanwhile the primary group continued to meet two sessions per week and observations were made but not fully recorded.

The age range of the young people in both groups was similar. Most of the group were fifth year students with some 14 year olds and others in their early twenties. The fifth years, currently studying GCSE, in each group generally had different expectations. Those in the first group would not sit the exam, or expect few grades and were hoping to get jobs in garages, offices, shops or child care. Those in the second group were planning to go to sixth form college or College of Further Education and gain average to high passes in their exams.

Background to field work: Willow Dene

The first piece of work was located on a council housing estate about two miles from the centre of a northern town. It was a small estate of 600 living units built twenty years ago to replace slum terraced houses. The housing design gives a high density population without high rise flats. The flats and each dwelling has a front door on the outside, unlike high rise blocks of flats where the front door opens on to an internal corridor.
The estate gives the appearance of being designed to take into account the problems of the multi story blocks of the 60's. It is a mixed development with single person units on the lower level for the elderly and maisonettes for families on other levels. Around each block there is a grassed area with swings and slides for younger children. There are no privately owned houses on the estate although the two main roads which border two sides have mixed housing. At the centre of the estate there is a housing office, a launderette, the Community Centre and a shared Anglican and Methodist Church. The local shops, pubs and clubs are on the two main roads. There are frequent bus services to town along these roads but no service goes through the flats.

When the estate was built the council tenants were 'respectable'. But as time passed so-called 'problem families' were rehoused on the estate and it is now considered to be a 'rough' estate. These perceptions were voiced by residents, people who had lived in the area but not on the estate and ex residents in interviews. The council housing department denied any policy to rehouse problem families in one particular area but could not speak for past housing officers.

It was difficult to build up a single picture of life on the estate. There were those who were very happy, those who wanted to transfer to another area. The crucial factor seemed to be the behaviour of close neighbours and the proximity to the noisy areas of the estate. The flats and maisonettes themselves were comfortable and in good condition many residents looked after them well. Not many were bought privately as residents think they will be difficult to resell.

There are families with young children, lone parent families, single elderly, some elderly married couples, married couples with grown up children all living on the estate. The common characteristics are that they are working class and predominantly white European. The main provision made by the Social Services are Home Helps for the elderly but have very few cases involving children or family support. They do not regard it as a 'problem estate'.

Meeting the Group

A group of young people were meeting each night on the Chapel steps, near the Community Centre at the centre of the estate. The group were annoying the local residents and some of these had made complaints. As a response to this the ward
councillors had called a meeting for residents and some of the local community officers concerned with this area. The group was not large. There were usually about ten hanging around, but this varied quite a lot depending on the day, the weather and who had to child mind. If one of the girls had to look after younger relatives some of the girls would go with her. If someone's parents were out some of the group would go to that house to watch videos. They met on the streets when there was nowhere else to go and there were no interfering adults.

The core of the group were mainly girls in their last year at school and studying for GCSE's. Then there were some younger girls from the fourth year and older boys, who had already left school but lived in the area. Only a few lived on the estate, most of the others lived on a larger council housing estate adjacent to Willow Dene but others travelled from other part of town. This was because of school friendships.

Most of the boys who had left school were unemployed and did casual work occasionally. This meant that they had very little money. However there was quite a bit of petty crime. One of the 16/17 year olds was involved in more serious crime including fraud. He had been opening bank accounts and writing cheques for goods when there was no money in the account. Then he sold the goods. Although he had left school with no formal qualifications he was quite smart.

Amongst the boys there was a general feeling that society had not been fair for them and there was therefore no reason for them to conform. The girls were different, they were still at school and hoping that they would be able to achieve something. At the end of the year most of them who had left school got jobs in either offices, shops or child care.

There were other young people on the edge of the group and were accepted within it when they passed by. However there were others who were definitely excluded. On one occasion one of the girls grassed on a young lad who ran past after trying to steal from one of the flats. She said that it was lads like him that got their group a bad name and she was happy to tell his pursuer where he lived.

There were other groups which met on the estate and created a nuisance. This group felt that they were blamed for a lot of the problems on the estate when all they wanted to do was to sit and talk with their friends. Sometimes they would drink, but not every night, and sometimes they were a bit rowdy, but they were not the only
ones. One evening when the group were not in the usual place because it was raining I tried to find them by 'following noises'. I was led to flats where there was loud music and raised voices but did not find the young people. This substantiated their claim that they were not the only ones who were noisy.

**Beeches**

The second study, the Beeches, was carried out in a Youth Centre. It is situated very close to the centre of a small town in the South West of England. This building is over fifty years old and continues a strong tradition of Youth Work in the area which began more than a hundred years ago. A full time worker, a local management committee, part time workers and many adult volunteers play key roles in the running of the Centre. The group of young people in this study were just a small part of a lively Youth Centre.

The town centre was primarily a shopping centre with few entertainment venues. This meant that it was busy in the day time, but quite dead in the evening. There was one night-club/bar but most of the young people avoided this as it was thought to be rough. For other entertainment, cinemas, theatres and clubs, the city was five miles away and easily accessible.

The Beeches was on the edge of a residential area where there was a mixture of different housing. In the same road there were large three storied Victorian houses, many of which were still occupied by families although some had been converted into flats, modern semi detached, privately owned houses as well as rows of small terraces. Within half a mile of the Beeches there were two small council housing estates. These 50's style developments of semi detached houses with large gardens were now a mixture of privately and council owned homes.

The town has had a long tradition of high adult employment with local boot and shoe manufacturing, coal and related industries and textiles. However these old family firms have died out and in recent years there has been a rise in youth unemployment. The town has retained its own identity even though the city has expanded to its boundaries. This strong association with the town and not the larger city often prevents some of the young people crossing the boundary for work or even entertainment. Although politically it is a labour strong hold, socially it is a very conservative town.
The Beeches does not only serve the local area or town centre. It has always attracted members from the borough which covers a wider geographical area. Administratively the borough includes another five or six centres, which would consider themselves either a small town or village. They each have their own shopping centres, banks, pub and clubs and a distinctive name and usually a long history of independent identity. Adult members join the Beeches for the specialised activity groups and are not usually from the local community. The Tensing group attracts young people from the borough but the regular youth clubs attract a greater proportion of local children.

There is a small percentage of Asian families living in the borough, few of these live in the vicinity of the Beeches. There are also a few Afro Caribbean families. The town is predominantly white European, and a mixture of working and middle class families.

Tensing

The group is called Tensing because it is a part of a nationally organised piece of youth work with a common philosophy. The programme originated in Norway and the English counterpart has close links with these roots. The group is independent and organises itself, however the national organisation does have some influence on ideology and practice. Tensing has a recognised Christian base and the concert programmes have a predominantly Christian content. There is a strong informal network between some of the groups especially in a region. Training weekends, concerts and the development of new groups are often organised by regional or national committees.

Within this fairly formal structure a group of about 40 young people meet regularly on Sunday mornings. This session is task orientated. The time is spent rehearsing and planning concerts but within this a lot of time spent socialising within the sub groups. Those who come simply for the task are often frustrated when it is treated as the secondary function of the session.

The concerts are mainly singing with some drama and readings. The choir is central and forms the core of the presentation. Most members prefer to be in the choir because they enjoy performing in the group and have a laugh. However most songs
have a soloist and the band provides the accompaniment. The band has also
developed its own style and they also like to work together. They also have a laugh.

The songs tend to be pop songs which have been arranged for the choir by one of
the group. A member of the group is also responsible for conducting each song.
The roles are taken by different members in rehearsals so that if one is not available
at a performance then someone else can do it. This is part of the power sharing
philosophy.

Most of the group also meet on Monday evenings at an open club where they can
meet socially. Some of the sub groups meet socially outside Tensing, they live in the
same area, or go to the same secondary school. Quite a lot of the planning happens
outside the formal group sessions.

The core members of the group are fifth years and at present studying for GCSE’s.
These are the members who play a key role in the group. There are some fourth
years who do not play such a leading role in the group. Three of the boys are
eighteen, have jobs and access to cars and although they do not have a key role in
the planning of concerts, they maintain links with other groups and travel around.

During the six months I was working with Tensing a new group was set up with
a specific task and was called the planning group. Two years ago when the Tensing
started there were eight members and decisions were made by consensus. As the
group has grown it has become more difficult to ensure that decisions were made
fairly. Planning groups are one of the ways the larger Tensing groups have of
carrying out democratic decision making. This group had reached the stage of
needed such a group. It was decided that initially it would meet one evening
fortnightly.

In addition to the young people there were many adults associated with the group.
There was a Youth worker, a volunteer, three band members who were in their
ey early twenties, and a group of parents who supported the group, helped with
organisation and transport.

**Role of Researcher/Youth Worker**

In each of the groups my own role was clearly defined as a youth worker, with the
expectations which that brings with it. In fact there is no really clear model and each
youth worker brings their own understanding to the role. But in addition to this, I was more self conscious of the role because as an observer for the piece of research I was involved in I was aware of interactions within the group and the part I was playing. The problems relating to working in the field in this dual role were noted in chapter two and have to be taken into account when using the data (Woods, 1986, Stenhouse, 1975).

At times there was a conflict with what I would do in a 'normal' youth work situation and what I did because I wanted to see what would happen 'if'. This happened in the early days at the Willow Dene where I refused to take on the traditional role of youth worker and said I would work with the group to enable them to decide what they wanted to do. When the group moved into the building then the role of youth worker was taken on because that was one of the terms of the agreement with the Community Centre Committee. This meant my role was modified to meet certain criteria. But it was possible to negotiate with the young people, the adult volunteers and the committee within the agreed terms.

With the group at the Beeches it was more difficult to define my own role. There had been a long tradition of youth work led by a full time worker. Although I tried to adopt my own style within this there were expectations from the young people, the staff and the management which invested a lot of control in the full time worker.

There were a lot of contradictions in the two roles of researcher and youth worker and these inevitably effect the field work.

**Introducing the Characters - Willow Dene**

**Young People's Group**

JANE aged 15/16 and one of the most vocal members of the group, in her final year at school studying for GCSE's.

JAMES 20 years old unemployed young man who lived close to Willow Dene and spent a lot of time hanging around with the younger group. He was popular with the younger boys who looked up to him, or feared him and with some of the girls who were attracted to him. He had clear opinions on subjects like war, religion, the Labour Party, other races, women's roles, men's roles, gay people. His opinions were fixed
and open to challenge. If they were questioned he became very defensive. At 12 he had been beaten up by a 17 year old. When he went home his father asked who’d done it and then said he had to find him and ‘kick shit out of him’. His father took him by the ear and watched while he beat up the other boy. He was more afraid of his father than the 17 year old. His father’s worst punishment was to send him off on his bike and then to set Rex, the family alsation dog, after him. The dog caught him and ‘bit his arse’.

JOHN aged 19, James’s minder, also unemployed, he did most of the fighting and was often injured in fights in town. He often came to the group with cuts and bruises. He did not have such a high profile as James and rarely expressed his own opinions. During the Gulf war he went to the army recruitment office to enlist. He was attracted to fighting for his country but he did think about the danger of it. If he was disabled in combat he would rather commit suicide than live with disability.

SCOTT 16/17 years old, just left school, he was tall and thin and stood out in the group, he spent most of his time with the girls in the group and laughed and joked with them. He was threatened by the aggressiveness of the boys. He was clever and capable but had not been able to develop his abilities in school. He was not a fighter but his major crime was fraud.

Residents of Estate

JEAN aged about 60, secretary to the Community Centre Committee, dislikes young people and they dislike her.

OLIVE attended residents meeting and offered to help the young people’s group when they met at the Centre, she is a pensioner living alone.

BETTY Olive’s daughter, aged about 35, also lives alone in a flat on the estate, she has a disability and is employed by Remploy.

DAVE aged about 25, he attended the residents meeting and the subsequent committee meeting, he knows all the young people in the group and sometimes takes them on outings in the summer.
Local Authority

DEBBIE a Ward Councillor who hold surgeries on the estate. She is known by most of the residents and likes to be seen getting things done. She does not live on the estate.

COLIN a Ward Councillor who also holds surgeries on the estate and is known by most residents, he is quiet and thoughtful. He does not live on the estate.

STAN Area Advisor for the Youth Service is quick to organise, rarely lets things evolve. He lives in a neighbouring town.

Beeches - Tensing Group

LIZ aged 16 is one of the leaders in the group, she has just completed her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award and was using Tensing as one of her pieces of work. This meant that she had an investment in her performance as the youth worker had to write a report for her. She is also a key person in the drama, who has taken on the role of a leader in the group.

MAGGIE aged 16 she is one of the thinking people in the group with a concern for the world and political issues. She enjoys discussing life, the universe and everything and has an awareness of oppression etc. She plays the guitar, but will not play in the group lacking some self confidence. She sings in the choir, but often sits by herself smoking and does not join in. She puts herself on the edge but is not put there by the group.

EMMA in the same sub group as Liz and Maggie, they are in the fifth year at the local comprehensive. She is outspoken on social issues and is very self confident, a member of the local Youth Committee. She is a member of the drama group with Liz.

JUNE aged 15 a fourth year at the local comprehensive school she is friendly and quiet in the group. She is influenced by her peers. She is a member of the dance group.

JENNY a close friend of June in the same sub group. Very similar in appearance to June - permed long hair, bright make up and good quality clothes. She is quiet and friendly in the large group.
JULIE aged 16 although a fifth year has the appearance and behaviour of a more mature young woman. She attends a private school in the city. She belongs to the sub group who attend the Methodist Church. She is a natural leader but not pushy. Quietly ambitious, she knows what she wants and will probably get it. She wants to go to Oxford.

SUSAN aged 15 Liz's younger sister, a fourth year at the same local comprehensive. Very skilled in drama and dance and would like to be famous. She is influenced by her peer group and was involved in the shoplifting incident. She is not as assertive as June and Jenny in the dance group but takes on the co-ordinator role because of her prominence in the Tensing group as Liz's sister.

ROGER aged 18 he joined the group more recently but has met Tensingers from other YMCA's and visits them for social events and other groups concerts. He likes the social contacts. He is involved in the Boys Brigade at one of the local churches.

ANDREW aged 18 a friend of Roger and they always seem to be together. He also travels around the country to other YMCAs and is very sociable. He will sing solo in the concerts.

Youth Workers and Volunteers

ANN 45 years old, she is the part time paid youth worker with responsibility for the Tensing group. She worked with some of the girls when they were younger in the Junior Club. They put on a concert as part of her project for her basic training course. When it was suggested they form a Tensing group at this YMCA Ann involved these young people in the new group. It is her enthusiasm and keenness that has enabled the group to grow and thrive. She tries very hard to make it participative but often tries too hard because she wants everything to be the best, especially when there is a concert. She also tries to hold everything together - not allowing the group to take on this responsibility.

SIMON 23 years old, is a volunteer with the group but is also a member of the choir, the band and sometimes sings solo. He and Liz have been a couple for two years and sometimes have quite bad patches in their relationship. Simon changed his name by deed pole last year and does not recognise his mother as next of kin. His family are dispersed and he lives on his own, having spent some months homeless.
He is a member of a rap group and practices regularly. He is a volunteer with Cyrenians as well as the YMCA.

CHRIS 24 years old, lives next door to June's family and her father invited him to the group because he has musical skills. He has become the musical director arranging the songs, teaching new ones to the group and planning the programme. He brought his band to the practices and they played at the Christmas concert. The other two don't attend as regularly as Chris now but Chris has become very involved in the group. He went to the Eastbourne recording and was most impressed by the quality of the performance of other Tensing groups. He is keen to go on tour with the concert. He is sometimes frustrated by the disorderliness of the group and rehearsal time.

This chapter provides a background to the field studies so that the incidents selected can be understood with the minimum of detailed explanation of the context. Introducing the characters at this stage will provide information which can be referred to in the next two chapters when specific incidents are used to illustrate the key elements in the development of the theory. The next chapter describes the first residents meeting at Willow Dene. This was the most critical meeting in the study as it exposed both theoretical and practical issues which became the focus of the theory.
CHAPTER 6

A CASE STUDY OF EMERGING ISSUES: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL

Introduction to the Issues

My introduction to the first field work site was to attend the residents meeting which presented all the questions I wanted to address in my research in one evening. In this chapter I will introduce the issues around which the theory has been developed through a description of the meeting and the subsequent analysis. The residents meeting not only provided an introduction to the politics of the estate and some of the key players but also it served as an example of the complexities of the different levels of power which operate in a small community. Young people were congregating on the estate in the evenings and causing problems for other residents. The meeting was called by local councillors to try to resolve the problem. The events of the evening illustrate the different ways of using and taking power in the community setting. This chapter introduces some theoretical notions of power which emerge from the analysis of the meeting. These are mainly power as control through confrontation and defence of the territory although there are examples of resolving disputes through consultation and negotiation.

Attending the meeting affirmed that this site would offer the opportunity to study in some depth the working class culture and the relationships within it. The values, attitudes and beliefs held by young people do not exist in isolation but have developed out of the values of a particular culture. This event provided an empirical view which would stand alongside the practical view of the practitioner. With youth work training and experience as a researcher and observer it provided the opportunity to begin to formulate the emerging theoretical issues. When it came to the point of beginning the analysis of the field diary this evening provided most of the categories which were to be examined in other events and also some indications of the first order concepts.
The Problem

The major problem was groups of young people who gather on the estate, annoy the residents, who then phone the police and feel nothing happens. The young people feel powerless because they cannot spend their leisure time how they chose. The residents feel powerless because the authority figures do nothing about their problem. The police, local councillors and local authority officers feel powerless because they do not have the authority nor the resources to respond. The residents meeting was part of an intervention strategy devised by the local authority to resolve the problem.

The Meeting

The residents meeting was held in the large hall of the Community Centre. Notices had been placed in the Centre and local shops to inform residents of the meeting. Two of the local councillors, Debbie and Colin, were present, the third was expected later but never arrived. Local council officers from the Housing Department and Rothercare sat at the front with the councillors and two police officers. Stan, the Youth Service official, sat with the residents at the side of the hall on his own. He arrived late. Tables and chairs were set out in rows and people sat in groups around the tables. Members of the Community Centre Committee were serving tea and biscuits before the meeting started. I sat with a group of people about two thirds of the way back. I was present as an observer and did not know anyone there.

Colin called the meeting to order and took the chair as people sat down and the women stopped serving the tea. He explained why the councillors had called the meeting in response to the residents complaints. The police inspector was asked to speak first. He was a bit taken aback as he had assumed he would be responding to complaints and not making a speech. He asked for the residents to say what their problems were and the complaints came thick and fast. Many gave instances of when they had phoned the police and there was no response, they said they never saw a policeman in the area and that the police car simply drove through the estate.

In his reply the inspector explained how he staffed the whole borough with the number of policemen allocated to him in this section of South Yorkshire. He explained how the community constable's time was allocated to the estate. The community constable was the other police officer at the meeting. The inspector then
explained how calls were prioritised. If the police were dealing with a serious incident they cannot be called to a minor complaint. But he assured them that every call was logged and had to be dealt with at some time. While he was talking some of the residents told their own stories to each other of how their calls were responded to.

Jean sat at the back of the hall with her husband. No one sat close to them. Jean was most vocal in complaining about the lack of police presence and response to calls. She was disruptive and called out from the back. She said the group of young people on the chapel steps had been playing music until after midnight, drinking cans of beer and shouting at the weekend. She had phoned the police but no one had come. This was not the first time this had happened.

A young man, Dave, who was sitting with a young woman and child spoke up in response to Jean. He said that when the Centre was hired out for weddings at the weekend he and his family were disturbed by slamming car doors, people shouting as they left the hall at midnight. It was not only the young people who were responsible for creating noise at night on the estate. This position was supported by other people in the meeting.

During the meeting a lot of comments were made in small groups about the young people on the estate. Not all were made through the chair and most of the time it seemed that Colin did not have control of the meeting. The comments and contributions were directed more at the people sitting in the same little group around the table. The complaints included swearing and using bad language, throwing stones, knocking on doors, riding bikes and skateboards on the walkways and appearing threatening to older women. Someone said that the young people did not even live on the estate. Other people said that it was not the fault of the young people because these days there was 'nothing for them to do' that there had been a youth club on the estate and it had been closed down.

A group of middle aged and elderly women sitting near me were talking amongst themselves and saying that the young people who were outside the hall should be part of the meeting as they were being discussed. Eventually it was suggested through the chair that the group sitting outside should be invited in and asked what they wanted. Everyone seemed to agree. One of the elderly women sitting near me got up to go and tell them but Colin asked Stuart, the community constable, to go.
The women sitting near me said he would scare them off. However he returned shortly with the group who stood along the wall by the door. None sat down in the main part of the hall.

Colin explained to the group what was happening, that there was a strong feeling they needed somewhere to meet - what did they feel. They agreed. Then someone picked up on the point that they were not from the estate. A mother of one of the lads said "well he is 'cos that's my son". They were asked to put up their hands if they lived off the estate. Most did, but in fact it was established that they did not live far away.

The next problem was where this room could be found. Some suggestions were made from the floor and all were off the estate. The young people said there were too far away and what about downstairs here. It was at this point Jean started snipping from the side of the room. She did not want the group in the building. Not only was she secretary of the Community Centre committee but, living close by, she has had a lot of abuse from the group. Jane spoke out in response to Jean and said they had a lot of abuse from her when they were standing outside doing nothing and not creating a nuisance. She felt Jean often started the trouble.

Colin wanted to move the meeting on and deal with the question of a place for the group to meet. He asked Stan to speak for the Youth Service. Stan said there was no money in the budget for new buildings but it might be possible to support local initiatives where the adults were working with the young people to run a youth club in the Community Centre. There were three Youth Centres in the area and if the young people wanted to go to them they could. He said he would be happy to meet the group after the meeting to take their names and addresses and would be in touch. Both adults and young people felt that something must happen. Some adults were prepared to 'help' but they said the young people must be 'responsible', 'raise money', work for it and interested people would meet after the meeting.

The next part of the meeting became confused. Colin wanted to move on to other matters, the young people drifted out and Stan, thinking they would disappear asked them to leave their names and addresses before they went. Some wrote their names down and then left. When the meeting finished at eight o'clock the young people drifted back into the hall and over to where Stan was sitting behind a table. The
young people stood in front. I hesitated to go behind the table next to Stan as I would be aligning myself with the local authority. However it was impossible to stand anywhere else because the young people crowded at the front. So I stood behind the table.

Stan collected names and addresses and I talked informally to some of the group.

STAN: We will be in touch.

ANDY: Can I put my sisters name down?

JJ: Can you not tell her?

I felt too much was being made of the list and that it was a way of defusing the situation. The Youth Officer was using his authority to control the group. He would use local government resources to intervene in a community struggle. I felt that in his official role he had to be seen to be doing something effective but was not listening to what the young people themselves wanted.

One young woman wanted to know what the provision would be suspecting the response would be to provide the usual Youth Club.

JANE: Will it be a Youth Club, cos we don't want a Youth Club, just somewhere to meet.

JJ: Hopefully it will be what you want it to be.

I was clear about my own intervention and if I was going to work with this group it would be to enable them to find the solution they wanted and give the support they needed to carry it through. I was aware that this might lead to conflict with both the residents and the Youth Service's policy.

Adults came and put their names on the list.

OLIVE: I'm 65, what do I do to join. I could be a grandma, with a shoulder to cry on.

BETTY: I will bring tea bags, milk, sugar and biscuits for the first meeting.

It seemed already the adults were taking control, not giving responsibility to the young people to decide what they wanted and who would be involved.
The young people went to talk to Debbie and Colin and some went to see Jean about renting the room downstairs. I stayed to talk to Stan about how I felt about working with the group. I said I would go and meet the young people on their own territory this week sometime and have a chat.

The end of the evening was confusion with the young people having discussions with the councillors, residents and committee members. The young people were told that the next committee meeting was 5th November and they could go and tell the committee what they wanted. The committee would decide what to do. The cost of hiring the room was £5.00 per hour.

**General observations and comments**

Representatives from different sections of the community were present at the meeting. The largest group were the local residents but they were not a united group. There were definite sub groups and they sat together around the tables. Rather than a circle or rows facing the chair person and top table the chairs were placed on either side of the rows of tables. This meant some people sat with their backs to the chair person. There was a lot of discussion taking place between the groups rather than to the whole meeting. The layout of the room encouraged this also the people attending were not familiar with the rules of debate. It did encourage people rehearse what they want to say and get the reassurance of their friends or those who sit close by, then the consensus will be spoken to the whole group. This happened when some of the women sitting near me wanted to bring the young people into the meeting. It started as a murmur and gradually went further round the room until it was heard by the chair person.

The residents had taken some control of their situation by attending the meeting but not as an organised, cohesive group. This meant that their power was dissipated and not really focused. The power came through the consensus reached through the sub groups.

Another section of the community who were invited to the meeting were the local authority officers. These included the South Yorkshire Police, the Housing Department and outh Service. They had been invited by the local councillors for this ward who had organised the meeting. Although part of the community, because they worked in it, their influence was different to that of the residents. They had the
authority to operate within because they represented the local government and were resourced by them to provide a service to the community. The role of the local councillors was to be seen as the intermediaries between the voters and their employees - the officers. The second part of the meeting, which is not described in full, catalogued complaints about the services on the estate. The real frustration was with the lack of services, especially from the housing department and the police.

Finally, there were the young people, who had indirectly been responsible for bringing about the meeting. Indirectly, because it was the feeling of loss of control over their own environment which was the real cause. The group of young people simply focused the frustration and took on the role of the aggressor while the residents remained the victims.

Emerging theoretical issues

The use of power was central to my understanding of the many interactions during the meeting. At this stage it was possible to begin to unravel some of the complexities of how power is being used in this small community. The categories I identified initially formed the basis for further analysis of the field study. The most obvious form of power used is that of control which takes many forms. In the residents meeting aggressive behaviour, which I later modified to confrontation and includes many expressions of aggressive behaviour and violence, was the most blatant for both individuals and officials who are representatives of the local authority and I have referred to a corporate in the model below. Territorial control also featured strongly in the community discussions.
Control: confrontation

The model which emerges from this incident can be represented in the way:

Trigger point: young people on streets

Individual response:
- victims feel threatened and feel powerless
  - seek to take power through

Individual action:
- aggressive behaviour

Corporate action:
- request for action by authority figures, the police, housing department, youth service

Expected outcome:
- to remove threat of young people on street

This is a model of control where the action taken can be individual or corporate.

As an individual, Jean is very aggressive towards the young people, both in the meeting and outside. In the meeting she sits at the back sniping at other people's contributions but not entering into the dialogue. Even though she actually holds a lot of power as secretary of the committee she adopts an aggressive attitude to enforce this. Outside she often starts a run in with the young people by giving them some verbal abuse when she passes the Chapel steps. This provocation then leads the young people into a slanging match. They then become labelled and are accused of creating a nuisance, threatening behaviour and other aggressive acts.

Whether or not this is true then becomes irrelevant. The young people become a real threat and fear of aggression and violence leads to distrust. Then the young
people are able to take some control in the situation. This use of aggression, or the possibility of it, puts the adults out of control. Confrontation through aggressive behaviour is the most immediate response to a situation in which an individual feels powerless.

This model also includes the status of the local government as a controlling force in all aspects of public life. This incident focuses on the housing department and the police. The housing department it expected to have some kind of control over what happens on the estate and deal with complaints of rowdy gangs. The estate caretaker is usually put in this role and he is perceived as exercising his control in a confrontational way.

The police are part of this control and seen as the ultimate authority figures. They represent public control and law and order. They are expected to be the servants of the citizen. They are often referred to as the strong arm of the law and in this role provide the muscle which many people do not have to maintain control. They are perceived as confrontational. The many appeals to the police by the residents to curb the activities of the young people demonstrate this.

However when the police are called to the estate unless the young people are committing an offence the officers are unable to take any action. They can move them on, they can ask them to be quieter and not annoy the older people but they cannot enforce this. The police officer at the meeting explained this and also commented that if his officers were called to a more serious incident that would have to take precedence.

In this incident power becomes highly individualised and very subjective. The councillors brought the different sections together so that there could be greater recognition of the extent of control in the public arena. Whilst the residents wanted to exercise control over their small part of the borough through the support of the housing department, the police and the youth service. The councillors had to put this very local situation in the context of borough wide provision, the demands of the different council departments and the shrinking local authority budgets.
Control: territory

Territory denotes the space over which a person, group of nation exercises control. For the residents of the estate is a very small geographical area but it is somewhere they feel they can identify with and be in control of what happens. It is difficult to feel in control in this situation with high rise blocks, no private gardens or front gates but only communal walkways and shared landscaped areas with trees and swings.

When there is dispute over the territory there has to be some arena to hear both sides or else the most aggressive group gain control. At the time of the residents meeting this was in stalemate. The young people continued to meet on the Chapel steps, some residents complained, the police came and moved them on. But the young people continued to make their claim on their territory.

Control only becomes a problem when other people's behaviour does not conform to the accepted norm of the group. The young people were not the only problem for some of the residents. The road which went through the estate was used as a short cut between the two major roads on two sides of the flats, by taxis. The road had four sharp right angled bends in it and cars speeding round made it dangerous for young children and elderly people. Another complaint was that people drove cars and vans down footpaths. This was due to the design of the estate. Not all blocks had an access road. When residents were working on their cars or moving furniture and so on they wanted to get as close to the door as possible and often this meant driving on footpaths.

The Community Centre is also part of the adults territory. The residents meeting is held there and none of the young people from the group choose to attend. They are meeting outside in their usual place and watch everyone going in. They only come in when invited, speak when spoken to and leave when they think the business has nothing to do with them. The committee members who run the Centre give the impression they own the building. It is nominally a 'Community Centre' but in fact has become a private club which excludes young people and children from membership. Making the tea at the beginning of the meeting reinforced the committee's control over this part of the territory.

In addition to the notion of control two other categories emerged in the meeting. The first was through negotiation and discussion in the meeting which resulted in a
change of attitudes. The second was through use of personal power as exhibited by one of the young people when she was able to state clearly to the meeting how she understood the situation. As the theory develops these two notions of power become first order concepts. They are significant because they link with the notion of participation which is one of the aims of youth work.

**Resolving power issues through discussion and negotiation**

The residents meeting had been called because of the problem on the estate between the young people's group and some of the residents was not going to be solved through confrontation. The councillors were trying to find the middle ground in order to find a solution acceptable to both sides and to recognise the rights of both parties.

Having an open forum would theoretically give everyone the opportunity to have their say and to hear other opinions. However this is not always as simple as it sounds. Many people do not have the confidence to speak in the large group. What happened at the meeting was that those sitting in small groups talking to each other reached a consensus and then a spokesperson shared it with the large group. This was not organised by the chair, but this was what actually happened. Feminist groups in the 70's adopted this style of meeting more formally and it has in more recent years become an acceptable method of working with groups.

The input from more moderate groups, who were not so hostile to the young people, was heard and when the young people came in adults said they would support any group organised by the young people. These views were shared with Jean and the Centre Committee and during the course of the meeting a more tolerant attitude to the young people emerged. At the end there were negotiations between some of the young people and some of the committee. They were already talking to Jean and asking about the cost of the room, vacant evenings and the next committee meeting. They were arranging for the group to go to the next committee meeting to say what they wanted.

Through discussion and negotiation a more moderate resolution to the problem emerged in which there was a notion of sharing power and taking responsibility for it. Also there was a greater understanding between the young people and the residents. The local authority had used their power to bring about the situation in which the
discussion could take place but were not able to reallocate resources as an intervention strategy. This would mean a change in policy within the council.

**Taking control through use of personal power**

Even in this fairly threatening disempowering situation the group and Jane in particular displayed their own personal power. Jane was able to speak confidently in public about how she felt. The young people were accused of aggressive and disruptive behaviour by the adults but from their perspective the adults themselves displayed aggressive attitudes to the group. Later when I met with the group on the Chapel steps I witnessed some of this from adults as they walked past. When the group were invited into the meeting they simply responded to the proposals Colin made to them about having a place to meet. It seemed that they were not being given any space in which to say what they wanted as the meeting had already decided what would be appropriate. However, even in this situation Jane was able to contribute her own perception of the problem. Given the structure of the meeting with the young people being called in after much of the discussion had taken place this showed a lot of self confidence from Jane.

The group drifted out when they felt they had achieved all they were going to, then coming back in when they were able to talk to the councillors and committee informally after the meeting. They did not have to conform to the accepted patterns of behaviour by staying in the meeting. I interpreted this as the young people deciding for themselves what was useful for them. Stan was concerned that when they left he would lose contact with them but I felt confident that they would not go far away. They were returning to their own territory on the streets where they felt more in control. The young people's group had not been invited to the meeting on equal terms with the residents at the outset and it seemed to me acceptable that they should exercise their right to leave when they were not interested in what was happening.

I was interested in the obvious conflict between the notion of control expressed by the residents who wanted the young people off the streets and the emphasis on taking responsibility in the discussion with the young people. Although it was not openly stated I assumed that the adults perception of taking responsibility would mean behaving in a way that they found acceptable and not trusting the young
people to act responsibly within their own set of values. During the weeks of planning and negotiations which followed the meeting this became obvious. The Community Centre committee set down very clear rules of behaviour in the terms of their lease for the meeting room. These included not bringing alcohol on to the premises, even the planned Christmas party was vetoed when the committee realised they were intending to drink cider. However despite these doubts about the sincerity of adults saying that they would support the young people if they were prepared to take on the responsibility of the group I decided that on the strength of these statements I would be prepared to work with the group to enable them to decide what they wanted. I felt that the way Jane addressed the meeting and the behaviour of the group indicated that there was the potential for working with the group on their terms and for encouraging the members to use their self determination in this situation.

Conclusion

In the research this event served a number of purposes and I have used it to introduce the many ideas which relate to the emerging theoretical issues. It was also my introduction to the community where I did my first piece of field work. I used the situation to work with a group of young people in an informal way outside the formal structures found in the youth centre. When I agreed to work with the group under the direction of the local authority youth service it was on the understanding I would work in a participative way with the young people to encourage them to decide for themselves what they wanted and to take responsibility for this. I felt it would be possible to test out some of my theories about working in this way and see whether they were realistic in such a community setting where there was a clear working class value system. Also the policy makers were involved in the process and this would enable me to include them in the development of the theory.

The emerging issues focused on the notion of power in relationships within this small community. The most common manifestation or expectation of power was as control with one group or individual having power over another. The residents wanted to control the young people. The local government officers were regarded as agents of control within the community and in particular the police force. Control was expressed through confrontation and careful protection of the territory. This was not surprising and bears out Lukes (1974) view of the first dimension of power discussed.
in chapter four as well as the traditional view of power as control over (Weber, 1964). This was not only the belief of the individuals who wanted to have control over the young people's group but also found in their belief about the authority of the local government officials to take control. I included this in the model of confrontation earlier in the chapter. Another category, gender differences, emerged in the field work with the young people's group but was not evident in the residents meeting but it became part of the developing theory. The young men exercised considerable control over how much young women were able to participate in decision making in the group.

Other models of power were not so easy to detect but I identified two in the analysis of the residents meeting. Negotiation and discussion did happen within the sub groups at the meeting and this resulted in the moderate voice being heard. It was the responsibility of the chair of the meeting to ensure this happened. Sensitivity by those in control, therefore, needs to be shown towards all people involved. It was effective in changing some of the attitudes of those present by the end of the meeting Jean was prepared to talk to some of the young people in a non aggressive way. The second was the use of personal power and I have called this self determination.

It was discussed in chapter four in the work of Rapoport (1989) who compared the greater opportunity young people have in their leisure time to experience more control over their own lives with the more formal settings of the home and school.

These concepts are central to my initial analysis and I will show how they contribute to the development of the theory in the next chapter from moments selected from both of the field work sites.
CHAPTER 7

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INTERVENTION

Introduction

The residents meeting illustrates the different ways of understanding power relations within the community and introduces the key players in the study the young people, the policy makers and the youth worker. In this chapter I have selected moments from the field work to illustrate elements of the theory as it developed. The purpose of the theory is to understand how interventions can be used to empower young people in the youth work setting whilst taking into account the cultural differences. It also addresses the question whether the interventions are a form of social control or do they encourage the young people to take control of their own lives. In order to do this I have tried to understand the different ways power was being used within the young people's groups. Also to critically examine the youth workers interventions to establish whether young people were able to make their own decisions.

In chapters two and five I referred to my own dual role of researcher and youth worker and in the following accounts this will be further developed. At the residents meeting I was simply an observer with no active part to play in the event. When I started to work with the group I had a clearly defined role and the responsibility of a youth worker. I was not an impartial observer but an active participant. My interventions were made self consciously and committed to working in a way which encouraged participation (HMSO, 1982). I had developed a style of working during my training which sought to empower young people. However when I was working in the Community Centre at Willow Dene and at the Beeches centre I was expected to adopt a more authoritarian role. The committee members and volunteers at Willow Dene and parents at Beeches assumed my role was to ensure the rules were kept. The field work gave me the opportunity to explore the conflicts of these two very different roles. The working relationship which developed with the young people's group was as a youth worker and not an objective researcher. This would affect the data collection as I was never able to meet with them informally. The first meetings
with the Willow Dene group on the Chapel steps was the only time I was able to meet
the group on their own territory.

The three modes of power

In the thesis different understandings of power emerged and were grouped into three
modes (1) control, (2) self determination and (3) changing values as the theory
developed. The Thompson report Experience and Participation (HMSO, 1982)
seemed to imply that self determination was the way power should be used in the
informal youth work setting. However it was not as simple as that because within the
young people's group, the wider community and the youth centre there was a clear
indication that control was the most consistent and primary use of power.

Power as control: the court scene

The first incident happened outside the chapel one evening the week after the
residents meeting and illustrates the location of power within the group. The two
main characters John and James were new to the group and were older than the
rest. There were eight young people sitting around talking when James and John
arrived with two lads I'd never seen before. They did not belong to the group.
James went over to Scott, stared at him and told him to sit back down. I noticed that the other boys who had been sitting talking had disappeared.

James then turned to the two lads he'd brought with him and asked what had they shouted at his girlfriend, Mandy.

They did not reply.

James shouted at them, asked again what they had called her and that it began with and 'S'.

They muttered 'Slag'.

James asked whether they had seen her before.

They said 'no'.

So why, he asked, had they the right to call her a slag.
The lads muttered under their breath.

He then included Scott and told him to stand with the other two lads. He asked Scott what he would do in the situation - would he call anyone a slag if other people did it, just for a laugh.

The scene changed, James told all the lads to move into the central pavement outside the chapel, he sat down by the door and the others stood round in a semicircle. The girls moved away to the side and sat down on some other steps and were not involved in the rest of the proceedings. James said he would hold court and sit in judgement. He continued to question the lads, at one stage he got up and smacked one of them. I did not see it but heard his head hit the chapel door. I was asking the girls why James was threatening these lads. They apparently did not belong to this area and had come down looking for trouble.

I discovered the following evening that one of the outcomes of the court was that Scott had been warned off the estate by James and threatened with GBH if he came back. Scott had been involved with the group and was an active participant in our discussions, I was surprised by this judgement. However I did see him a few days later but much less confident than before. James told me it had been 'sorted out'.

**Three categories of control: aggression and violence**

The court scene illustrates control being used in three different ways; aggression and violence, gender differentiation and territorial control. The first is in the aggression and violence of the incident. It was very physical and did not allow any dialogue to take place. The defendants were not allowed to speak for themselves but only respond to questions put by James. The spectators simply looked on and by their silence colluded with the aggression and violence. James would not have been persuaded by argument or reason, he was convinced of his own position and right to act as he did. He had the physical support of John who stood beside him. He acted as James's minder, usually did the fighting and was often beaten up. Other boys who had been with the group prior to James's arrival disappeared acknowledging the authority of James and not wanting to get involved. Scott was the one who did not leave and he became implicated with the two outsiders even though he had not been involved in the original incident. The aggression and violence was confrontational and although this was an extreme case the threat of violence was always present.
when James and John were part of the group. Taking the law into their own hands was the way they operated and everyone respected their position.

**Gender roles**

The second is the differences in gender roles. The girls did not leave with the boys from the group but stayed to watch. They knew they were safe and the power struggle took place between the young men. When there was actual violence I felt vulnerable but the girls remained seated and looked on. It was clear that they would be physically safe. Their acceptance of this way of sorting out trouble indicated that they did not question it. James's role in the group as leader was to be questioned later when the group met in the Community Centre but here on the streets no one questioned it.

The boys and girls have very different roles in this incident. The boys who fear being caught up in it leave, those who support James take on an aggressive role and the victims are punished.

The cause of the incident also has clear implications for men's control of women. The two defendants were accused of calling James's girl friend a slag. James was not only defending her honour, no one calls his girl friend a slag. But also the offence has implications for James. The girl's reputation reflects on him because she is his girl friend and his possession. Calling her a slag was a slight on him as much as her. This becomes a double bind for women as Wilson comments

> men are able to use women as sexual partners as and when they want to, but become very possessive of the women they decide to have a steady relationship with.

*(Wilson, 1978)*

Control of women through their sexuality is one of the underlying issues in this incident. Using the term slag denigrates the woman and is used by both women and men to describe women who appear to enjoy sexual relationships with more than one man. There is no equivalent term for men. By defending his girl friend's reputation he was defending his own status, if she was a slag it would damage his reputation *(Lees, 1986).*
In this incident the girls were either passive onlookers or absent but played a significant role. Later in this chapter I will examine another incident in which the young women play a more active role in the group to see what the differences are in a more controlled situation in the youth centre.

**Territory**

The *third* is control of the territory. The two defendants were not part of the group and had strayed onto the estate. Their behaviour was offensive and action was taken. The punishment meted out by James was to exclude the boys from the estate. He was protecting the territory over which he felt he had some control. Scott, although one of the group, was included in this ban but later this mistake was rectified when James accepted that Scott was part of the group. He was allowed back but only after James had sorted it out. Scott would not have come back as the threat of GBH if found in the area was enough to deter him. He had already witnessed what would happen if he did return and James saw him.

In this incident there was no doubt who was in control of the territory and how this was achieved. In the discussions during the residents meeting there were those who wanted to have the same sort of control over who was allowed on to the estate and where they could meet. Some saw the role of the police as similar to James's in this incident. However the outcome was different as a result of discussion and negotiation and it was recognised that the role of the police was not to use this kind of control, but to enforce the law.

**Conflicts of the dual role.**

During the court scene I felt uncomfortable in my dual role as well as my role of youth worker. I chose not intervene during the incident for many reasons. First and foremost I was afraid for my own safety. I did not understand what was happening and was not as confident as the girls that I would be safe. Secondly I felt I had no authority to intervene because my role was to work with the group on their territory and on their terms. I was beginning to build relationships with members of the group but at this point my role had not been established. I had met with the young people on the Chapel steps three times prior to the court scene and the stated purpose for working with the group was to enable them to decide what they wanted to do and not
impose my own views. It was not like working in a youth centre where I have a designated role. Thirdly there was the conflict of roles. As a researcher I wanted to understand the way power was experienced within the group without the intervention of a professional who held very different values. This incident was one of the few occasions during the field work when I was an observer and did not have the dual role of researcher and youth worker. It provided the opportunity to understand how control is exerted and accepted in this culture.

The next moment I have selected is from the young people's group at Beeches and it illustrates power as control in gender roles in this group.

**Power as control: Recording session**

In both case studies there were many examples of the girls taking subordinate roles. I have chosen a moment from the Beeches field work. This evening twelve young people attended the planning group there were seven boys, five girls and three youth workers. This was not representative of the Tensing group where out of forty members a quarter are male and three quarters female. A much higher proportion of the boys attend the planning group.

As usual Ann had written out the agenda prior to the meeting. There was a long agenda with many items to be discussed by the group. Roger and Andrew wanted to leave early because they were going out but before they leave they wanted to discuss the visit to the recording studio in Eastbourne. This item appeared as item 18 almost at the end of the agenda. They asked to discuss it first before they left and the group agreed. The event has been organised nationally and each local group was asked to send their best singers but no more than ten. The discussion focused on whether the best singers should go because it was for a commercial product or whether anyone should be allowed to go because Tensing philosophy encourages everyone to participate. However for Roger and Andrew these question were irrelevant. They had already decided they were going to go and wanted to be included in the ten representatives. The question was decided quickly because the boys wanted to leave the meeting, they have cars, offered to drive and arranged to take other members of the group who were free to go. Chris also wanted to go as the experience of working in a professional recording studio would far outweigh the conflicts with Tensing ideology.
When Roger and Andrew leave, having made the arrangements for the recording session, the group continue with the rest of the meeting. Emma, Maggie and Liz contributed much more to the discussion when the boys had left. They were deciding on the social issues they wanted to include in the next concert. Emma and Maggie dominated this part of the meeting because they both have a concern for social issues and already have a well thought out position on homelessness, civil war and poverty. This knowledge of the subject gave them greater self confidence to speak in the group. The boys usually dominated discussions even though they did not demonstrate the same awareness of the issues. At this meeting Roger and Andrew had left early and Emma and Maggie were able to speak more freely.

**Control and gender roles**

Roger and Andrew attended the meeting because they wanted to ensure they were selected to go to the recording session at Eastbourne and asked for the agenda to be changed so that this could be discussed first. I interpreted this as control using their power as males within the group although I was aware that they were also demonstrating their self determination to change the agenda. There was an obvious conflict here between the two ways of using power. The boys knew what they wanted and were in a position to take control because they had cars, were earning money and had the freedom to travel. They also had contacts with other Tensing groups and knew what was happening in these groups and who else was planning to go to the recording session. This knowledge and experience gave them more power within the planning group. The discussion about the philosophy was not important to them and they prevented this taking place. If the outcome of this discussion had been that Beeches Tensing group refused to participate in the recording session because it was contrary to their understanding of the philosophy Roger, Andrew and Chris would most likely have gone anyway.

Another example of the dominant role of the boys in the group was the ratio of male and female in the planning group compared with the whole Tensing group. As was noted at the beginning more boys than girls attend the planning group even though there were many more girls in the larger group. The planning group was self elected. Members were invited to join if they were interested in planning activities and concerts. It was not by design that a higher proportion of boys are members of the planning group it was because they showed more interest. The controlling group
was therefore not representative of the whole group. The decision makers were predominantly male. Also it was observed that the girls contribute more to the discussion in the meeting recorded here when Roger and Andrew leave. In other meetings it was noted that the girls sat in groups with their friends and talked amongst themselves but did not share their opinions with the rest of the group. This was similar to the informal discussions that happened in the residents meeting. It was only when they had rehearsed what they thought within the close group of friends that they had some confidence to talk in the larger group. However on this evening when the dominant males have left there was a much freer discussion and the girls contributed with greater self confidence. The passive role adopted by the girls was similar to that noted in the court scene where the girls sat on the side lines watching the event but not taking any other role.

The philosophy of the Tensing group was described in chapter five. The intention was that the group functioned in a participative way and that each member was able to make their own contribution to the group. However, when this was left to the normal power relationships within the group the boys were able to control the agenda and took a leading role in the decision making.

**Power as control: Dance group**

Another item on the agenda at the planning meeting described above was the report from the dance group. Susan was the group co-ordinator and told the planning group about a problem she was having to deal with. Two of the dance group members, June and Jenny, were not talking to the rest of the group. They had decided they wanted to perform to two of the songs and had chosen the fast ones. This meant that Karen and Kirsty did not have a song to dance to whilst the rest of the group had one each. Susan said that June and Jenny had not consulted with the rest of the group but decided for themselves what they wanted to do.

Maggie commented on the behaviour of the group and said that it was very petty. It was obvious that everyone should have the opportunity to do one song each. But the problem for Susan was that June and Jenny had decided they were going to dance and refused to discuss it with the rest of the group. Susan was asked whether she wanted someone from the planning group to help sort out the problem when the
dance group met on Sunday morning. Susan said that it was impossible to get June and Jenny to change their minds and they would not co-operate.

The planning group discussed the problem and it was suggested that as a compromise one of the songs could be used as an encore and Karen and Kirsty dance to this. Julie offered to meet with the group on Sunday and act as mediator and put forward the suggestion from the planning group.

**Control and confrontation**

June and Jenny adopted a strategy of non co-operation to achieve their goal. They had decided which dances they were going to and were not prepared to discuss it. Although Susan was the group co-ordinator she did not have power within the group and was unable to resolve the situation even though it was unfair. In their refusal to talk to the rest of the group they were able to have their own way.

It was this incident which modified the theoretical model I had developed at Willow Dene. There confrontation was much more blatant in aggressive attitudes and violent acts and were obviously much more threatening as was seen in the court scene. However in this situation June and Jenny exerted a lot of power within both the dance group and the planning group. With their refusal to discuss with the rest of the group and the presentation of a fait accompli they were able to get their own way. This method was more refined than threatening violence but was equally confrontational.

The solution proposed by the planning group offered an alternative to the problem and did not address the unfairness of the decision made by June and Jenny. They maintained their power and the rest of the dance group were compromised and disempowered. One of the underlying tenets of Tensing was that everyone should have an equal opportunity to do what they want in concerts. This principle could be seen as encouraging self determination. But it can also be seen as very misleading when decisions were made by the most powerful members of the group without consultation. The actions of June and Jenny could be interpreted as self determination in the same way as Roger and Andrew had decided they were going to the recording session. But they could also be exerting power over the rest of the group as they refused to discuss and negotiate.
I did not play an active role in the three moments selected and made no interventions. I was observing the groups and from my analysis have been able to identify different ways power was being used by individuals to control decisions. At this stage I was unclear when an action could be classified as self determination or when it was control. At the resident’s meeting Jane was able to speak in public about how she felt and present her own understanding of the situation. I categorised this as self determination. She was able to contribute to the discussion and represented the views of some of the group. In the planning group Roger and Andrew and in the dance group June and Jenny were imposing their decisions on other people. Although it appeared that they were themselves empowered they were disempowering others. As the theory developed these distinctions became significant. Self determination had to include the notion of listening to other’s points of view and taking these into account.

The next two moments have been selected to illustrate how whilst working with the group my interventions were intended to encourage self determination.

Power as self determination: Committee meeting

At the end of the residents meeting at Willow Dene the Community Centre committee had agreed that the young people’s group could attend part of the next committee meeting to discuss renting the down stairs room in the Centre. During the intervening weeks I agreed to meet with the group on the streets and work with them to prepare for this meeting. My stated intention was to work with them to enable them to decide what they wanted to do. During my first meeting with the group I explained that this was my role. I met with the group six times in the period between the residents meeting and the committee meeting. In my dual role as researcher and youth worker I used the meetings with the group to both observe the power relationships within the group and also to intervene to ensure they discussed what they wanted to present to the committee.

The young people decided that they wanted somewhere warm to meet and talk. They did not want an organised youth club with adults telling them what to do. Nor did they want other young people coming from outside. Membership of the group would be decided by the core group. Although the committee meeting was arranged for Bonfire night some of the young people said they would attend. I offered to go
with them and this was agreed by the group and we met outside the Community Centre just before 6.30 pm. Before going into the meeting we rehearsed what they were going to say and the questions they were going to ask the committee.

The committee had met earlier and we joined them for the final part of the meeting. Debbie and Colin were already there, Stan joined the meeting later. Then another group of the young people arrived with Dave. He had been at the resident’s meeting and spoken there about the noise from the Community Centre late at night but he had not been involved in any of the meetings I had had with the young people. Jean called the meeting to order and asked the group what they wanted. Scott started to say what the group had decided but Dave intervened and said that he thought the Community Centre should be available for the young people. Jean then responded in a very negative way and the meeting became heated. The young people could not speak and Scott looked surprised at what was happening.

Debbie then suggested continuing with the business, Jean had a prepared list of conditions the committee had decided. I suggested she read them out. The group could use the room when the committee were in the Centre on Mondays and Thursdays between 6 pm and 8.45 pm, the members had to be aged between 14 and 18, alcohol was prohibited, they had to leave the room as they found it, the rent was £5 an hour and it was for a trial period of one month. Dave responded immediately disputing the limitations placed on the use of the building, other groups were able to use the hall until midnight, and he objected to the high rent. There was some discussion about the restrictive terms but the committee were not prepared to move their ground. Dave left the meeting angrily and some of the young people went with him. I suggested that for the trial period the group accept the conditions and then review the situation. Some more of the young people’s group arrived including Jane and the situation was explained to them. An agreement was reached that for a trial period the group would accept the committee’s terms. Then Jean said that there had to be a Youth Leader, not volunteers or Dave. This was not one of the original conditions. One of the young people asked whether I would do it. I asked whether they wanted me to and those who were there agreed. The meeting ended at 7 pm because the committee had to go upstairs to the main hall to start the Bingo session.
Conflicts between self determination and control in practice

The aim of my work with the group was to encourage the young people to decide what they wanted for themselves and to reach a consensus which they could then present to the committee. Going through this process would give them confidence to be able to do this when they had to meet the adults. I took seriously those in the residents meeting who said that the young people had to take responsibility for the group themselves. I felt confident that when we went to the meeting that those who said they would present the case would be able to do so and not rely on sympathetic adults present to speak for them. I went along to support them not to represent them.

However I was not expecting another adult, Dave, to be present and to speak on their behalf. Scott was just beginning to say what the young people had decided when Dave intervened in a confrontational way. This meant that the young people's voice was not heard and the adults present were forced to take sides. Debbie in her mediating role tried to calm the situation but all hopes of negotiations taking place were dashed. Dave represented the dominant attitudes of adults on the estate and his confrontational manner disempowered the young people. After a short time he left angrily without achieving anything for the young people except putting them in the position of having to agree to the committee's terms. As a youth worker I also felt powerless because my purpose for attending the meeting was only to support the young people and not to speak for them. I found myself in the position of asking the committee what their terms were. This was quite contrary to my planned intervention but the situation had changed so much that I felt this was the only way forward. It meant that the young people had not had the opportunity to tell the committee what they had decided.

The committee had also met and prepared their own terms and conditions for the group if they chose to meet in the room at the Community Centre. The choice for the young people was whether they wanted to accept these rules or continue to meet on the Chapel steps and be hassled by some of the residents and the police. The committee's terms limited their use of the room, the people who could meet there and some aspects of their behaviour as well as fixing a fairly prohibitive cost. The committee was controlling their own territory.
The young people then had to make their choice. This was not a choice about what they wanted to do, but whether they would accept the committee's terms. There was no negotiation or consultation. The young people would have to be responsible not for their own decisions but for those imposed by the committee. This was not the way I had worked with them to help them reach their decision about what they wanted to do. This situation illustrated the difference between the two modes of power and the difficulty of working with the self determination model when the values of the dominant culture were based on the model of power as control.

I continued to work in this way with the group, even when they seemed to have little control. I did not offer to continue to work with the group when the committee insisted that a Youth Leader had to be in charge. I waited until I was asked by one of the young people. I made it clear it was their choice and would only do it if they wanted me to. In the situation they did not have a lot of choice, but I felt it was important for me to ask the question. It was my way of giving the young people some power when most of it had been taken away.

During the next few months while I continued to work with this group and carry out my fieldwork this conflict persisted. My interventions were planned to encourage young people to make their own decisions through discussion and negotiations within the group whilst within the group and wider community decisions were usually made by those who could exert the most control. The next moment I have selected is from the Beeches and examines the conflicts between self determination and control from the perspective of the youth worker's role.

Power as self determination: Plans for a concert tour

The planning group was meeting as usual but Ann was unable to attend and I offered to be responsible for it. Omar was to act as chairperson and arrived shortly after me. Only six more members arrive, Liz, Susan and Maggie had arranged to go out with friends. The meeting was attended by five boys and two girls. The girls did not play a very active role in the group. There was no set agenda because Ann was not there. I encouraged Omar to sort out what the group needed to discuss this evening. After some immediate issues were dealt with Roger said that he would like to do a tour with the current concert. I said that there were two dates fixed already and there had been another enquiry from another YMCA. Chris supported Roger's suggestion and
said he would also like to tour and thought that doing a venue every other week rather than planning a week's tour would be better.

I asked what they were going to do about it. The next concert date was in three weeks time followed by another a week later would it be realistic to do something before then? Roger suggested going to Coventry as he had contacts there. He went to phone to see whether it could be arranged for two weeks time. While he was away I asked the rest of the group how could we arrange the visit.

The rest of the group had to be consulted, some members worked on Saturdays so this could be difficult. One of the group would check this out with the group during the Sunday session. I told the group I would not be there as I was on holiday next week therefore someone in the planning group would have to take responsibility for that.

Next the venue had to be confirmed, Roger said he would know definitely on Monday. Then travel had to be sorted out. Roger and Andrew have cars and travel to visit other Tensing groups regularly. I reminded them that a lot of cars would be needed to transport the choir and the equipment it might be worth finding out how much it would cost to hire a coach. I then gave them some relevant information e.g. that it cost me £15 in petrol to get to Coventry in my car, that one of the members mothers had organised a coach to Leicester last summer and she would be able to tell them how much that cost. The group then considered what equipment they would need and decided that they had everything but the lighting. Roger was asked to find out whether the host group could get this locally when he phoned again on Monday. Chris said he would consult with the group on Sunday to work out the running order for the concert and another member of the group said he would produce the programmes on two sides of A4. I agreed to get them photocopied. The host YMCA would be asked to do the local publicity.

The meeting ended on a positive note and the group had made a decision to go to Coventry with the concert in two weeks time if the venue was confirmed.

FOLLOW UP. I was on holiday the next week and did not meet the group until the following week. I had told the group this and expected they would carry out the decisions we had made at the meeting. However this did not happen. When I asked why the planning group had not made the arrangements I discovered that on Sunday
at the Tensing session Ann had said it was impossible and they had enough work to do for the concerts already arranged. Other venues could be arranged later. Ann explained to me that she felt there was not enough time to arrange everything and although the group had said they would make the arrangements she felt it would be left to her, it always was.

Encouraging self determination in practice

The aim of my interventions with the planning group was to encourage self determination. I did not devise the agenda prior to the meeting but left the group to decide what issues needed to be discussed. The plans to organise the tour came from the members of the group when Roger said he wanted to take the concert to other YMCAs. My role was to help them to explore the implications viz. will most of the group be available, transport arrangements, the programme and the equipment they needed. I also ensured they were all clear about their responsibilities in the organisation. I felt I would be able to take a week's holiday and then finalise the arrangements the following Sunday. I saw the activity as a group responsibility each having their part to play. There were many reasons why it might not happen but I did not feel it was my responsibility to ensure that it did. My role was as a facilitator to enable the group make and carry out its own decisions and I was not the organiser.

The reason the visit to Coventry did not take place was not the failure of the young people to organise it but because the decision of the planning group was over ridden by another youth worker who had not been involved in the decision making process. Without consultation with me Ann had decided that the group could not go. The reason for her decision was that there was too much to do preparing for the other events and even though the young people say they will do things they do not, or do not do it properly. Then she has to do it all. She finds it difficult to let go of the power in the group. Although she is motivated by the best of intentions, that she wants to be proud of the group, she does take power away from the young people because they are not participating on equal terms.

Conclusion: Interventions to empower or control

I have selected moments from the field work diaries which illustrate the different modes of power I have developed in my theory. There were numerous incidents to
chose from as they are found in normal everyday encounters. What I have sought to do is to take these ordinary situations and tried to understand the power relationships between the players.

I have also tried to show how the youth worker can intervene in the different situations to encourage specific outcomes. In the two final incidents where I consciously worked to encourage the young people to make their own decisions I was suggesting that they experiment, share their ideas and I was able to provide relevant information. These strategies were identified in my practice and became part of the developing theory. The model which emerged from the analysis of the case studies will be presented in the following chapter.

Although the first three incidents were used to illustrate the power relationships with the group but it was also noted that as a youth worker I did not intervene. The dual role of the researcher and practitioner played some part in this because I wanted to see what happened in the group. But I was also aware that my non intervention colluded with the most powerful in that situation. I was encouraging control and supporting the status quo. This was another aspect of intervention strategy I needed to consider. The next chapter sets out to show how the theory developed from my initial discomfort through the insights gained in the field work and the many attempts to understand what my findings meant for both theory and practice.
CHAPTER 8

PARTICIPATION OR CONTROL AS THE CORNERSTONE OF YOUTH WORK: ASPECTS OF A THEORETICAL MODEL

Introduction

It was the tensions between my own values attitudes and beliefs and those of the young people I worked with and the differences between my values and those of the policy makers or funders which prompted me to begin my study. The theory developed in response to these tensions as a way of understanding how the youth worker or policy maker could intervene in young people's lives in order to bring about greater participation in decision making in the structures which affect the young person's life. It seemed that often young people were allowed to participate when they were in collusion with the dominant values of the youth work agency or youth worker. This was discussed in chapter four in the example of the Lyndhurst Club. But was this a form of social control rather than real participation as discussed in the Thompson report (HMSO, 1982) which maintained that the youth service was not simply an instrument of cultural reproduction but should be concerned with helping young people to become whatever it is in them to be. These theoretical issues are explored in chapter three but I now return to them to consider how they affect practice.

In this chapter I will show how the theory emerged in the dialogue between my practice and the theory. First I was able to observe young people in different cultural settings and recognise some of their different values. As the key concepts were discovered working definitions had to be found. I then developed a matrix which incorporated the categories which emerged. Then out of this understanding a model developed illustrating the intervention strategies which related to each mode of power and the expected outcome. It offered a way of understanding how interventions affected the control or empowerment of young people.
Discoveries from the field work

As the researcher I wanted to spend some time observing young people in different cultural settings and recognise the different values and attitudes. In each of the moments I selected there were different sets of values depending on the people present. For example in the resident's meeting there was a wide spectrum represented whilst in the court scene everyone there held the same values and James's behaviour was not questioned. Similarly in the Beeches planning group there was a common value base as the members chose to belong to Tensing and accepted the underlying philosophy. However there was some differences between the values of the youth worker and those of the young people. This was not a real class difference but related to age differences. The young people's culture demanded immediate results and events could happen straight away. There were also fewer commitments to be taken into account. The youth worker had a different set of values with responsibility as quite central. Responsibility included ensuring that everything was under control and not left to other people who might not be so reliable or do the job to her satisfaction. I will look more closely at this notion of responsibility as the theory develops.

From the first reading of the field diaries I identified power as the key concept. Power relations played a significant role in interactions between people as individuals or groups. In the first analysis of the field work different ways of using power were observed in

- the relationships between the girls and boys in the young people's group and how gender roles were accepted without question,
- the relationships between the young people and the adults - the committee, adult volunteers, the police and the youth workers,
- the young people's attitudes towards others not in their group including young people from other parts of the town, ethnic groups, gays, people with disabilities,
- decision making within the group,
- my own role as the youth worker.

In the preceding three chapters I selected from the extensive field work only a few moments which illustrate the main modes of power which emerged from the analysis
of the data. In the discussion I have shown how, in different situations there were many interactions and how different meanings could be assigned to them.

**Modes of power: control**

The next stage was to understand the different ways power was being used and I developed three modes of power: control, self determination and education. 'Power over' or control was the most commonly used. This was quite simply getting an individual group to conform to another individual or group's wishes. This could be seen as social control or behaving responsibly according to the status quo. It was used in both personal and social relationships. From the field work I sought to understand the different ways control was being used and developed three categories to describe them.

In the study of Willow Dene aggression and violence were the most blatant and examples of these were given in the account of the residents meeting and the court scene. I noted that even when there was no actual violence the threat of it was a form of control and aggressive attitudes were as forceful as physical violence. This form of control allowed the strongest or more forceful to have their way and was a form of rough justice where might was right. It was very physical and did not allow dialogue to take place. At Willow Dene this was the dominant form of power accepted both by the residents and the young people, the police were expected to be enforcers of this kind of control. The dominant culture of the estate incorporated this use of power. This was compared with the power relations within the young people's group at the Beeches. Here aggression and violence were not observed but the same kind of control was exercised through non-co-operation which was a similar form of rough justice not allowing dialogue to take place. As a result of this I renamed this category confrontation and it included both aggression and non-co-operation.

The second category I developed within control was gender roles. The two moments I included in chapter seven were representative of many incidents I observed. In both groups the girls played a subordinate role in decision making and a traditional woman's role in the group. They were passive in the court scene but not threatened by the boys' behaviour. They accepted the violence as normal but were not included in it. Within both groups the fixed gender roles restricted the girls' participation in
activities and decision making unless interventions were made to encourage them to join in. In the Beeches planning group the girls talked amongst themselves and formed their own opinions but only shared these with the group when invited. However, when the dominant males left, they played a much more active role in the group.

The third category in this understanding of power was control over the territory. This was part of the negotiations in the residents meeting as well as the conflict in the court scene. During my work with the Willow Dene group to plan what they wanted we discussed membership. Restricting access to the geographical area, a building or membership of a group was the means by which a group took control. In fact the committee also restricted membership in their terms and conditions which were presented to the young people at the committee meeting.

For Roger and Andrew their geographical territory extended beyond Beeches when they decided to go to Eastbourne, but this was because their territory was defined by the national Tensing group and not the local group or dominant culture. But it was nevertheless just as restrictive because the event was part of Tensing activities and the reason for travelling a hundred miles was to create a piece of Tensing territory which would have an identity quite separate from the rest of that geographical area. The reason for going was to meet with other members of the national group.

**Modes of power: self determination**

In both studies control was the most frequent use of power but there were also some examples of young people taking control of their own lives and I looked at this from two perspectives. The first in examples of it happening in the normal course of events and the other through the youth workers intervention. It was difficult to find a term to use which summed up exactly what this mode of power encompassed. In the literature there were references to empowerment and participation but these terms have been overused and therefore not easy to define. The problems relating to how these words were understood were discussed in chapter three. Although participation has been retained in the title because of its association with the Thompson report Experience and Participation (HMSO, 1982) in the theory I wanted to understand this form of power in a more neutral way. I adopted self determination from the reference made to it in Hurrlemann's work (1989, p.16) "Peer groups are
an important medium in which adolescents are able to experience self
determination." It is intended to denote the individual's control over their own life.

The questions raised in the field work went to the heart of this notion and exposed
the conflict between different value systems. In the resident's meeting Jane was
able to express her views and was able to take control of the discussion. It was a
view which did not support the perspective of the dominant culture and presented
another way of understanding the situation. However in the two moments selected
from the Beeches Roger and Andrew's control of the planning meeting and June and
Jenny's decision without consultation with the rest of the dance group could be
classified as self determination but they were also using their power to control other
members of the group. My definition of self determination, therefore, had to include
openness to negotiation.

But the problem of the conflict of values was still evident. If the dominant culture
supported power as control then Roger and Andrew's actions could be understood as
self determination within this value system. It was my own value system which
defined self determination as openness to negotiation. This was also extended to
consider the values of the policy makers as set out for example in Experience and
Participation. Young people are encouraged to participate in decision making within
the Youth Service. If the dominant culture sustained the notion of power sharing,
negotiation and debate and the young people chose to work in this way then the aims
of Experience and Participation could be achieved. However, if the dominant culture
has control as its primary understanding of power then participation would be within a
value system which did not allow negotiation. The strongest would maintain control.

At this stage I was aware of the problems of modes of power in different cultural
settings and how this affected the notion of participation but it was not clear how it
affected youth work practice.

**Modes of power: education**

Exploring these differences and trying to understand how power was being used lead
me into a third mode of power, education which I defined as changing beliefs and
attitudes. Lukes (1974) used this as his third dimension of power in a negative way
to change people's beliefs contrary to their own interests. But, for me as a youth
worker, I recognised the positive connotations. In working with young people a wide
range of different experiences could be offered with space and opportunity to experiment. They could then choose to change their beliefs and attitudes. The important idea here was that they chose whether they changed or not. This related to the central question whether the aim of youth work was social control or empowerment of young people. If the youth worker advocated the beliefs and values of society’s dominant culture then this could be seen as social control. But if it was to provide information and experiences which offer different values and beliefs and individuals make different choices about their lives this could be a positive outcome.

The insights of Friere, reviewed in chapter four, added a further dimension to my understanding of education in his dialogical approach. There could be an exchange of experience and understanding between educator and students the result of which might be a change of beliefs for the educator as well as the student.

However, as was seen in the field work, change is not always possible. In the few meetings I had with the young people’s group on Willow Dene I encouraged the young people to decide for themselves what they wanted to say to the committee. But when they met with the committee they were not given the opportunity to speak or to negotiate on their terms because representatives from the dominant culture worked in a different way. In the moment selected from the Beeches study the outcome was similar, the young people’s group were not allowed to organise their tour because another youth worker said no without consultation or negotiation.

As the theory developed the key elements were arranged on a matrix with the categories, gender, territory, aggression and violence on the vertical axis and the modes of power on the horizontal. However this was unmanageable and did not help to clarify my thoughts. The categories were recognised as elements of control and not part of the other two modes. I began to look in the case studies for other categories which were associated with self determination and education.

**Intervention strategies**

The next step was to take each mode separately and present these as models of intervention strategies with their own outcomes. This became the working model when I returned to the field work diaries to write up my findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of power</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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The model took into account the different ways power was used in the personal and social relationships in the different cultural settings. I identified the strategies used in the model from accounts in the field work diaries. The three associated with control had been part of the first analysis and easily defined. Those associated with self determination and education were uncovered as the exchanges were examined more carefully. In my dual role as researcher and youth worker at Willow Dene I was able to observe how control worked within the group and in the community. The intervention strategies were used by individuals in the group and community to maintain social control and effectively disempower many members of the group. Any member of the group could persuade the others to change as was the case with James the threat of violence brought about change. Those who were threatened left the group that evening.

If I were to intervene as a youth worker then I would either have to act within the control mode of power using confrontation as a strategy or in my role as an educator try to get the two sides to negotiate a settlement. In this second intervention I would be seeking to change the attitudes of members and working against the dominant values of the group. This would also change the nature of the group. As I tried to
understand these different power relationships I was distinguishing between education as a means of social control or empowerment. I concluded that it could be both and adopted the term a change of attitudes and beliefs to describe the outcome.

The residents meeting provided a situation in which there were a number of different groups represented each of which came from different cultural settings. The local authority held the values of society's dominant ideology. They were guardians of public order, responsible for public funds and services not only in this community but throughout the borough. The committee were responsible for the Community Centre and entrusted with its upkeep by the local authority. But as local people they held the values of their own culture where control was dominant. There were more moderate views expressed by some individuals in the community in addition to those held by the young people's group. Although, with the exception of Jane, the young people did not have the opportunity to speak for themselves. The adults had already assumed what it was they wanted and the young people were expected to comply.

From this meeting I took the key word to be responsibility. This could be understood in two ways. The first was that the young people were to behave responsibly in keeping with the values of the dominant ideology, to conform and accept the rules set by the committee or other adults. Or secondly the young people would be responsible for their own decisions and I would work with the group to enable them to decide for themselves what they wanted and to be self-determinant. This was an example of a clash of cultures. The outcome was that when the young people met with the committee they had to conform to their wishes. My intervention strategy was possible within the group and I encouraged them to make their own decisions but was not possible within that particular culture. In the committee meeting the group was disempowered by the control exerted by the adults. Where control was the dominant mode of power it was very difficult to work effectively in a different mode.

Although the young people's group at Beeches was quite different. The individuals in the group had their own set of values from their own culture but the group had adopted another set of values in the Tensing philosophy this included the opportunity for equal participation. Even working in this situation control was still dominant some members took control of the group through confrontation or using gender roles. Although participation was part of the philosophy it did not happen naturally within the group.
The model helped me to explore the complexities found in the power relationships within groups, the community and individual personal relationships. I was able to distinguish between the different strategies which were in play both consciously and unconsciously in a variety of everyday situations. From this I went on to consider the implications for youth work theory and practice.

**What conclusions can be drawn**

1. The worker needs to recognise that different modes of power are used by the young people, the local community, other workers, the agency or policy makers and him/herself and also to identify their source, e.g. working class culture, the values of society, local government policy or ministerial reports like Experience and Participation (HMSO, 1982) etc.

2. The worker needs to understand how the modes of power have different strategies and outcomes related to them. These are illustrated in the diagram on page 125 above.

3. When planning an intervention the worker needs to be clear about the expected outcome and decide whether it is possible within the dominant values or operating principles of the group or community.

4. When working with a group where participation is encouraged identify where the blocks may be e.g. the dominant culture, girls are not used to taking power, the strongest is always the decision maker, or youth workers are not able to give up control, or the young people are not used to sharing power.

5. The worker needs to be aware of his/her own power to change attitudes and values. It can be used to get young people to conform to social values and then it becomes social control. The worker needs to be clear when this kind of power is being used to give the young person opportunity to make their own decisions. It might be that they are not the one's the youth worker would have made.

6. Finally recognise that participation is not possible or appropriate in every youth work setting and as an educator conscious decisions will have to be made. These should be made honestly not deceiving ourselves that control is participation.
In the final chapter I will draw all the threads together to show how the interaction between theory and practice informs the understanding of youth work.
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Issues of youth work theory and practice

The research has been a personal journey exploring questions in actual situations where I was able to work with two groups of young people and at the same time observe the work critically as a researcher. The studies encompassed many of the problems I had previously experienced in my work and in discussion with colleagues found they had similar questions. It enabled me to understand why I had many doubts about how participation could work in different geographical areas and class cultures. Throughout the research study I was able to experiment with different models of participation in both formal and informal groups. I was able to observe the complex interactions in the youth work setting between the members of the group, the wider community and other practitioners and then spent some time analysing these interactions.

The introduction to the work showed how the need to formulate unspoken questions prompted the study. It seems appropriate at the end to ask how far these questions have been answered by the study. The question which became the focus was how far young people participate in youth work provision and on whose terms. To answer this question I first had to discover what happened in everyday interactions and I recognised the importance of power. In the field work I was able to observe how power was used in different situations and experiment with different ways of intervening in the youth work setting. This lead me to identify different ways power was being used and to define the terms I developed a model which showed how the different modes of power each had different intervention strategies and outcomes. This became a diagnostic tool which I was able to use to plan interventions in my work. I also used it in further analysis of the field work.

In the case study of the committee meeting it was apparent that it was only when the young people accepted the terms and conditions of the committee were they able to participate. However when they did participate on these terms their attitudes towards
the adults on the estate changed. Also those of the committee changed a little to accommodate the young people. Thus in the dialogue and discussion there was some change on both sides. It was not possible for the young people to participate in decision making within the community without taking into consideration the external forces of the dominant culture.

However it was possible for me in my work with the young people to encourage them to decide for themselves what they wanted. This was outside of their normal experience but as an educator my interventions were planned to give them the opportunity to decide what they wanted and to plan how they would achieve it. I was aware that working in this way my interventions could have two different outcomes. One would be to empower the young people to make their own decision, the other would be to change to their attitudes and values. I had to try to differentiate between education as an agent for social control or social change.

In addition to these findings there are two additional outcomes from the research process. The first considers how the findings can affect the management of youth work within an organisation. The dialectic between theory and practice should inform the policy makers as well as improve practice and develop youth work theory. All of these factors should play their part in providing a service which meets the needs of young people. The second reflects what I have gained personally and what I have learned from this study. In fact it was my own discomfort towards youth work practice which prompted me to do the research.

The relationship between theory and practice has formed the basis of this study and I have discovered many weak links between the two. Theoreticians deny serious attention is given to both and practitioners get on with the job and are unaware that they are developing youth work theory. Youth workers, despite their inability to present a neatly packaged youth work theory, do continue to offer a service to young people. The absence of written material indicates that there has been little research in this field and that practitioners do not value their work by writing about it. But the Thompson Report showed that there were more than half a million adults employed in the youth service either as full time, part time or voluntary workers. This study has attempted to show how links can be made between practice and theory how theory can reflect practice. I have also demonstrated how these need to take into account the economic and social system in which they operate.
The process I was engaged in during the study illustrates this. I started with a vague question which came out of my youth work experience. I was able to select a piece of work and from my analysis begin to read more widely about the issues arising from it. This work has produced a theory which takes into account the different youth work settings and will contribute to the development of youth work theory. Having the time and opportunity to think about and reflect on my practice critically is only part of the process and the discipline of writing it up and sharing it with others is perhaps the most difficult part. What I have gained from this work is to recognise how important this part of the process is for youth work.

The organisation

The study also gave me the opportunity to relate the findings to the organisation. As a practitioner I was conscious at times of the contradictions in my work but there were no structures within which these could be addressed. There was a lot of emphasis on the participation of young people in the organisation when in practice it was very difficult to work with and resulted in ways of including token young people in management. Professional training is one place where the questions could be addressed more effectively. Courses for youth workers need to include comparative studies of class cultures in Britain. It is not a classless society nor are the values and beliefs of the middle-classes held by all, even though they are the dominant values of the society.

From my study of the literature the work on youth sub cultures tends to support the notion that for young people their working class culture is normal and not delinquent or deviant. If young people are to participate as equals within the organisation then their cultural background has to be taken seriously and this will impact on the style of youth work and the way young people can become part of the decision making process. In the same way as the dialectic between youth work and practice should be part of the workers consciousness and should inform the policy makers.

Biography

The centrality of different value systems was crucial from the very first questions. The conflicts seemed to arise out of the attitudes I, as a middle-class professional, had and those of the young people I had worked with. The study gave me the
opportunity to learn about other cultures and how their value systems were different to my own. I was able to meet and talk to people from other cultures and understand something of their values and beliefs.

I was able to develop methods for studying other cultures and explore people's lives though ethnographic interpretation. Using power as a key concept enabled me to understand not only the inter-relationships between individuals and groups but also how different modes of power are found in everyday interactions. The dominance of power over as a means of exerting control was a direct contradiction of empowerment, a term used often in youth work philosophy. Encouraging a young person to have control over their own lives and be responsible for making their own decisions was in direct opposition to their experience of being controlled by others. This was not only the case in the wider community, but also within the young people's group.

In the same way participation could not be a reality when the power structures within the group were based on the culturally accepted norms. When power was expressed in aggression and violence, gender differences or territorial claims the powerless were not offered many choices. This analysis of the field work helped me to understand how difficult it is to work with a participative model of youth work. In some working situations participation is inappropriate and as a youth worker I realised I needed to be clear about when it is possible. This was one of the conclusions drawn in the preceding chapter.

The thesis gave me the opportunity to reflect on my practice and consider some of the wider issues of intervention. Since the Thompson report there has been an over emphasis on participation within the youth service which has led to much confusion in practice. When young people participate and use power as control over others the system remains unchanged as the few will dominate the rest of the group. If there is to be equal participation then careful interventions have to be made by the worker. The dominant culture of the group may make it inappropriate to expect the group to work in a participative way.

As a researcher I started out with many questions about my role as a youth worker and my own values and beliefs which were often in conflict with the working class attitudes of the young people I worked with. I now feel more comfortable with the
tension because I have recognised and named the problem. I have also accepted that both participation and control play their part in youth work interventions.
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