

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 25th-27th June 2015

TAG: The Professional Association of Lecturers in Youth and Community Work

ABSTRACTS OF MAIN SESSION PRESENTATIONS

Thursday 25th June: 5.00pm-6.15pm (Full Conference Session)

Session Title: Main Session 1 - Opening Keynote

Presentation:

‘Tackling ethical challenges in community-based participatory research’

Presenter: Professor Sarah Banks

Biography: Sarah Banks is co-director of the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action and Professor in the School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University, UK. She teaches and researches on professional ethics and values, community development and work with young people. She is currently experimenting with the use of Socratic dialogue and Forum Theatre in community engagement and research and is involved in several participatory action research projects, including ‘Debt on Teesside’ with Thrive and Church Action on Poverty and ‘Imagine’ (on ‘The social, historical, cultural and democratic context of civic engagement: Imagining different communities and making them happen’). Recent books include: *Critical Community Practice* (The Policy Press, 2007, with Butcher, Henderson and Robertson); *Managing Community Practice* (The Policy Press, 2013, 2nd edn, edited with Butcher, Henderson and Robertson); *Practising Social Work Ethics Around the World: Cases and Commentaries* (Routledge, 2012 edited with Nøhr). For further details see: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/sass/staff/profile/?id=747> & <https://www.dur.ac.uk/beacon/socialjustice/>

Abstract: Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is increasingly popular. It often involves community organisations and universities working together and can help build community capacity in a time of austerity, generate new perspectives on social and economic issues and result in better implementation of research findings. Yet CBPR is both practically and ethically challenging. It is not always clear when people are in the role of researchers and research subjects; when people’s work should be credited and when anonymity is important; who owns and has rights to the data/findings; how to navigate the institutional ethical review process; how to guard against exploitation of one party by another; how to be open about unequal power relationships; and how to achieve greater equality and mutual respect.

This presentation will discuss what counts as an ethical issue; what are some of the main ethical issues and challenges that arise when community organisations and universities work together on research projects; and how we tackle these in practice. Reference will be made to *Community-based Participatory Research: A Guide to Ethical Principles and Practice* and accompanying case materials, films, podcasts and exercises for promoting ethical awareness, reflection and action. These were developed by a group of UK-based academics and community partners through a research project coordinated by the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action, Durham University and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council under the Connected Communities programme. The materials are published by the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) and can be found at: <http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/work-with-us/current-projects/ethics-cbpr>



Presentation 1:

‘Utopia studies as a resource of hope, and practicing and developing an education otherwise’

Presenter: Charlie Cooper

Biography: During the late 1970s through to the late 1980s Charlie worked as a welfare practitioner, initially with women’s aid in Doncaster and subsequently with housing associations, including two workers’ collectives in London. Since entering academia in 1989, he has taught on a range of themes at certificate, undergraduate and postgraduate level - including housing, planning and urban policy; social policy and education; and community development and youth work - and these are the main focus of his current research interest. Charlie is a professionally-qualified housing manager, and community development and youth worker.

Abstract: A long-standing limitation in social policy debate is the inability to conceptualise and dream differently possibilities for human wellbeing beyond what ‘should be’. Mainstream education policy thinking is largely limited to ‘tinkering’ with the system or positing how things ‘ought to be’, influenced by normative thinking dictated by a particular morality.

This inability to imagine a reconstituted society (‘utopia’) encapsulating human flourishing is addressed by Ruth Levitas in *Utopia as Method* (2013) in which she asks sociologists to take utopia studies seriously. She argues for utopia as ‘*a critical tool for exposing the limitations of current policy discourses ... [promoting] genuinely holistic thinking about possible futures The core of utopia is the desire for being otherwise, individually and collectively*’ (Levitas 2013: xi).

This session will discuss the theoretical thinking behind the notion of utopian studies and, whilst acknowledging those who practice in such ways, debate its utility for creating sparks of re-imagining to inspire others to take forward, advance and present as a challenge to the *status quo*. As Freire argued, ‘*It is imperative that we maintain hope even when the harshness of reality may suggest the opposite*’ (cited in Burke 2004: np). Utopian studies offers possibilities for restoring hope.

The session builds on ideas that have emerged over the past year or so for the concluding chapter of a book co-edited by Charlie Cooper, Sinéad Gormally and Gill Hughes entitled *Socially-Just Radical Alternatives for Education & Youth Work Practice - Re-imagining Ways of Working with Young People*, due to be published by Palgrave by the end of 2015.

Presentation 2:

‘Despair and Hope’

Presenter: *MG Khan, Tutor, Ruskin College Oxford*

Biography: MG Khan has many years of youth work and community work experience in a variety of contexts. He is a Tutor on the BA (Hons) Youth and Community Work course at Ruskin College, Oxford, and is the author ‘Young Muslims, Pedagogy and Islam’ published by polity press.

Abstract: Using the example of the Sufi poet Baba Bulleh Shah (1680 – 1757 Panjab) this presentation will explore the importance of language and metaphor in ensuring meaning and legacy.

Presentation 3:

‘Between a Rock and a Hard place, ducking and weaving and making the most of our role with the VCS.’

Presenter: Carol Packham

Biography: Dr Carol Packham is the Director of the Community Audit and Education Centre and has been teaching on the Youth and Community programmes at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) for over 30 years. Her work involves MMU community engagement e.g. through provision of community based courses, with progression to MMU, such as the training of participatory researchers. She is an active community volunteer in her local inner city area, where she is the treasurer of a voluntary young people's project and vice chair of a community forum. Her particular interests centre around participatory approaches to community and young people's involvement e.g. in research and evaluation, decision making, and community learning and volunteers.

Abstract: This input will have the theme of alliances and consider the role that our courses, and institutions, play in forming alliances with the voluntary and community sector. I will give some examples from my work at Manchester Metropolitan University and particularly in relation to our role with Community and Voluntary sector organisations.

Presentation 4:

‘The place of hope in youth and community work: a systemic view of youth and community work futures’

Presenter: Wayne Richards

Biography: Dr Wayne Richards is a senior lecturer in youth and community work at the University of Worcester and leads the masters programme in transformative practice. He is a boundary researcher interested in testing the integrity of set boundaries. His doctoral research was a heuristic study examining boundaries of race.

Abstract: This presentation responds to the austerity policies which have significantly diminished the funding available to youth and community work. The current turbulent conditions have left workers feeling increasingly anxious, frustrated and disoriented with regards their professional identities and purpose. Whilst economic resources available in the past brought material benefits and fuelled the movement towards a youth work profession, it also had the disturbing consequence of increasing state dependency for practice and directing the agenda towards instrumental approaches to young people who then become viewed as commodities. Reduced economic resources have increased the pressure for workers to adopt instrumental approaches and justify practice in economic terms through accepting the language of evidenced based practice as a matter of survival.

I argue that, in order to envision a different future, we must look beyond the evidenced based argument and embrace the dual ontological structure of youth work and community work which at once both delivers planned interventions to impact positively on youth transitions and also sustains relational practice which connects with the complex lives of young people and communities in order to liberate and transform. This latter view draws on a systemic paradigm which is adaptive and able to live with uncertain futures and outcomes. Such a paradigm perhaps operates as a pedagogy of hope (Freire 2004) in contrast to instrumental approaches - one that is likely to be truer to the authentic core of youth and community work although potentially dismissed by advocates of evidence based practice. A critical view of the instrumental world of structure and control offered by Martin Buber (1937) seems very relevant here. He suggests that although it provides the ground for our physical and social survival it is nonetheless a world of alienated surfaces which lack connection and meaning. This paper will envision youth and community work operating within a systemic paradigm needed to connect and restore hope and purpose.

Freire, P (2004) Pedagogy of Hope . London Continuum
Buber, M (2003) I and Thou. London Bloomsbury

Presentation 1:

'Talking race: confronting racism'

Presenters: *Wayne Richards and Bal Gill*

Biographies:

Dr Wayne Richards is a senior lecturer in youth and community work at the University of Worcester and leads the masters programme in transformative practice. He is a boundary researcher interested in testing the integrity of set boundaries. His doctoral research was a heuristic study examining boundaries of race.

Bal Gill joined Ruskin College as the coordinator of the youth and community programme in January 2007 following a role as visiting lecturer at Manchester University. Bal completed his JNC at Westhill in 1982 then worked in Cumbria, Rochdale, Lancashire, Warwickshire, Calderdale, Blackpool and Manchester before following his passion for training, specialising in youth and community work, group work, anti-oppressive practice and counselling.

Abstract: How do we talk about race and racism in the teaching of youth and community work? Where this was once a central feature of educational practice, the tendency has been for it to slip off the agenda and instead be communicated through the referents of culture, ethnicity and immigration within a discourse of assimilation. Warmington (2008) reminds us that racism is not an aberrant or exceptional problem but an everyday practice sinewed into social and educational practices. We are concerned that the national picture continues to deteriorate with austerity and political conflicts making the situation worst in Britain and across Europe by creating a climate where racism moves from benign to more violent and aggressive forms.

This presentation will focus on the challenges of talking about race and racism in the HE environment. Implicit within this are fundamental tensions. Upholding race as a reality in social experience and identities has the potential of reifying and essentialising race and thus maintaining it as an artefact upon which racism continues to manifest. Debating race as a social construct risks formulating ideological discourse disconnected from the lived experiences and realities of racism and thus becoming impotent. The presentation will open up race and racism as a topic for discussion and accommodate these contrasting and contradictory tensions.

Warmington, P (2008) The 'R' Word: Voicing race as a critical problem and not just a problem of practice. In Satterthwaite, J. Watts, M & Piper, H. (Eds) *Talking Truth Confronting Power*. Stoke on Trent, Trentham books.

Presentation 2:

'Combatting Gender-related Violence'

Presenter: *Finn Cullen*

Biography: Fin is a feminist youth worker, academic, researcher and activist based at Brunel University London. She has 15 years experience working with young people in a range of settings and her research incorporate young women's friendship cultures, gender and substance use and promoting sexualities equalities in school settings in the No Outsider project. Fin was the UK local action coordinator on the GAP work project. Fin is on the editorial board of Gender and Education and the book reviews editor for Women's Studies International Forum.

Abstract: This presentation is based on a 2 year EU funded international GAP WORK project to support training for youth practitioners to combat Gender-related violence. The project sought bridge potential gaps in practice between:

- support services for adults and for children;
- specialist victim-support services and everyday professional contact;
- supporting those affected and intervening to challenge violence;
- actions focussed on dating violence or on homophobia.

A broad definition of 'gender-related violence' (GRV) was adopted which aimed to problematise sexist, sexualising or norm-driven bullying and harassment whichever children and young people are targeted. The initial focus was explicitly feminist and was grounded in the team's experiences as academics, practitioners and activists. This paper reflects on the opportunities and challenges offered by critically engaging with and opening up definitions of gender based violence using the experiences of both trainers and training participants.

The presentation explores the UK arm of the project which involved designing, delivering and evaluating such training with 128 youth practitioners— many of them youth workers. I reflect on the experience of bringing activism, practice and theory together, as well as on prior scholarly work exploring the potential within youth work to challenge normative sex-gender (Batsleer, 2006, 2012; Cullen, 2013).

Presentation 3:

'Politycal Literacy: Educating for Active Citizenship' A Polity of 'Government of Many' vs 'Government of Few'

Presenter: *Paul Fenton*

Biography: Paul is currently working as a freelance educator and consultant and is Visiting Professor linked to the Creative Communities Unit at Staffordshire University. He was the founding Principal of Oasis College of Higher Education (London) and Principal Lecturer in Youth Work, leading the College's development from 2009 to 2014. He has experience of work across the HE sector having held full, part-time and visiting capacities at various HE institutions in the UK. His professional practice career has included posts as youth and community worker, inclusion director, community education advisor and local authority youth and children's services training manager. Paul holds postgraduate qualifications in youth, community and education studies; is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Abstract: In the recent general election in the UK a majority government was formed having received the support of only 24.3% of *all* registered voters. This statistic might appear peculiar, or even unfamiliar, but it shouldn't be. Why? Because no government has achieved even 25% of all registered voters this century (the last four general elections) and the Labour government of 2005 holds the lowest record at 21.6% of *all* registered voters. In fact, in the modern era you would have to look back to 1951 to find a government that could muster the support of just over 40% of *all* registered voters (a Conservative 'victory'). The reason? Throughout the last 70 years the vote share for the two main parties has decreased significantly along with voter turnout and, consequently, it can be argued the constitutional system in the UK has been exposed as unfit for genuinely representative democracy.

The real 2015 election results highlight two fundamental concerns for 'British Democracy'. Firstly, the increasing apathy towards the two main political parties and; secondly, the flaws in a system that can return a majority government with such a small percentage of public support. However, despite these concerns, much of the electorate is ignorant to the 'polity' (the form or process of civil government or constitution) at work in the UK. This reflects a general political illiteracy in the populous that continues to accept the status quo as promoted by the two 'main' political parties. As Hugh Collins observed in his analysis of political literacy in 1992:

"High levels of political ignorance in a community are a danger sign...They are a warning that the quality of democracy is under threat...[because]...The boundary line between the literate and the illiterate marks out differentiations of power, which are characteristically associated with significant social divisions such as class, gender, religion and ethnicity. Only literacy can confer the emancipatory possibilities of a fully human existence."

In this presentation, I set out the value of youth and community work revisiting its function in offering 'liberalia studia', what Jeffs (2015,p.13) describes as "*a liberal education best able to instill intellectual discernment, wisdom and a capacity to separate sense from nonsense...to engage in dialogue with young people, to raise their sights and help them build the world anew.*" Drawing on Aristotle's 'Politika' as a tool for evaluating constitutions of 'government of few' vs 'government of many', I suggest a reemergence of 'politycal literacy' in youth and community work is needed that promotes the virtue of 'polis' (citizenship) as engaging young people as agents of change in the interest of the 'common good'.

Collins, H. (1992) Political Literacy: Educating For Democracy. 'Papers on Parliament' No. 14. Parliament of Australia
Jeffs, T. (2015) What Sort of Future? In Stanton, N. (2015) 'Innovation in Youth Work'. YMCA George Williams College
Reference to Aristotle's Politika from: Ebenstein, Alan (2002). Introduction to Political Thinkers. Boston, MA: Wadsworth



Delegates are invited to choose from one of five 'twinned' workshops as follows:

WORKSHOP 1:

First Presentation:

'Rethinking approaches to curriculum in Teaching and Learning in Youth and Community Work'

Presenter: *Trudi Cooper (Edith Cowan University, Australia)*

Abstract: In England and Wales, Youth and Community Work in Higher Education emerged in an environment where curriculum was scrutinised and accredited by state-sponsored regulatory organisations. The legacy of this system remains today. The system has had some advantages, but these come at a price of constraining both the Youth Work curriculum, and the role of the youth work professional association. By contrast, in Australia, no external regulatory structures have ever existed. This lack of structure has had a number of disadvantages, but also some benefits. In particular the lack of accreditation has allowed for greater curriculum experimentation in youth work education, and the role of youth work professional associations has not been limited by other accrediting organisations.

In this presentation I will focus on the relationship between curriculum frameworks, the delivery of youth work education, and dialogue with youth work professional associations. The presentation examines the following issues:

1. Why it is important to carefully scrutinise how the overarching frameworks for the youth work curriculum;
2. The advantages and disadvantages of competency-based and outcomes focused approaches to curriculum;
3. An approach to curriculum development in Youth Work that overcomes the disadvantages of outcomes focused curriculum whilst maintaining the benefits;
4. Implications for dialogue with youth work professional associations.

The presentation reports aspects of a recently completed Australian project to renew the Youth Work curriculum in Australian higher education, which was funded by the Office for Learning and Teaching in Australia. The full findings are available in the report: Cooper, T., Bessant, J., Broadbent, R., Couch, J., & Edwards, K. (2014) Australian Youth Work Education: Curriculum Renewal and a Model for Sustainability for Niche Professions Sydney: Office for Learning and Teaching

(Workshop 1)

Second Presentation:

'New communities of practice: where should the craft of youth work fit?'

Presenters: Nick Koral & Ian Jones (Bradford College & University Centre)

Biographies:

Nick Koral has 10 years practice experience of working with young people in community settings as a qualified practitioner. He then trained as Social Worker working supporting young people who are at risk of or victims of CSE. He joined the College in 2006 and now is the Curriculum Team Leader for the School of Childhood and Youth. He has a keen interest in critically appraising the "Youth Workers tool box" in light of current and emerging practitioner requirements. He is still a registered and practicing Social Worker. Contact: n.koral@bradfordcollege.ac.uk

Ian Jones has 30 years practice experience of youth and community development work in different settings. He joined Bradford College & University Centre as a part time placement tutor in 2013 and then joined full time as Lecturer on the professionally qualifying BA (Hons) in Youth & Community Development Work & PGD/MA courses. He has a keen interest in social pedagogy and how its exploration can inform youth and community development work in the UK through his Masters Studies and on-going research/scholarly activity. Contact: i.jones@bradfordcollege.ac.uk

Abstract: Social pedagogy and youth work practice: are we at a tipping point for change? Scandinavian and Nordic countries within Europe are active creative practitioners embracing social pedagogy. Trends within UK youth work practice require practitioners to move across both ideological and professional "borders" (creating both opportunity and threats) and engage within **new "communities of practice"**. A key theme here is the need for progressive multi-disciplinary practice and co-production. Hamalainen (2003, p76) suggest that *"the basic idea of social pedagogy is to promote people's social functioning, inclusion, participation, social identity and social competence as members of society"*.

Key themes:

- Explore the ideology of 'social pedagogy', 'community practice' and the 'craft' of youth work.
- Share the findings of the 'Future in Our Hands' conference from Finland with 'Humak University of Applied Sciences'. Paper delivered: *'To discuss the future challenges both in NGO, Youth Work and Cultural Management, and to try and find answers to the current and future questions.'*
- Share the findings of the joint Youth Work and Social Work academic exploration with Norway.
- Explore and question paradigms in Youth and Community Work and consider imagining a different future.

Key questions:

- Is there a place for a 'social pedagogic' ideology within the current context of youth work?
- Should 'key thinking' and understanding of youth work, "In Defence of Youth Work" etc., embrace or resist the notions of 'social pedagogy' and 'communities of practice'?
- Is the current socio-economic climate and 'neo-liberalist' political ideology a 'threat' or an 'opportunity' for change?

Hatton. K (2013) *Social Pedagogy in the UK: Theory and Practice*. Russell House Publishing.



WORKSHOP 2:

First Presentation:

'Initial findings from a case study exploring supervisor perceptions of youth and community work students' learning within extended fieldwork placements.'

Presenter: *Pat Norris (York St John University)*

Abstract: Fieldwork placements are central to professional youth and community work training and programmes rely on work-based supervisors to support student learning within the setting. The context for this paper is a recently validated programme working with a newly established network of fieldwork placement supervisors. To support the ongoing development of the programme, a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning within placements is likely to be helpful.

The wider policy framework and landscape of youth and community work provision is dynamic and we are finding that many fieldwork placement organisations are quick to reflect in their provision these changes in policy. Securing suitable placements in this context means working with a range of organisations, for example housing, youth justice and welfare settings as well as the more traditional youth and community work settings and working with supervisors with different professional backgrounds. While this reflects the increasing integrated nature of youth and community work practice within the locality of the HEI, it also brings a rich pool of professional understandings to the supervisor body supporting the programme. The positive potential this offers may also be problematic and the study hopes to explore this further. Along with a diverse range of placement opportunities, the HEI is working with younger (U21yrs) students with less practice-based experience, compared to mature students already working in the field and this factor potentially results in more input into the teaching and learning process by placement supervisors.

The questions of what and how students are learning within their placement is personalised to the individual. Being confident as an awarding HEI that student's professional formation is secure and that the process for all students is fair even though the learning contexts vary is at the heart of the programme. The apparently diverse fieldwork placement contexts led to the question of 'what are and how do these inter-relating factors are shape students learning and professional formation?'. This study began with thinking about learning in a social context and how structure and agency work in relation to the teaching and learning within fieldwork placements. The importance of the traditional artefacts relating to youth and community work, drawing on Engeström's (2001) work on activity theory is considered along with the influence of agency, disciplinary knowledge and organisational culture on student learning. This paper presents the initial work and pilot findings for the study. The overall research aims to develop the context's understanding of the teaching and learning experience, to support students, supervisors and the HEI and contributes towards a doctoral programme in educational research.

Key words: Engeström, activity theory, structure and agency, youth and community work, teaching and learning



(WORKSHOP 2)

Second Presentation:

'Paired Listening: Creating Space for Reflexivity'

Presenter: *Helen Gatenby (Nazarene Theological College, Manchester)*

Biography: Helen has lived and worked in Ardwick, Manchester since 1989. She established the M13 Youth Project there in 1995, where she continues to work as a manager and youth work practitioner; and, since 2006, she has been a Visiting Lecturer at the Nazarene Theological College, on their 'Youth Work and Ministry' degree course. She is working towards a PhD at Durham University, researching how youth work students develop their professional values within qualifying education. Her interests are informal education theory and practice with young people, teaching and learning strategies, and living hopefully, with faith and love in Ardwick.

Contact: helen@brunswickchurch.org.uk 07973 976925

Abstract: Youth work requires the kind of knowledge and understanding that enables workers to make wise judgements in often complex and unique life situations: and which also requires them to be self-aware and reflexive in this process, as workers themselves are the main 'tools' of their work. This entails learning on the part of youth work students that teachers cannot directly teach, as Carl Rogers contentiously points out:

Anything that can be taught to another is relatively inconsequential and has little or no significant influence on behaviour. [the] only learning which significantly influences behaviour is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning...[which] cannot be directly communicated to another. (Rogers in Schön 1987:89)

If there is truth in Rogers' claim (Schön qualifies it somewhat), this says something about the way youth work educators work to foster learning about self and practice within qualifying youth work students. Drawing on theory and practice from co-counselling (Lindahl 2004, Potts 1981), the workshop will explore, examine and question an approach to learning which uses reflective and uninterrupted paired speaking and listening, to support students to develop their reflective thinking and listening skills. This teaching practice is not about imparting knowledge or holding academic conversation / discussion: it is about fostering exploration of self and development of one's thinking with the support of focused and disciplined listening, allowing the speaker / thinker to explore, question and hear themselves, reason and reach their own conclusions in the company of another. The workshop will explore underpinning theory, and is participatory, involving practice and collective critique of the listening / speaking paired-dynamic.

Lindahl, K. (2004) *Practising the Sacred Art of Listening*. Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications
Potts, D. (1981) *One-to-one Learning*, in Boud, D. (ed) *Developing Student Autonomy in Learning*. London:

Kegan Page

Schon, D A. (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, London: Jossey Bass

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WORKSHOP 3:

'Youth Work In Digital Spaces'

Presenter: *Jane Melvin (University of Brighton)*

Biography: Jane is currently Principal Lecturer and Programme Leader for the BA (Hons) working with Children and Young People suite (inc. BA (Hons) Youth Work) at the University of Brighton. She also teaches on the MA Education in both Brighton and Mauritius, and is hoping to complete her Professional Doctorate in Education within the next year. With experience in both local authority and voluntary sector youth services, Jane's research interests centre around the use of digital technologies as a vehicle for engaging young people in informal and experiential learning, and her current interest relates to the concept of 'digital space' and its relationship to youth work practice.

Abstract: This workshop will use the principles of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1999) to explore the digital ecologies of young people and students of youth and community work, in order to explore the relevance of developing youth work practice in digital spaces. Participants will be asked to engage with the workshop content through reflection on their own personal experiences and through those of professional practice, in order to determine how the fact of young people's digital ecologies relates to youth and community work today and the professional formation of 21st century youth workers.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1999) Environments in developmental perspective: Theoretical and operational models. In Measuring environment across the life span : emerging methods and concepts. Washington D.C., American Psychological Association.

WORKSHOP 4:

First Presentation:

'Pre-Service Training for Youth Workers'

Presenter: *Jennifer Brooker (RMIT, Australia)*

Biography: Jennifer has been the Youth Work Coordinator at RMIT (Australia) since January 2008. She is responsible for the coordination and delivery of various youth work training programs to both TAFE and Higher Education cohorts including Cert, IV Youth Work (Class/industry), Cert. IV Alcohol and Other Drugs, the Commonwealth Youth Programme Diploma in Youth in Development Work (internationally recognized course delivered nationally), the Diploma of Youth Work (Class/industry). Jennifer is currently undertaking a PhD which is looking at the youth work training programs of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA.

Abstract: Mapping youth work practice around in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States as part of my doctoral studies, has highlighted the similarities and differences in current pre-service qualifications currently on offer for the training of youth workers. Variations in subject focus, length and placement of practicum requirements, policy frameworks, the age range of clients and whether formal pre-service training is necessary to gain employment in the youth sector for a particular country affects the validity of a work force necessary for the safety and ongoing support of children, adolescents and young adults around the world. This workshop will compare the history and current state of pre-service training for youth workers and then outline their current similarities and differences followed by a discussion on how their training impacts upon them and their potential to transfer their skills and knowledge globally.

Second Presentation:

'Bridging the Gap: Employer Engagement in Widening Participation'

Presenters: *Breda Friel and Alastair Scott-McKinley (Ulster University)*

Biography: Breda Friel (FHEA, FCHERP) and Alastair Scott-McKinley (FHEA, FCHERP) are part of the Community Youth Work team, School of Sociology and Applied Social Studies, Ulster University.

Abstract: This workshop will outline our experience in developing partnerships with key sector employers (YouthAction NI and WELB Youth Service) at region level. The partnerships support employers' direct involvement in the delivery of short courses on the Ulster University Certificate in Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) and Certificate in Community Youth Studies. The partnerships add value, which benefits individuals, and the wider economy, through addressing the Northern Ireland skills agenda by preparing and up skilling the new and changing workforce, in line with the key action point within Government Policy: Access to Success. (DELNI 2012). The project targets potential part-time students which make up 40% of all higher education students in the UK (UUK, 2006) and 30% of students studying at Ulster (15% undergraduate) (Internal UU Statistics). UUK (2006) point out that "part-time higher education is a significant element in the continuing growth of the sector and plays a central role in extending higher-level skills, widening participation, and lifelong learning."

The purpose of the project is to make higher education visible and accessible within communities and employment settings, in particular in community and youth settings. Community Youth work is a sector with a workforce made up mostly of volunteers (90% N=24,452) (Courtney 2011). A small number transfer to semi-professional paid roles or professional full-time roles. This project is targeted at those individuals considering paid roles and wishing to transition from level 2 and Level 3 training into level 4 training. The transition to Higher Education can be a challenge for non-traditional students due to their diverse range of support needs (Brennan 2008). This project engages the support of employers in 'bridging the gap' between volunteering, higher education and employment. The approach is informed and aligned with Government policies; 'Access for Success' (DELNI2012), 'Success through Skills' (DELNI2010) and 'Priorities for Youth' (DE 2013). It is also in accord with two Ulster Universities policies, (1) 'Widening Access and Participation Strategy' 2011/12-2015/16 particularly Aim 2 and objective 1, 2, 3 & 4 and (2) Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18.

The project also seeks to raise aspirations of these students to consider progression to further modules on the (CPPD) framework or a full programme of study, particularly part-time routes based in employment. The project targeted young adults classified as NEET (not in education training or employment), young adults who are late engagers with education and mature adult returners who can achieve level 4 university accreditation, in particular from low participation and neighbourhood renewal areas.

This model has achieved the following outcomes:

- Establishment of an 'Outcentre Partnership' for delivery of the Certificate in Community Youth Studies (60 credits lv4) with 22 students completing in 2013-14 and 20 studying in 2014-15.
- Delivery of four modules, with 53 students completing Lvl 4, 10 credit modules with employers in Derry, Newry, Enniskillen and Limavady. A further 85 students are planned in 2014-15.

The role of regional employers was a significant factor in the success of the project. Students on the projects indicated that the two most significant factors influencing their decision to study were (1) it was 'offered within their local community' (67%), and (2) that it was delivered in partnership with an employer (61%). Based on the evidence of this project, employers can play a significant role in 'Bridging the Gap' and supporting part-time students engagement with higher education.

- Brennan, John and Osbourne, Mike (2008) Higher education's many diversities: of students, institutions and experiences; and outcomes? *Research Papers in Education*, 23: 2, 179-190
- Courtney, Roger. (2011) *A Profile of the Youth Work Workforce in Northern Ireland*. Youth Council for Northern Ireland
- Department of Education (2013) *Priorities for Youth: Improving Young People's Life through Youth Work*. Department of Education http://www.deni.gov.uk/priorities_for_youth_-_english-2.pdf
- Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) 2012 'Access to Success' – widening participation in education for under-represented students Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) <http://www.delni.gov.uk/access-to-success>
- Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) 2010 'Success through Skills' – development of skills in Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) <http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/successthroughskills.htm>
- Ulster University (2011) Widening Access and Participation Strategy' 2011/12-2015/16 <http://adl.ulster.ac.uk/public/docs/waspc/WAPStrategy2011-16.pdf>
- Ulster University (2013) Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18 http://www.ulster.ac.uk/centrehep/teaching_and_learning_strategy/Learning_TeachingStrategyPlainTextVersion.pdf



WORKSHOP 5:

First Presentation:

'Report on Research on involvement of young people in youth and community teaching'

Presenter: *Caroline Mountain (Leeds Beckett University)*

Biography: Caroline is a Senior Lecturer at Leeds Beckett. Caroline has worked with young people for most of her working life and has 25 years' experience as a youth and community worker. Alongside generic youth provision the work has involved; work with girls and young women; anti-racist work; schools based work; participation work and sexual health work. She has worked in statutory youth services, third sector organisations and the NHS. Caroline joined the Youth and Community team at Leeds Beckett (then Leeds Metropolitan) in 2006, but has tried to remain in contact with front line youth work volunteering for a range of projects. At the present time she volunteers with The Cupboard Project, the young people's section of Health for All.

Abstract: This presentation is informed by the findings of Caroline's research into the active involvement of young people in youth work training courses in higher education. Youth Work has a long tradition of involving young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services and other areas that concern them. Long before the call for such practice in policy and guidance such as United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1990), The Children Act (2004) and Every Child Matters (DFES, 2003), it was embedded in youth work practice. This can be evidenced in literature dating back to 1939 in circular1486 In the Service of Youth although was commonplace before that time (Roberts, 2004). Hart (1992), describes participation as '*the right to share decisions which effect one's life and the community in which one lives*' (p.5). It would seem apparent that a course teaching students how to work with young people and communities will affect the lives of young people and the communities in which they live, yet the research found little evidence of young people's participation within such courses.

In addition to sharing the findings of her research, Caroline is interested in seeking the views of participants as to the involvement of young people and how such work can be supported. As one participant commented 'from a youth and community perspective, something we pride ourselves on is that the young people are central to everything we do, except apparently in academia, so we need to address that'.

Children Act 2004 (c. 145). London: HMSO
Department for Education and Skills, (2003) Every Child Matters. Department for education and Skills
Hart, R. (1992). Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre
Roberts, J. (2004) 'The significance of Circular 1486 -The Service of Youth', The Encyclopedia of Informal Education [online] Available from: <www.infed.org/youthwork/circular1486.htm>
United Nations (1990) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Geneva: United Nations.

(Workshop 5)

Second Presentation:

'Developing Young Communities'

Presenter: Sue Cooper (St Mark and St John University, Plymouth)

Biography: Dr Susan Cooper has 15 years practice experience of youth work in a range of different settings. She joined the University of St Mark & St John in 2005 as a senior lecturer and Programme Leader for the professionally qualifying BA (Hons) in Youth & Community Work. She has developed expertise in evaluation, including the development of an innovative and participatory evaluation methodology through her doctoral studies. Contact: scooper@marjon.ac.uk

Abstract: This presentation is informed by the findings of an evaluation of a three year lottery funded youth work project delivered by a social landlord. The development of positive communities is at the heart of North Devon Homes as evidenced by their vision statement; '*Working together to create communities where people want to live*' and this commitment informed the youth work approach taken in the youth project.

The approach moved away from the usual practice of targeted and curriculum-led delivery that is found in the majority of youth provision despite the mounting critique of this way of working (see Davies 2013). Instead, they developed an exemplary approach to youth work shaped by community development practices. A key innovation is seen in their decision not to work within traditional age-based groups as is general practice in most other youth work provision. Underpinning this decision was the fact that outside of the youth clubs, young people naturally spent time together across all ages, therefore it made sense to work with these 'communities' of young people rather than impose externally set age-based parameters.

Whilst mixing pre-teens with older adolescents may cause concern for some in relation to peer pressure, these concerns are generally informed by a negative perspective of youth. If young people are viewed not as problems to be contained, but as assets then these concerns are radically reduced. Seeing young people as assets rather than problems enables them to be envisioned as a source of social capital that can strengthen communities (Schwartz and Suyemoto 2013). Additionally, taking a 'communities' approach addresses issues of sustainability. Building individual young people's knowledge and skills alone is unlikely to lead to behaviour change over the long-term. Interventions focused at the individual level need to be combined with efforts to shape the broader environment. This includes tackling social norms that hinder young people's participation in their communities.

Davies, B. (2013) 'Youth work in a changing policy landscape: the view from England' in *Youth & Policy*, Vol. 110, pp. 6-32

Schwartz, S. and Suyemoto, K. (2013) 'Creating change from the inside: youth development within a youth community organizing program' in *Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol. 41 (3), pp. 341-358

Saturday 27th June: 9.15am-10.30am (Options)
Main Session 6: Seminar Choices
Theme: 'Questioning Paradigms in Youth and Community Work'

Delegates are invited to choose from one of two 'twinned' seminars as follows:

SEMINAR 1:

First Presentation:

'Working with the concept of assemblage as the basis for (re) thinking pedagogical approaches to professional formation of youth and community workers as informal educators'

Presenter: *Christine Smith (St Mark and St John University, Plymouth)*

Biography: Christine has worked at the University of St Mark and St John for the last 7 years and is currently working towards her PHD in Education.

Abstract: This workshop invites participants to explore the assertion made by Jeffs and Spence (2008) that higher education offered to youth and community workers lacks cultural and intellectual breadth required to negotiate and navigate the complex arena in which practice is evolving. More broadly Braidotti (2013:12) theorises such a concern in relation to what she calls the post human challenge in a global era. She considers the role of the University in '*empowering new generations as knowing subjects who can actively pursue alternative schemes of thought, knowledge and self-representation*' in ways that are attuned to the principles of social justice and orientated to the radical pursuit of freedom. Postgraduate education has been described as the 'new frontier of widening participation' (Hubble and Foster 2015:4) but what of its role in the professional formation of social professionals and in relation to this workshop more specifically youth and community workers as informal educators? The workshop will ponder whether there is a need to question the traditional frameworks of higher education in place to produce social professionals as well as the obstacles that stand in the way of an agenda for change that might run counter to contemporary dominant discourse.

The workshop will conclude with a brief presentation on a research proposal that seeks to work with the concept of assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari) as methodology and collective biography (Davies and Gannon 2006) as method and as one potential strategy for 'plugging in' to a deeper understanding of the complexities impinging on professional formation and what it means to become professional in contemporary policy and discourse formations. The approach may also enable an orientation to action that can refresh pedagogical approaches to postgraduate professional education for youth and community workers. The research proposal is entitled: '*A nomadic inquiry: - working with the concept of 'subjectivity' as the basis for (re) thinking pedagogical approaches to professional formation of youth and community workers as informal educators.*'

Barad, K. (2007) Meeting the Universe Halfway. Duke University Press

Braidotti, R. (2013) *The Posthuman*. (1st ed.) Cambridge: Polity Press.

Davies, B. and Gannon, S. (eds) (2006) *Doing Collective Biography*. (1st ed.) Berkshire: Open University Press

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (2013). *A thousand plateaus*. Bloomsbury.

Hubble, S and Foster D (2015) New loans for postgraduate students announced in the Autumn Statement 2014. House of Commons Library

Jeffs, T. and Spence, J. (2007/2008) Farewell to all that? The uncertain future of youth and community work education. *Youth and Policy*. No. 97&98: 135-166.



(Seminar 1)

Second Presentation:

'Wondering about Assemblages, Webs and Collectives: Could we move away from individualised models of reflective practice and how?'

Presenter: Janet Batsleer (*Manchester Metropolitan University*)

Biography: Janet Batsleer has been teaching on youth and community work programmes in Manchester for over 20 years and holds the position of Principal Lecturer in Youth and Community Work at Manchester Metropolitan University. She gave evidence to the parliamentary select committee in 2011 in its investigation into 'Services for Young People' and has published a range of texts related to youth and community work with a special interest in critical pedagogy.

Abstract: Youth and Community work is changing and this paper reflects on work we have undertaken over the last ten years and possible new directions. There is a plausible argument that in securing the practice of youth and community work on our courses in Higher Education through support to National Occupational Standards, Subject Benchmarks and the institutionalisation of assessment of competence through individual reflective practice we have both defined the field of work (to our collective good) and at the same time colluded with the governance tools so brilliantly analysed by Stephen Ball in relation to teaching. We have allowed 'our soul' to become available for neoliberal regulation. In this paper therefore, in part as auto critique, I want to ask where practice is now after the collapse of Local Authority based services, and what forms of collective May now emerge which can support and create infrastructures for practice. I want to draw on new materialist and feminist theory to examine ideas of the youth and community assemblage and ask what forms of cooperative, critical and reflective practice might be emergent.

SEMINAR 2:

First Presentation:

'Youth Work and Cartographic Action: Re-naming Paradoxes – Mapping Utopian Futures'

Presenter: *Graham Bright (York St John University)*

Biography: Graham Bright is Senior Lecturer in Children, Young People and Families and Youth and Community Work at York St John University. He is the editor of 'Youth Work: Histories, Policy and Contexts' (Palgrave MacMillan, in press) and is engaged in a PhD study with the University of Durham which is examining the narratives of youth workers' lives and practice.

Abstract: Using Foucauldian and Freirean frameworks, this paper seeks to re-name inherent paradoxes in the history and development of youth and community work, and map ways in which these continue to influence contemporary practices. In highlighting these intrinsic dilemmas which result in amoral praxes, the paper begins to promote an imaginary that not only recognises youth work's current precarious predicament, but which draws upon and synthesises Trickster typologies and perspectives from Utopian studies to consider and affirm new ways ahead for the Profession which re-state youth work's commitment to critical interruption.

Second Presentation:

'Living Absurdly in a Collision of Cross-Purposes - Anticipating the Future, Generating Hope'

Presenter: *Helen Gatenby, M13 Youth Project*

Biography: Helen has lived and worked in Ardwick, Manchester since 1989. She established the M13 Youth Project there in 1995, where she continues to work as a manager and youth work practitioner; and, since 2006, she has been a Visiting Lecturer at the Nazarene Theological College, teaching on their 'Youth Work and Ministry' degree course. She is working towards a PhD at Durham University, researching how youth work students develop their professional values within qualifying education. Her interests are informal education theory and practice with young people, teaching and learning strategies, and living hopefully, with faith and love in Ardwick.

Abstract:

What informs and directs youth workers' practice on the ground: agency aims? government policy? funder priorities? social anxiety? religious faith? neo-liberal ideology? utopian vision? youth work principles? professional ethics? young people's needs? workers' values? Youth workers will always work with multiple contradictions in a 'collision of cross-purposes' (Rohr 2003:178), which we seek to juggle, hold in tension and somehow reconcile in our practice. How do we minimise our levels of hypocrisy? How do we emerge from being overwhelmed? How do we work with reality, yet practice with vision and hope? Calling for imagination and courage, this presentation offers some reflections on practice contradictions from life and practice in a 'deprived' neighbourhood in Manchester.

Rohr, R. (2003) *Everything Belongs*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company.



Presentation:

'Utopia and Beyond – Dreaming Differently of 'Could Be' Ways of Working with Young People'

Presenters: Charlie Cooper, Gill Hughes and Julie Rippingdale (University of Hull)

Abstract: This session builds on Charlie Cooper's introduction to utopia studies on Friday morning and Ruth Levitas' embrace of Andre Gorz's call that 'it is the function of utopias ... to provide us with the distance from the existing state of affairs which allows us to judge what we *are* doing in the light of what we *could* or *should* do' (cited in Levitas 2013: xvii – emphasis in original).

To illustrate the primary function of utopia, Levitas draws on Abensour's re-reading of William Morris' *News from Nowhere* (1890). The main character, William Guest, a Victorian socialist, wakes up in the year 2102 to a society transformed as an agrarian democracy with *inter alia*: no private property; no monetary system; no class divide; no schooling institutions; and where pleasure is sought through the arts, nature, beauty and meaningful labours rather than monetary wealth (Morris 2004).

Morris never intended *News from Nowhere* as a blueprint for a future utopia, arguing that it was 'impossible to build a scheme for the society of the future, for no man [sic] can really think himself out of his own days' (cited in Levitas 2013: 113). Instead, as Abensour argues, utopias should be heuristic devices encouraging learners to discover 'could be' for themselves. The primary function of a utopia is to encourage the desire for something better. What is important is 'how the text itself acts on the act of desiring [W]e should understand it as the catalyst of a process, in which the reader is an active agent, of disrupting the normative and conceptual frameworks of mundane experience' (Levitas 2013: 113).

In this sense, we can begin to re-imagine ways of working with young people in more critical, adventurous ways, where normative conceptions are thrown into disarray and we are encouraged to explore different possibilities 'to desire better, to desire more, and above all to desire in a different way' (Edward Thompson, cited in Levitas 2013: 5). Creating such desires is increasingly vital for a society ravaged by 35 years of neoliberal restructuring where the common public good and respect for the other is eroded. Authors in the field of education, for example, such as Reay (2012: 3), call for a revolution embracing 'could be' requests for 'totally different ways of envisioning education'. Similar requests might be made for mainstream youth work.

The diverse experience of a TAG audience offers an opportunity to facilitate an interactive session utilising participatory methods to engineer discussion exploring the possibilities of dreaming differently – beyond the current system to what 'could be'. It is clear from the current literature, and today's difficult economic and social context, that this is an area both ripe and vital for exploration.