

Critical Pedagogy and Professional Practice in Youth and Community Work Education

Seminar Programme: Thursday 4th July 2019

SEMINAR BLOCK ONE			
Thursday 9.00-9.30am	Full Conference Presentation: Introduction: Presentation: <i>Transformational Teaching & Learning in a Managerialist Straitjacket'</i>	Chair: Jo Lewis Christopher Herriot DeMontfort University	Constance Stewart Conference Room
<p>There has always been a tension and a conflict in “teaching” informal education practices in a formal education context. Formal education is funded by the state with the express purpose of meeting the needs of employers. Gramsci, echoing Marx, argued that the dominant ideology in any society is the ideology of the ruling class, permeating all layers of education. Higher education, as the pinnacle of the education system, exists to ensure the continuing dominance of the bourgeois elite and of the capitalist system itself. The education system in the UK, developed during the industrial revolution, is, according to Sir Ken Robinson, modelled on industrial production and the factory system itself, an outmoded batch system of learning by rote.</p> <p>The last 30 years or so of Neoliberalism has had a massive impact on higher education as universities have been transformed into (not for profit) businesses with attendant adherence to new public management and managerialist principles. Academic freedom has been undermined with an unceasing and uncompromising stream of standardisation and uniformity. Command management has stifled genuine initiative and innovation. The few innovations that have emerged from this top down culture have tended to take the form of vanity projects, gimmicks and restrictive practices. Yet, taking De Montfort University (DMU) as a case study, youth work lecturers have been able to facilitate production of new waves of “agents of subversion”. Higher education remains the most appropriate space for the development of critical thinking and the application of critical pedagogy, including the development of youth work apprenticeships. On the other hand, drawing again on Gramsci, and on Paulo Freire, the struggle against bourgeois hegemony requires the building of alternative cultures in the educational sphere as much as anywhere else in society. Another type of university is not only possible but necessary.</p>			

SEMINAR BLOCK ONE: OPTION 1			
Thursday 9.30-10.45am	Twinned Seminar Option 1: 1. <i>Nostalgia ain't what it used to be: Pedagogical strategies to tackle the culture of silence</i> 2. <i>Voice 4 Deptford: Empowerment, tension and social movement</i>	Chair: Sheila Curran John Lockhart University of Central Lancashire Andy Turner Goldsmiths University London	Constance Stewart Conference Room
<p>Presentation 1: Nostalgia ain't what it used to be: Pedagogical strategies to tackle the culture of silence (John Lockhart)</p> <p>The popular understanding of ‘community’ frequently masks undercurrents of exclusion, division and conflict. Communities develop common narratives that wrap up notions of identity, memory and place that may be unrealistic or even harmful. Community can be understood in nostalgic terms that does not reasonably reflect any existing reality. Practitioners thus face the dual challenge of navigating local sensitivities and prejudices alongside expectations from funders and government that do not recognise the complexity of the task.</p> <p>The problem is compounded at the policy level. Giving voice to an abstractly-defined community is presented as the answer to many social problems but the term itself is elusive and problematic (Brent, 2004). In the wake of austerity and local government budget cuts, the opportunity for resourcing creative and responsive initiatives is limited. This is reinforced by the drift of government policy towards more transactional, target-driven approaches, as well as a lack of understanding by policymakers. What is required therefore is the possibility of harnessing community-based initiative with limited outside resources, and in a way that will confront deep-rooted assumptions.</p>			

The presentation will focus on specific pedagogical strategies to tackle the culture of silence and horizontal violence by drawing upon the example of one northern town that has experienced significant economic dislocation and decline, resulting in (and compounded by) issues such as drug addiction, petty crime, racial tensions and hostility to asylum seekers. It will focus on the tools of critical social analysis and emancipatory action research (Ledwith, 2016) to explore a locally-based intervention to start challenging common myths and false narratives through participatory learning.

References:

Brent, J. (2004) The desire for community: Illusion, confusion and paradox. *Community Development Journal*, 39(3), 213-223.

Ledwith, M. (2016) *Community development in action: Putting Freire into practice*. Policy Press.

Presentation 2: Voice 4 Deptford: Empowerment, tension and social movement (Andy Turner)

The presentation will note that community work is complex, frustrating and untidy. Realities of people working together are often tough, at times feeling overwhelmed by the obstacles and inertia, unable to initiate change. These challenges are amplified by the rhetoric of empowerment commandeered by the state and private sector, alongside a context of neoliberal marketplace, where the emphasis is on the measurable and monetised. Through pedagogy at Goldsmiths students confront these challenges in two ways. Firstly, pedagogy critically reflecting on student fieldwork placements.

Under austerity many placement organisations have shifted their approach, away from advocacy and campaigning, to community engagement and service delivery. Teaching staff have noted shifts amongst organisations hosting students, alongside a context where radical community organisations and youth work agencies have closed or had budgets dramatically reduced. In this context, how do students experience a breadth of community development – from pluralist approaches to radical Freirean practitioners and projects? Where do students experience dialogical approaches, conscientisation and praxis that generate change? Without this experience and critical reflection, our pedagogy is deficient.

One response has been for the departments own 'Centre for Community Engagement Research' to supervise students on placements through its connections with campaigning community groups engaged in community work, typically now led entirely by volunteers without any paid worker. One group is 'Voice for Deptford' – a collective of residents from the local Pepys estate and elsewhere, organising and campaigning. Here students have participated in activities including street interviews, setting up a community shop and with teams hosting drop in sessions, facilitating community meetings, and participating in planning groups. This experience of community work has enriched pedagogy deepening student experience of community work, social justice, shifting experience beyond more prolific pluralist practice.

A second aspect of pedagogy is group work. Students are encouraged to dialogue and call out issues related to injustice and oppressive practice. Students consistently report the challenges of group work – of confrontation, conflict and dialogue, that can feel uncomfortable, but enable participants and the group to progress their thinking and practice. Dialogue and praxis as part of group work practice is central to our pedagogy, involving two lecturers to facilitate and is therefore expensive. The initial discomfort felt by students leads senior management to question why the university resource it? The pressure on reducing group work hours have been significant. In this context – how do students learn and develop their practice?

In their final year students highlight the significance of group work in confronting injustice and empowering them to challenge exclusion. This year third year students stood for elections and when confronting racism challenged systems, raised concerns across campus and galvanised students to occupy university administration offices, demanding changes to university policy around issues of race. At the centre of the approach was group work practice.

This presentation will consider how practice of radical Freirean community development including dialogue and group work practice has become harder for students to access in London. The session will highlight the above examples and the importance of locating effective practice, defending or developing opportunity for students to develop Freirean community work practice as part of our pedagogy.

SEMINAR BLOCK ONE: OPTION 2

Thursday 9.30-10.45am	Twinned Seminar Option 2: 1. <i>The Look of Love - Youth Participation through a Freirean Lens</i> 2. <i>Dynamix Systems Voices - creating engaging participative practices</i>	Chair: Ian Jones Louise Sheridan University of Glasgow Angela Hancock Bishop Grosseteste University	BG Futures Room 1
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Presentation 3: The Look of Love – Youth Participation through a Freirean Lens (Louise Sheridan)

This participatory presentation is based on the results of a doctoral study that examined Youth Participation Practice in North Ayrshire, Scotland – From a Freirean Perspective. Paulo Freire’s ideas (2000; 2005) and principles for educational practice (1996) formed the theoretical framework for a research project with young people, youth workers and an Elected Member of the Council in North Ayrshire about their perceptions and experiences of youth participation practice.

The presentation will enable critical discussion about the following principles and their relevance to contemporary youth participation practice: ‘the importance of pedagogical space; educators and learners are both subjects within the process but not necessarily equal; education should aim for a dream; educators should never impose their agenda; and educators should respect the autonomy of the students and respect cultural identities’ (Freire, 1996:129).

The presentation proposes that Freire’s first principle ‘the importance of pedagogical space’ should underpin all forms of youth work. When the right kind of space is created, in which young people are able to form trusting relationships with peers and youth workers, positive transformation is possible. Influenced by Freire’s (2005) emphasis on love being a key feature of transformative education, the concept of ‘Alfirmo’ was developed (Sheridan, 2018). The presentation will examine this new concept, which is ‘the act of caring for, nourishing and supporting people, while asserting belief in their ability as agents of change’ (p.1). Participants will discuss the suggestion that alfirmo should be the cornerstone of transformative practice with young people.

The presentation will also facilitate discussion about the notion of scaffolding (MacIntosh and Youniss, 2008) and how youth workers convey that they are there for young people to support them as required. The notion of youth workers ‘being there’ for young people will be examined, which relates to Hovied and Finne’s (2014:248) suggestion that ‘[youth workers] have to give of [themselves]’ in youth work. This notion will also be examined in terms of the implications for youth participation – both for young people and for youth workers.

Presentation 4: Dynamix System Voices - creating engaging participative practices (Angela Hancock)

This submission is part of a research project aiming to engage with practitioners interested to explore and develop understanding of factors contributing to decision making processes with young people. A small community organisation which developed through regeneration funding at the beginning of the 2000’s agreed to pilot the first stage of this research, within the context of more recent policy and resource capacity changes. This pilot sought to scaffold practitioners’ critical reflection with transparency in interrogating professional practice choices, potentially co-creating knowledge from these perspectives.

Processes with young people to hear their voice more in day to day practices were captured initially through workshops with staff, involving mapping and modelling from a systems thinking approach. This surfaced discussion with reflection on the current practices alongside imagining the ‘ideal’ approaches alongside current constraints as well as potential enablers to develop ‘what could be’ with a realistic plan of the action required to achieve this.

This was captured in rich picture diagrams, representing staff and young people as coloured counters, moved in relation to the discussions about possibilities and options for extending participation. This was then contrasted with the voice of the young person through the youth workers discussions with young people in a session.

Contrasts are seen regarding priorities from a staff perspective alongside the young people. This is part of ongoing localised debates, creating engaging participative practices, contributing to ethical debates about adult decision making for young people, particularly within the role and responsibilities of leadership.

SEMINAR BLOCK TWO			
Thursday 11.15- 11.45am	Full Conference Presentation: Introduction: Presentation: <i>Applied Critical Pedagogy: Perspectives on teaching professional practice in HE</i>	Chair: Dave Beck Sinead Gormally University of Glasgow	Constance Stewart Conference Room
Applied Critical Pedagogy: Perspectives on teaching professional practice in HE			
<p>This presentation will examine perspectives from two HE institutions where Critical Pedagogy underpins the teaching, learning and assessment practices of students undertaking BA (Hons) Degrees in Community Development and Community Education. It will share problem-posing practices that assist in improving pedagogical criticality and professional reflexivity.</p> <p>The presentation will explore how we teach critical emancipatory practice within contemporary neoliberal frames that regulate and impact on professional standards in both youth and community development practice and in HE. In the context of austerity driven policies that stigmatize and individualise communities, this presentation exemplifies processes through which our students become prepared to consciously engage in critical emancipatory practice. Rather than to 'accept the orthodoxies that sustained prejudice and inequality' (Beggan and Coburn, 2018) the application of critical pedagogy, in these HE contexts, helped to create counter-narratives to dominant and constraining discourses.</p> <p>Adopting participatory and alternative strategies in teaching, learning and assessment within HE demonstrated how the use of study visits, social media technology, and peer teaching enabled students to reflect on their existing world view and current practice. This helped them to re-imagine their role in taking forward a critical pedagogy for emancipatory practice (Coburn and Gormally, 2017), and to consider why it is important and how it might look!</p> <p>Beggan, E. and Coburn A. (2018) Creating 'one big masterpiece': Synthesis in Creative Arts Youth Work. <i>CONCEPT</i> 9 (2) 15-30</p> <p>Coburn, A. and Gormally, S. (2017) <i>Communities for Social Change: Practicing Equality and Social Justice in Youth and Community Work</i>, New York: Peter Lang</p>			

SEMINAR BLOCK TWO: OPTION 1			
Thursday 11.45-1.00pm	Twinned Seminar Option 1: 1. <i>Anti-Oppressive Practice: From the classroom to professional practice.</i> 2. <i>How do cisgendered lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer (LGBQ) women youth workers use their self in youth work settings?</i>	Chair: Ian Jones Elen Ghassempoory & Emma Chivers , Uni of South Wales Jean Hatton University of Huddersfield	Constance Stewart Conference Room
Presentation 1: Anti-Oppressive Practice: From the classroom to professional practice. (Elen Ghassempoory & Emma Chivers)			
<p>The youth work profession commits itself to the values of "equity, diversity and inclusion" (LSIS, 2012, p. 5) and a fundamental principle of the profession is to challenge oppression and inequality (Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services and Principle Youth Officers' Group, 2018, p. 5; LSIS, 2012, p. 5; National Youth Agency, 2004 and FCDL, 2003, cited in Chouhan, 2009, p. 60). Moreover, such commitments and values are reflected in Welsh and English youth work strategies which seek to challenge oppression(s) young people may face (England. Cabinet Office and Department for Education, 2011; Wales. Department for Education and Skills, 2014). Youth work training and education guidelines further emphasise such commitments (National Youth Agency, 2019, p. 26; ETS Wales, 2010, p. 11), which is a constant challenge to Youth and Community work students, practitioners and Higher Education Institutions within the current climate.</p> <p>Despite such commitments, significant challenges arise within higher education, particularly in the teaching of Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP), and its principles and values within the context of Youth and Community education. This critical concept presents a challenge for all those involved within youth and community work, and is a particular issue for higher education institutions, students, practitioners and placement supervisors, as the concept is often misunderstood and or only applied utilising surface level theoretical underpinings. Examples from practice</p>			

evidence this lack of understanding and mis-conceptualisation, resulting in students being unable to translate into practice, and utilise in supervision meetings to develop and enhance their learning.

This seminar will briefly explore the theoretical underpinnings of AOP and its relationship with youth work principles and values, prior to exploring the critical pedagogy of AOP approaches and how this can be maximised to inform Youth and Community work education. Following this, the teaching of AOP, approaches and thinking within the youth work curriculum will be explored. Specifically, the challenges of teaching AOP to students will be explored via a range of perspectives that includes both a youth and community worker lecturer's, youth and community work students and youth work placement supervisor perspectives.

The paper will explore alternative methods for teaching AOP in ways, which support students to move past a surface level theoretical understanding of the critical concept and encourage a significant shift towards an ingrained attitude and belief system that can be reflected and integrated within their professional practice.

Reference List

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- Wales. Department for Education and Skills (2014) *The National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014–2018*. [Online]. Available at: <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/140417-national-youth-work-strategy-en.pdf> (Accessed: 15 May 2019).

Presentation 2: How do cisgendered lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer (LGBQ) women youth workers use their self in youth work settings? (Jean Hatton)

The youth work literature notes the importance of 'sharing something of our selves' (Thomas, 2016) in order to develop the relationships with young people that are essential in youth work (Young, 2006; Sapin, 2013) but there has been little research as to how this is done in practice (Murphy & Ord, 2013). This presentation offers evidence from research with cisgendered LGBQ women youth workers (adding to my previous presentation at Brighton in January, 2019) as to how they shared information about their self around 3 different themes. First: how identities may be leaked (Butler, 1991; Murphy and Ord, 2013). Second: the use of conversation - a familiar theme (Young, 2006; Batsleer, 2008) - but when, in these conversations do youth workers disclose their LGBQ identity? The third theme is the use of humour or fun (Fusco, 2012; Sapin, 2013) in the sharing of information about their personal lives and their sexuality with young people.

This research fills a gap focussing on LGBQ youth workers: only touched on by a handful of writers (including Janet Batsleer, 1996, 2008 and other dates) but offers insights that are useful to youth workers, whatever their LGBQ or other identities (Hatton & Monro, 2019).

References:

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- Fusco, D. (2012). Use of self in the context of youth work. *Child and youth services*, 33(1), 33-45.
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- Sapin, K. (2013). *Essential skills for youth work practice* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
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- Young, K. (2006). *The art of youth work* (2nd ed.). Lyme Regis: Russell House.

SEMINAR BLOCK TWO: OPTION 2

Thursday 11.45-1.00pm	Twinned Seminar Option 2: 3. <i>Preparing for an unexpected journey – learning as collective critical endeavour</i> 4. <i>Towards a Digital Hybrid Pedagogy for Youth Work.</i>	Chair: Jo Lewis Mike Gilsenan Newman University Jane Melvin University of Brighton	BG Futures Room 1
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Presentation 3: Preparing for an unexpected journey – learning as collective critical endeavour (Mike Gilsenan)

Over the last four years the authors and four separate cohorts of students have undertaken a module entitled Critical Pedagogy. The aim is over a twelve week period to co-create a process that can capture elements of Critical Pedagogy whilst exploring the tensions, paradoxes and liberating aspects of not only understanding the underpinning theoretical concepts within Critical Pedagogy but also in attempting to break down teacher/student power imbalance by offering the whole teaching, learning and assessment process over to the group as a collective, critical endeavour.

This piece will draw on staff and student reflections of the overall experience, including the content, process and whether the experience has influence twelve months later. This process (or journey as we like to envisage it) is not something that; can be planned, fits neatly into a modular structure and can be a rollercoaster. As with any journey the traveller has to be prepared for the terrain they think they come across in any weather. How to prepare to start the journey requires consideration of a number of factors which are pertinent to the experiences of all the travellers.

Presentation 4: Towards a Digital Hybrid Pedagogy for Youth Work (Jane Melvin)

Youth workers are often identified as boundary crossers, border pedagogues, or hybrid pedagogues, terms which imply practitioners being able to straddle the border between two or more disciplines, professions or territories. The very language of borders and boundaries suggests learning spaces and places bounded by recognisable structures, however, in the digital world, the skills needed to maximise learning across virtual borders and boundaries might not be so apparent. The idea of a digital hybrid pedagogy hints at deeper meanings where the borders between the spaces and places of non-digital youth work and digital youth work are sometimes uncharted and vague. This challenges youth workers to think about ‘...deeper resonances, suggesting not just that the place of learning is changed but that a hybrid pedagogy fundamentally rethinks our conception of place’ (Stommel, 2012) .

Hybridity implies that a number of pedagogies can be merged in order to work together. In terms of where learning based on digital needs is situated, it is not just a case of mixing traditional approaches with a digital dimension: it is also about making sure that the type of learning gained by young people in physical spaces and places is reflected and complemented by the types of learning that can occur in digital spaces and places. Underpinned by cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), this paper will explore recent research into digital tools, spaces and places as mediators of youth work practice, and will identify expansive drivers that suggest how youth workers can work towards evolving a digital hybrid pedagogy in order to meet young people’s digital needs as a part of holistic youth work practice.

Dr Jane Melvin
University of Brighton

References

Stommel, J. (2012). Hybridity, pt. 2: What is Hybrid Pedagogy? [Online].
<http://www.digitalpedagogylab.com/hybridped/hybridity-pt-2-what-is-hybrid-pedagogy/>: Hybrid Pedagogy.
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SEMINAR BLOCK THREE			
Thursday 2.00-2.30pm	<p>Full Conference Presentation:</p> <p>Introduction:</p> <p>Presentation: <i>Youth impact in policy and practice – putting practitioners and young people at the centre?</i></p>	<p>Chair: Christine Smith</p> <p>Tania de St Croix King's College London</p>	<p>Constance Stewart Conference Room</p>
<p>Youth impact in policy and practice – putting practitioners and young people at the centre?</p> <p>A decade of spending cuts in England has had a major influence on youth work professional practice, and for surviving and new organisations there is a growing emphasis on measuring impact. This reflects similar policy imperatives in the wider education and social sectors, where a market-oriented rationality underpins greater demands for evidence of impact and efficiency. Drawing on qualitative interviews with thirteen people with influential roles in relation to youth impact policy and practice, I will share early insights from the first phase of the research project I am undertaking with Louise Doherty, entitled, 'Rethinking impact, evaluation and accountability in youth work'.</p> <p>Drawing on elements of policy network ethnography (Ball, Junemann & Santori 2017) the first stage of our research asks how the policy emphasis on impact has emerged. As we are now moving into the second phase of our research, where we focus on how open access youth work is evaluated in a range of settings, we are investigating practitioners' and young people's views and experiences of youth impact and evaluation. This presentation will argue that democratic principles should be at the heart of decisions about how youth work is evaluated. It will be extremely useful to discuss our tentative findings with participants at the TAG conference.</p>			

SEMINAR BLOCK THREE: OPTION 1			
Thursday 2.30-3.30pm	<p>Twinned Seminar Option 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Adult volunteering in work with young people: hidden learning, hidden outcomes.</i> <i>Reflections on evaluating the impact of music programmes on young people's health & wellbeing</i> 	<p>Chair: Dave Beck</p> <p>Tyrrell Golding Open University</p> <p>Frances Howard Nottingham Trent University</p>	<p>Constance Stewart Conference Room</p>
<p>Presentation 1: Adult volunteering in work with young people: hidden learning, hidden outcomes (Tyrrell Golding)</p> <p>This presentation will share aspects of the findings from my EdD thesis: An exploration of adult motivation to volunteer in work with young people in England.</p> <p>This research critically explores adult volunteering in work with young people in England. The presentation will address the themes of the conference by exploring the extent to which work with young people may make claims of 'impact' in terms of providing opportunities to adult volunteers over and above the impact on young peoples' lives, particularly during a context of austerity and in relation to changes in practice.</p> <p>An exploratory research methodology was adopted (Sarantakos, 2013), underpinned by a social constructionist perspective (Lave and Wenger, 1991) to investigate adults' motivation to volunteer and the learning experiences that they have through participating in volunteering activities (Hodkinson and Macleod, 2010). Two research instruments were utilised in the study, the Volunteer Functions Inventory (Clary <i>et al.</i>, 1998), which was administered online, and focus groups delivered utilising a metaplanning approach (Matheson and Matheson, 2009).</p> <p>This presentation will share findings from 125 online survey responses and four focus groups. It will outline adult volunteers initial and ongoing motivations for volunteering together with demotivating factors. Furthermore, it will explore and problematise ways in which the field of work with young people may make claims of impact through the opportunities it provides for adults to volunteer.</p>			

Presentation 2: Reflections on evaluating the impact of music programmes on young people’s health & wellbeing

(Frances Howard)

Music and the arts are increasingly advocated for improving health and wellbeing among young people (Creative Health APPG 2017). Music is viewed as an accessible and relevant ‘intervention’ for developing young people’s expression, skills and confidence (Daykin et. Al 2012). However the evaluation of these programmes has been criticised for both an over-reliance on quantitative scales such as the Warwick-Edinburgh Wellbeing scale (Bowling 2017) and exaggerated claims of efficacy and shortcomings in qualitative methodological rigour (Glenister 2018).

This paper reflects on the issues and dilemmas faced by youth organisations who are tasked with evaluating for multiple funders. The presentation will focus on the YMCA Digital project. Run by Nottinghamshire YMCA, this programmes provides a variety of digital media and creative activities for young people, whilst at the same time offering positive role models through specialist supporting staff. It will recount the efforts undertaken to evaluate programmes in a way which satisfies various funders, including Children in Need and Youth Music. This is a daunting task facing many youth practitioners today.

The presentation will conclude with some preliminary findings from the ongoing evaluation process in relation to the value of music-making activities to young people’s health and wellbeing. Focusing on the YMCA’s ‘developmental assets’, the combined evaluation methods have highlighted particular musical affordances in relation to social interactions, emotional healing and the re-envisioning of identities. Whilst youth workers recognise the value of these outcomes for the young people on the programmes, the processes of impact driven evaluation (de st. Croix 2018) are detracting from the primary aims of the project in relation to musical expression.

References:

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 Daykin, N., De Viggiani, N., Pilkington, P. and Moriarty, Y., 2012. Music making for health, well-being and behaviour change in youth justice settings: A systematic review. *Health promotion international*, 28(2), pp.197-210.
 de St Croix, T., 2018. Youth work, performativity and the new youth impact agenda: getting paid for numbers?. *Journal of Education Policy*, 33(3), pp.414-438.
 Glenister, S. 2018. Changes in well-being of youth in challenging circumstances: Evaluation after a 10-week intervention combining music mentoring and digital storytelling. *Transform: New Voice in Community Music*, 1, pp.59-80.

SEMINAR BLOCK THREE: OPTION 2

Thursday 2.30-3.30pm	Twinned Seminar Option 2: 3. <i>Lessons from nature: an alternative curriculum?</i> 4. <i>Assessing the impact of climate change on youth and youth work in an island economy: the case of small state Mauritius.</i>	Chair: Ian Jones Rachael Fell-Chambers Bishop Grosseteste University Asrani Gopaul University of Mauritius	BG Futures Room 1
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Presentation 3: Lessons from nature: an alternative curriculum? (Rachael Fell-Chambers)

The presentation will draw on key findings from my inter-disciplinary doctoral research working with young people aged 13 to 16 years, who were accessing alternative curriculum on a care farm.

The research explored the contribution care farming had on young people's engagement with learning. Firstly, the perceptions and experiences of young people accessing alternative curriculum on a care farm were gathered through a methodological approach underpinned by aspects of ethnography. Secondly, care farm providers and school support staff were consulted with to provide an understanding as to why young people attend care farms in the UK and to ascertain if they felt there were any perceived benefits to their learning.

The presentation will present the most significant findings around the compelling interplay between the care farm context, the natural environment and the values of informal education. There will be opportunities for discussion around the value of a nature-based pedagogy for youth work and professional practice.

Presentation 4: Assessing the impact of climate change on youth and youth work in an island economy: the case of small state Mauritius. (Asrani Gopaul)

According to UNDP (2018), as a small state, Mauritius is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change just like its counterparts around the world. Youth service in the island is supplied mainly out of social protection. In Mauritius the main supplier of youth service is the Government. The services are offered through youth centres and different other residential outdoor infrastructures. Activities offered through these infrastructures covers mainly , training, Youth information education and communication campaign, adolescent reproductive health programme, Duke of Edinburg Award, Entrepreneurship programme, Voluntary work skills preparation for youth (Volunteer Mauritius) , Environmental preservation and Awareness Programme, maintenance of a E Portal for Youth, counseling services among others. Despite all these initiatives there has been a recrudescence of violence among youth population in Mauritius.

Recent events reported tend to make us question the viability of the massive investment and initiatives offered to the youth in our small state. Youth residing in both urban and sub urban region of the island are victims of these social phenomenon which usually takes the form of different globalized social evils, that is violence which was once seen only in film and happening in other cultures has become common across the island. Moreover, Mauritius mainly a welfare state, is victim to current paradigm shift happening because of neoliberalism influence of globalization and the race towards building more social resilience to counter vulnerability.

This research using mainly qualitative method will show to us how the impact of climate change is affecting the life of youth across the country. A survey carried out across 250 young between 14 and 35 (using the African Union definition of youth), will show to us that here is a need for rethinking the youth policies from a broader perspective in order to accommodate new policies that will counter effect of climate change, changes in welfare state and the requirement to increase youth involvement in activities organized by different parties. The research furthermore showed that among other results advance there was a need to address the issue of training and pedagogy for youth workers, community workers and youth leaders.

Key words: youth and climate change, youth work and social policy youth violence in small state