PROFESSIONAL YOUTH WORK:
An Australian Perspective

"This is a standout book! It single-handedly both contextualises and advances the development of the profession of youth work."
Paul McDonald, Chief Executive Officer, Anglicare

Professional Youth Work: An Australian Perspective is a compilation of academic articles documenting many of the issues that have faced the profession of youth work in Australia over the last 30 years. It looks at the development of a professional identity for youth work and the impact of professionalisation on the training and practice of youth workers. The book is designed as an historical record and resource that explores the development of youth work as a professional occupation in Australia.

Dr Tim Corney PhD has worked in the youth and community sector for over 20 years as a youth worker, manager of youth services and adviser to governments and non-government agencies on youth policy. He is an Associate Professor at Victoria University.

Youth Studies Australia

ACYS AUSTRALIAN CLEARINGHOUSE FOR YOUTH STUDIES

ynot youth network of Tasmania

youthworkers' association

Professional Youth Work: An Australian Perspective

Tim Corney

PROFESSIONAL YOUTH WORK:
An Australian Perspective

Tim Corney

PROFESSIONAL YOUTH WORK:

An Australian Perspective

Youth Studies Australia
Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies
University of Tasmania
Private Bag 64
Hobart Tasmania 7001
www.acys.info

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication Data:
Title: Professional Youth Work: An Australian Perspective / edited by Tim Corney, 2nd Ed
ISBN: 978-0-646-84582-1 (pbk.)
Subjects: Social work with youth--Australia; Youth--Services for--Australia

Published by YNOT the Youth Network of Tasmania
Cover image: Shutterstock®

PROFESSIONAL YOUTH WORK:

An Australian Perspective

Edited by Tim Corney, 2nd Edition.

Recommendations

"This is a standout book! It single-handedly both contextualises and advances the development of the profession of youth work. Its frameworks tackle the role, function and impact for youth workers in today's society. For any youth worker, or person interested in youth work, it is a fundamental reference as it captures the development and emergence of professional youth work within Australia, charts its motivations and influences, and places the critical role of the professional youth worker within a social service delivery context. I heartily recommend it."

Paul McDonald, Chief Executive Officer, Anglicare

"Youth workers play a crucial role in supporting young people to thrive and fully participate in their communities, particularly for the most marginalised and vulnerable. As a sector we too seldom have the space to step back and critically reflect on who we are, what we do and why, and what we might do even better. This book is a valuable tool to help progress that reflection, and foster important debates that will strengthen the professional practice of youth work."

Gabi Rosenstreich, Executive Director, Australian Youth Affairs Coalition

"From its earliest incarnations, to the current styles and philosophies, Tim Corney has drawn on the best contemporary thinking to vividly illustrate the history of the development of professional youth work in Australia. The work, covering the multiple layers that make up the culture, values and underpinnings of the profession, make this necessary reading for aspiring youth workers and those that employ them. I thoroughly recommend 'Professional Youth Work: An Australian Perspective' *as a contemporary, authoritative work, and will be ensuring my staff and colleagues have a copy as part of their induction."*

Peter Newling, National Manager, YMCA Australia

Recommendations

"This is an important contribution. Corney and his co-authors bring together the intellectual arguments and key concepts that underpin the development of a professionalised youth sector in Australia. It will be a prescribed text in the University youth work programs, but also of interest to a broader audience of other professions who work with young people. This is one of the best publications produced by the Clearinghouse for Youth Studies!"

Professor David MacKenzie, Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University

"Few people, if any, have thought more deeply about the practice of youth work in Australia than Tim Corney. This latest offering, 'Professional Youth Work: An Australian Perspective'*, provides further food for thought for all of us who work in, and care about, this sector. I recommend this book to young and old alike."*

Georgie Ferrari, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Introduction

Tim Corney

To those outside the youth and community sector professional youth work is not easily explained or understood. In many ways youth work is defined by the diverse and complex young people who find themselves at its centre. 'Youth' as a sociological category is just as heterogeneous; it is a dynamic, ever-evolving social construction. As Irving, Maunders and Sherington (1995:xiii) suggest:

> *Social historians, and sociologists of youth have all shared one fundamental assumption: a recognition that youth has been socially constructed. They have assumed not only that social, economic and demographic changes have shaped young people, but that the idea of youth was a 'ruling idea', one formed in societies' dominant institutions.*

The range of work undertaken with young people in society is as diverse as they are. Outreach and street work dealing with complex social issues such as youth homelessness or drugs and alcohol; non-formal education programs with a focus on prevention or harm minimisation; recreational and sporting programs with a focus on youth development – these are just a few of the fields in which youth workers can find themselves. This work, primarily delivered by the state and/or well meaning charities, community groups and/or religious organisations, has often focussed on those young people deemed to be most vulnerable or at risk (Maunders 1984). This is still the case, however now more than ever before advantaged young people have also become a focus of youth organisations and youth workers.

As the frameworks and motivations for youth work have matured and developed – moving from 'child saving' and keeping young people 'off the streets' to 'empowerment', 'participation' and 'human rights' (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995) – the focus of some youth work agencies has also shifted. While government-funded work is still mostly aimed at keeping 'at risk' young people in school, getting them into jobs or keeping them out of the youth justice system, philanthropic work has moved towards funding or facilitating young entrepreneurs and change-makers in and through youth led organisations.

This work with young people may be aimed at those who are disadvantaged or marginalised, *but* it is increasingly also directed towards those who are already well educated, resourced and socially included (FYA 2013).

Thus, while professional youth workers may work with diverse cohorts of young people, they have also sought to determine their own identity, value base and frames of practice apart from the mission of their employers in the youth focussed agencies, and those well-meaning but unqualified volunteers in the youth-led and community-based organisations. Many of the articles in this book deal with the question of what is and what underpins the profession of youth work. Attempting to define youth work and codify its practice has become something of a preoccupation for youth sector peak bodies (Grogan, 2004; Griffin & Luttrell 2011). As the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria representative I was invited, along with those from other states, to participate in the most recent attempt by the youth sector nationally to construct a definition of youth work. The meeting of the expert panel was held in Sydney, facilitated by the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, the national youth peak body; the following statement is the result:

> *Youth work is a practice that places young people and their interests first. Youth work is a relational practice, where the youth worker operates alongside the young person in their context. Youth work is an empowering practice that advocates for and facilitates a young person's independence, participation in society, connectedness and realisation of their rights* (The Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, October 2013).

The collection of essays in this book on the origins and development of professional youth work in Australia, was originally gathered together as a resource for university students studying youth work. The articles span a significant period of development in the profession of youth work in Australia, from the fledgling post-war period to the present, and they are arranged to follow broader philosophical and historical debates through to the more practical call for codes of practice and professional organisation. The articles map out the key issues and debates for the profession, and grapple with the fundamental question 'what defines youth work and informs its practice?'

The articles tend to focus on developments in the state of Victoria. This is primarily because Victoria has provided the longest running and largest array of training

courses. Three of Australia's four universities offering degree-level courses specifically in youth work are based in Victoria, along with numerous Technical and Further Education colleges offering the diploma – as a result there are simply more qualified youth workers (diploma or degree) in Victoria than in any other state. Consequently Australia's largest and longest-serving professional body, the Youth Workers' Association, is based in Victoria.

As editor of these essays I am indebted to my former and current colleagues, Dr David Maunders, Dr Veronica (Dawn) Goodwin and Dr Robyn Broadbent, for allowing me to reproduce their work. All three were grass roots youth workers who went on to teach many thousands of students the art of youth work while continuing to campaign for its professional recognition. To David in particular we all owe a special debt of gratitude. For many of us in the youth sector, David has not only been our teacher and/or graduate supervisor; he has also been a long term mentor and friend. His work has set the foundation for professional youth work in Australia.

To both the students and the practitioners that use these articles as a resource: I hope they bring some clarity to the history and development of youth work as a professional practice in Australia and provide some critical reflection on what it means to be a professional youth worker today.

Tim Corney
Melbourne.
2021 Second Edition.

References

Australian Youth Affairs Coalition. (2013). *A National Definition of Youth Work.* http://www.ayac.org.au/youthworkdefinition.html

Foundation for Young Australians - Nexus Australian Youth Summit, October 2013, *Innovative Philanthropy and Social Entrepreneurship*. http://www.fya.org.au/initiatives/nexus/

Griffin, R. & Luttrell, E. (2011). *Youth Work in Australia: Reflections and Aspirations.* Australian Youth Affairs Coalition Sydney, Australia.

Grogan, P. (2004). That Old Chestnut - *The professional development of youth work in Victoria*. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Maunders, D. (1984). *Keeping them off the streets: a history of voluntary youth organisations in Australia 1850-1980*. Centre For Youth & Community Studies, Phillip Institute of Technology, Australia.

Chapter 1

The human rights of young people: A catalyst for the professionalisation of youth work through the development of codes of practice

Tim Corney

> *Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies*
> (Kofi Annan, 7th Secretary-General of the United Nations 2001).

This article argues for the recognition of young people's human rights. It suggests that the practice of youth work has its basis in human rights, and that youth workers are advocates for, and enablers of, young people's access to human rights and citizenship. It explores the Commonwealth's move to encourage member nations to develop codes of youth work practice based on the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) and *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) as found in the Commonwealth Youth Programme. In particular, the paper demonstrates the link between the practice of youth work and human rights by using as a case study the development of a code of youth work practice in the Australian state of Victoria.

Youth Work - Social Justice, Human Rights and Young People's Citizenship

Practitioners of youth work have long held the view that most young people are disenfranchised from mainstream society, and are not treated equally by virtue of their age (Farson 1974; Corney 2004; Corney & Hoiles 2007; Seebach 2008). Some young people are further marginalised by the social, political and economic

contexts in which they live (Brown 1992, 2010; Joseph, Akpokavi, Chauhan & Cummins 2002). It is the powerlessness associated with the social and political marginalisation faced by young people that links youth work to social justice, to human rights and, more broadly, to the concept of participation embedded in the idea of active citizenship (Farson 1974; Crooks 1992; Corney 2004; Chouhan 2009; Wood 2009, 2010; Ife 2012). Kenny (1994) strongly links citizenship and human rights to civil and political rights. She suggests that it is the right of all people, based on their common humanity, to participate equally in the making of a civil society, and to reap its benefits regardless of age, gender or economic position. In this sense, youth work is underpinned by human rights, and by a commitment to enable the active participation of young people in the decisions that will affect them, particularly those made by governments and legislators on their behalf.

The United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) of 1948, the *International Bill of Human Rights of 1966 and the Conventions on the Rights of the Child* (CROC) of 1989, consider young people to be fully human (rather than their merely becoming human upon reaching the age of majority), and that as such they should have access to human rights both in international law and under the laws of those countries that have ratified these conventions. While this has been generally accepted across the countries represented within the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations, there are commentators (Mutua 2002; Peterson 1990) who have been critical of the universalising 'meta' nature of the human rights discourse these documents represent, suggesting that they represent a largely first world, Eurocentric construct. Critics have also raised concerns about the perceived lack of multicultural perspectives, from non-western countries in particular, even though, as Ayton-Shenker (1995) points out, the United Nations comprises the single largest conglomeration of cultures by representing most states in the international community. Such a 'meta' view is reinforced by Norchi (1995), who emphatically states that the UDHR "represents a broader consensus on human dignity than does any single culture or tradition" (1995:2).

Although young people under the age of majority may see themselves as fully human, and may lay claim to full human rights, in most countries they do not yet possess the rights of full citizenship that enable them to fully participate

in the decision-making structures of their society, nor do they benefit directly from participation in these structures (Farson 1974; Hawes 1991; Archard 1993; Seebach 2008). Three examples from Australia demonstrate some of the distinctions made between young people and adults that infringe on the former's human rights and limit their participation in, and ability to benefit from, society as fully-fledged citizens.

Voting rights

If a young person has not attained the age of majority or political enfranchisement (18 years in Australia), they do not have the same rights as adult citizens – they are not equal. In a liberal democracy such as Australia, a key, defining right of citizenship is the right to cast a vote in elections to determine who will govern and legislate (Gribbin 2004). In Australia those under the age of enfranchisement are ineligible to vote in local, state and federal elections, and in constitutional referenda. Though they may be able to join the armed forces, drive, operate machinery, apply for a government benefit or service, live away from home, work in paid employment, pay taxes (both income and goods and services taxes), engage in sexual relations and support dependent children, if they have not reached 18 years of age they cannot vote for or against those who will be elected to govern on their behalf. This appears to be a breach of UDHR Article 1, Article 21.1 and the CROC Article 12, that clearly define young people as fully human and outline their rights to participate in society's decision-making processes. As Seebach (2008) declares, if young people are presumed to be fully human then they are not citizens-in-waiting, but current citizens.

Education

Education is of unquestionable utility and benefit to young people. However, once formalised into school systems via standardised curriculum delivery within authoritarian structures, and by the legal enforcement of compulsory attendance, education also has the potential to impinge on young people's rights to freedom of speech and movement, and on their right to have their opinions taken into account (Armstrong 2009). Even 'progressive' school environments can unwittingly limit or control young people's access to authentic participation in their school's formal decision-making processes. This is often done by encouraging young people to create or join structures such as 'junior' school councils that simulate or replicate the 'real' (i.e., adult) version, rather than

allowing them to join the actual councils (Matthews 2001; Wood 2010). Young people can also be limited in their ability to participate in the informal decision-making processes by their segregation from adults in schools by blocking access to staff rooms or discouraging engagement with staff outside of 'classroom' activities. This is coupled with the sometimes harsh disciplinary, punishment and detention regimes of schools. Such limitations and restrictions would not be tolerated if they were imposed upon adults in workplace settings, and appear to be at odds with UDHR Article 26.2, and CROC Articles 12 and 28. The longevity of various democratic models of schooling (Graubard 1972; Neil 1974; Columbus 1978; Procunier 1991; Holdsworth 1992, 2003; Greenberg 1998;) demonstrates that educational institutions can be run successfully without draconian disciplinary regimes, and with the acknowledgment of young people's human rights and citizenship, thereby enabling their democratic participation in the schools' decision-making processes.

Rates of pay

An unambiguous example of the age-based discrimination and marginalisation faced by young people in the Australian context, is the continual exemption of 'junior' rates of pay from anti-discrimination legislation by successive Australian governments and their various wage arbitration bodies (Bull 1999). The right to equal pay for equal work enshrined in UDHR Article 23. 2 has long been championed by Australian workers (particularly, and justly so, for women), and was introduced into centralised wage fixing systems in Australia in 1969 – but not with regards to young people's right to equal pay (D'Aprano 1995). This is despite the *Australian Industrial Relations Act 1988* and the *Commonwealth Workplace Relations Act 1996*, in line with International Labour Organisation conventions (Rees, Lindsay & Rice 2008), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age.

The current Australian wage arbitration body (Fair Work Ombudsman 2013) updated youth wage rates in 2012 with a sliding scale of what amounts to legalised discrimination applicable to those workers between the ages of 16 and 20. The national minimum wage for adults is $15.96 per hour, however for those under 16 years of age the minimum rate is $5.87. At 16 years of age the rate moves to $7.55; at 17 years of age to $9.22; at 18 years of age to $10.90; at 19 years of age to $13.17; and at 20 years of age to $15.59. A person is not deemed worthy of adult rates of pay until they reach 21 years of age. So, a 16-year-old

young person working alongside a 21-year-old and doing the same work is paid less than half that which their workmate receives for work of equal value. This is in clear breach of UDHR Article 23.

Human Rights and the Concept of Youth Participation in the Commonwealth of Nations

Encouraging the advancement of young people's human rights and citizenship – through full and active political participation and engagement with the democratic processes and governance of their countries – has long been a core commitment of the Commonwealth of Nations. *The Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles 1971* (No. 6) states clearly that:

> *We believe in the liberty of the individual, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief, and in their inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which they live. We therefore strive to promote in each of our countries those representative institutions and guarantees for personal freedom under the law that are our common heritage.*

This 'right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which one lives' was re-affirmed in 1991 in the *Harare declaration of Commonwealth principles* and, in relation to young people, has been built upon and expanded in various Commonwealth forums. For example, the recommendations of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (Commonwealth of Nations 2011:2-3) suggested, in regard to young people's participation and citizenship, that:

> *Youth representatives should be supported to improve their local communities through working relationships with locally elected representatives and other local governance structures [...] All Commonwealth member Governments should establish national mechanisms, such as national youth councils, so that the views of young people can be taken into account in all possible aspects of national policy development.*

The recent Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (Commonwealth of Nations 2013) has agreed to the establishment of national youth councils to further the participation of young people in the political and governance processes of member nations. Some member nations, though, are already going further by

following the lead of European Union nations (Austria, for example, and the United Kingdom crown dependencies of the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey) in considering the enfranchisement of young people through a lowering of the voting age to sixteen (the Scottish independence referendum is another instance of this principle's application). Others are considering various Demeny (Sanderson 2007) systems of family enfranchisement. Yet, while Demeny systems serve to increase the weighting and/or value of the vote of parents, according to the number of children in their family, they do not necessarily enfranchise young people or increase young people's participation in the political process.

Global Youth Work and the Commonwealth of Nations

The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) is delivered into the 54 member states of the Commonwealth of Nations, having been established by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1973 primarily to train and develop youth workers and promote the active participation of young people in their country's development (Commonwealth of Nations 2013a). It is funded by voluntary contributions from member governments and aims to:

> *...work towards a society where young men and women are empowered to develop their potential, creativity and skills as productive and dynamic members of their societies and participate fully at every level of decision-making and development, both individually and collectively, promoting Commonwealth values of international co-operation*
> (Commonwealth of Nations 2013a:1).

The CYP is grounded in a human rights-based approach that view young people as having an equal stake in society, and see development as an outcome of achieving human rights. This view is also held by the young people of the Commonwealth as is confirmed by statements contained in the final communiqué from the 6th Commonwealth Youth Forum:

> *Give young people half a chance and we will astound you, not only with our energy, enthusiasm and idealism, but also with our maturity and willingness to engage constructively in the process of improving our communities and our world. We are often told that as young people we are the leaders of tomorrow. Behind this seemingly simple statement lies a dangerous assumption; namely that young people have no valuable place in today's world. This should not be the case*
> (Commonwealth of Nations 2007:5).

The implications for Commonwealth youth workers are clear: development is a human rights entitlement. As such, youth workers across the Commonwealth take on the role of advocates, facilitating access to human rights, the democratic participation of young people in all levels of decision-making, and partnering with them in the development and transformation of their societies. The CYP emphasises this view by repeating the rhetorical question posed by youth work advocate Chandu Christian: *For what are youth workers if they are not facilitators of human rights and development?* (Commonwealth of Nations 2006:4).

The Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment and a Code of Practice for Youth Work

The CYP is informed by the goals of the Commonwealth's Plan of Action on Youth Empowerment 2007-2015 (PAYE) (Commonwealth of Nations 2007) which build upon, and seek to create greater synergy with, the UN Millennium Development Goals and the Global Human Rights Agenda. In the eyes of the PAYE (2007:12), a human rights-based approach to youth work involves the following elements: 'Express linkage to human rights; Accountability to all stakeholders; Empowerment; Participation; Non-discrimination and attention to vulnerable groups'. The PAYE defines youth empowerment as 'both an end and a means' stating that:

> *Empowering young people means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms, rather that at the direction of others*
> (Commonwealth of Nations 2007:15).

Because of the CYP's grounding, it has a clear aim to base youth work – as an occupational practice – upon human rights through the development of agreed practice frameworks. That is, upon 'codes of ethical practice' informed by the UDHR and the CROC, in order to raise the standards of youth work practice and thereby bring greater human rights outcomes to young people. Youth work as a recognised occupation in the Commonwealth is dealt with by PAYE goal 12, point 12.3, which specifically calls for the youth sector to "draft codes of professional ethics with express linkage to human rights". It goes on to suggest that a critical pathway to developing the occupation of youth work and to delivering outcomes for young people should begin with the creation of "a code of conduct to guide it, as well as structures to monitor and regulate it". The most recent meeting of

Commonwealth government Youth Ministers (CYMM) from across the 54 nations recommitted itself to the PAYE goals and to the development of the occupation of youth work (Commonwealth of Nations 2013b). The various regions of the Commonwealth have taken up this challenge and begun its implementation. To this end, the Commonwealth Asia Centre recently released a 12-step guide to developing youth work that includes, as its final step, the establishing of codes of practice informed by international conventions such as the CROC (Belton 2012). The Commonwealth Pacific Centre has developed a 'road map' (Corney 2009) that explicitly sets out the process for developing a code of ethical practice for youth work in the Pacific based on human rights.

Calling for a 'Code of Practice' in Victoria, Australia - background

As a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, Australia is an active supporter of the CYP and the CYMM. Various Australian state youth councils have consequently recognised the need to develop codes of practice for youth workers in their respective regions, however not all are based in human rights (Griffin & Luttrell 2011; Grogan 2004; Corney & Hoiles 2006, 2007). The youth sector in the Australian state of Victoria, despite its best efforts over many years, was without a code of ethics or an agreed statement of good practice for the occupation of youth worker prior to 2007 (Goodwin 1991; Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995; Grogan 2004). However, a series of related events (i.e., the enactment by the Victorian state Labor government of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, the Working With Children Act 2005* and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*) gave legislative impetus to the youth sector to look specifically at the creation of a code of practice for youth work based on human rights considerations (Corney & Hoiles 2006, 2007). Further, debates regarding the professionalisation of youth work and the establishing of a code of practice – long championed by the CYP – were reopened after the appointment of Victoria's Child Safety Commissioner under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

Shortly after his appointment in 2006 the then Child Safety Commissioner, Bernie Geary, gave a significant address to the Annual General Meeting of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, in which he called for the sector to participate in the task of addressing child safety by developing a code of practice for youth

workers. He outlined the need to protect not only young people, but also those who work with them, stating:

> *I strongly believe that youth work needs to come out of the shadow of aligned professions and a major step will be a strong and proud declaration of a code of ethical practice [...] in their article 'Why the Youth Sector Needs a Code of Ethical Practice' Corney and Hoiles (2006) present a strong argument supporting why the youth sector needs a code. They view a code of ethical practice as a [...] necessary framework for the profession, to be used by workers in their work practice and the sector as a whole. In essence, a code will provide workers and agencies with a statement of both ethical principles, worker boundaries and practices giving us a guide that outlines a set of values to inform our professional practice*
> (Child Safety Commission 2006b).

This call by the then newly-appointed Commissioner, coupled with the incorporation of human rights into the enactment of various pieces of youth-related legislation, led to the convening of a Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) working group to explore the potential establishment of a sector-wide code of practice for youth work based in human rights (Corney & Hoiles 2006). This occurred alongside the re-establishment of the Youth Workers' Association (http://www.ywa.net.au), a professional association for youth workers in Victoria, and a global push from the Commonwealth contained in communiqués, such as the CYP's PAYE goals (2007), explicitly calling for codes of practice based in human rights to be developed for youth workers across the Commonwealth.

The YACVic code working group was strongly influenced by Commissioner Geary, and its outcome focussed on safe practice in youth work, particularly the safety of young people and workers, as well as the human rights of young people. The working group's recommendations were that a code of practice be drafted without delay by one of the committee members, Dr Tim Corney, a long-time youth worker and youth work academic, and for a period of draft consultation to be undertaken by the youth sector (Corney & Hoiles 2006, 2007). The result was the 2007 launching of the Victorian Code of Ethical Practice (YACVic 2007) by the Victorian Government Minister for Youth Affairs and the Victorian Child Safety Commissioner.

This sector-wide push to codify youth work to ensure the safety and human rights of young people, is not confined to Commonwealth countries. The governments of non-Commonwealth countries have also enshrined the *United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child* (1989) into legislation relating to children and young people, and have gone on to create codes of practice for youth work that define them in relation to human rights. The Republic of Ireland's *Youth Work Act* (2001) and youth work *Code of Good Practice* (2003) are examples of this.

The human rights of young people in Victoria, Australia and the Code

Young people are fully human, and in countries that have ratified the CROC, children and young people have access to human rights in law. In the Australian state of Victoria, the terms 'young person' and 'child' are legally interchangeable. Indeed those Acts pertaining to children and young people define a child as 'a person who is under the age of 18 years' (from the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* and the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2012*). (An exception to this definition comes in regard to those considered 'vulnerable' under the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2012*, where a vulnerable child or young person includes 'a person under the age of 21 years who is leaving, or who has left, the custody or guardianship of the Secretary [of the state government Department of Human Services] to live independently').

The Australian Government is a signatory to the CROC, but the state government of Victoria has gone further than its federal counterpart by introducing its own Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (CHRR) in 2006. The Victorian CHRR ensures that human rights are valued and protected within government and the community, and explicitly references the CROC's 'best interest' principles which are stated overtly in section 10 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*:

> *(1) For the purpose of this Act the best interests of the child must always be paramount.*
>
> *(2) When determining whether a decision or action is in the best interests of the child, the need to protect the child from harm, to protect his or her rights and to promote his or her development (taking into account his or her age and stage of development) must always be considered.*

The CROC extends its particular relevance to youth work practice in Victoria by the inclusion of its 'best interest' principles in not only the state's youth-related legislation (2005), but also the Victorian Youth Sector Code of Ethical Practice (YACVic 2007). The Victorian Code is premised on the CROC's core principle that young people are 'the primary consideration' of those who work with them and that they will do so in the latter's 'best interests'. Article 3.1 of the CROC prescribes that:

> *in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.*

These principles of 'best interest' and 'primary consideration' have been enshrined in the Victorian Code – a code developed by the sector itself – as foundational statements that serve to frame and inform the practice of youth work (Corney & Hoiles 2007; YACVic 2007). The Victorian Code provides agreed statements about what is to be considered good practice, and also provides an overarching frame of reference with which youth workers can engage in awareness-raising on a range of human rights and citizenship issues. The Victorian Code, although supported and launched by government, is self-regulatory and voluntarily adhered to by youth workers. Both the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and the professional Youth Workers' Association endorse the Code.

The development of the Victorian Youth Sector Code of Ethical Practice

The Victorian Code was developed in consultation with the youth sector, drawing on the experience and knowledge invested in the development of codes in other countries and other Australian states. The Warwickshire County Council (2006) and National Youth Agency (2004) Codes in the UK were particularly useful in this sense, as were sections of the Western Australian 'Fairbridge' Code (YACWA 2003). The first draft of the Fairbridge Code (Sercombe 1997a), although problematic in a number of ways, was helpful in informing part of the initial debate and dialogue within the Australian youth sector about the importance and utility of codes of practice in general, and their relationship to the concept of professionalisation in particular (Griffin & Luttrell 2011; Quixley & Doostkhah 2007).

While it shares some features with the Fairbridge Code, the Victorian Code drafted by Corney and Hoiles (2007) differs in many substantial ways, and these are particularly noticeable in a comparison of each code's foundational statements defining the practice of youth work. For example, the current Fairbridge Code describes youth work as being based on a 'relationship' and uses the deficit-based medical analogy of the 'healer' to describe the role of the youth worker. That is, the relationship between young people and society is presumed to be broken and thus all young people are in need of 'healing'. The original Fairbridge version (Sercombe 1997a) went further, mixing the medical metaphor with an incongruent familial analogy. It described a hierarchical relationship between the young person and society as one analogous to that of parent and child and echoed functionalist (Parsons 1957) ideas of social order by suggesting that youth work's purpose involves "healing the relationship between the young person and the parent society" (Sercombe 1997a; 1997b:18-20). The versions of the Fairbridge Code, later adopted in Western Australian (YACWA 2003), New South Wales (YAPANSW 2003) and the Australian Capital Territory (YACACT 2007), have all broadened the youth worker's role to include 'advocacy', and though the word 'parent' found in the original Sercombe version has been removed, the deficit-based notion of 'healing' – wherein youth workers should display a "commitment to advocacy and healing in their work with the young person and the wider society" (YACWA 2003:3) – remains. Quite how these differing roles – that of 'advocate' and 'healer' – could, or indeed whether or not they should, work together is unclear.

There are further major differences between the Codes. The Victorian Code is explicitly embedded in a human rights framework whereas the various Fairbridge Codes are not. The influence of the human rights approach to youth work reveals itself early in the Victorian Code through its employment of the wording of the CROC to describe all young people as "the primary consideration of youth workers" (YACVic 2007:4 & 7); the phrase 'primary client' is used in the Fairbridge Codes (YACWA 2003:3). Sercombe (2010:13) acknowledges this difference between the Codes, but suggests that the human rights-based notion of 'primary concern' is too 'unilateral', and prefers instead to individualise youth work as a 'relationship' with a particular 'client'. The Victorian Code, however, is explicitly human rights-based and, as such, its use of the term 'primary consideration', echoes the universal declarations of the CROC, and is therefore

unashamedly unilateral: concerned with the human rights of all young people, not just those with whom a youth worker may have a particular relationship. This represents a key difference of underlying approach between the codes.

The term 'client', as used by the Fairbridge Codes to describe a young person (YACWA 2003; YAPANSW 2003; YCACT 2007; YNOT 2012), is not found in the Victorian Code (YACVic 2007). The words used by youth workers to describe the young people with whom they work are important because, so often, it is words that shape and inform practice. Ife (2012: 254-257) suggests that the words we use will "frequently have human rights implications" and points out that the term 'client' as regularly used by social workers is problematic for those working within a human rights-based framework. Drawing on Illich, et al. (1977), he claims that the term 'client' is now so embedded in professional social work discourses that the hierarchical implications and power imbalances assumed in its use (not to mention its economic implications) actually disable, rather than empower, the individual – removing rather than realising their human rights.

Ife's (2012) concerns with the disempowering use of the term 'client' are echoed in the Commonwealth Youth Programme. The CYP, in contrast to the disempowering notion of the young person as a 'client', perceives the relationship between young people and youth workers to be an active and empowering 'partnership'. At a 2008 CYP Pacific graduation ceremony for the Commonwealth Diploma of Youth Work, the Solomon Islands Minister for Youth Affairs, Peter Tom, said that:

> *Governments must recognise that young people must be active partners in the development process [...] actively participating in all aspects of nation building and development, including decision making at all levels. This essentially means that for you graduands who have been trained to be youth workers, you must see young people as your partners – partners who have the potential to shape their own lives and chart their own course. Your role as facilitators is therefore very important in helping young people to shape their own destiny* (2008:1).

This notion of recognising the young person as an 'active partner' rather than as a 'client' can be seen as a direct and validating reference to the CYP's view of youth work as described by Corney and Hoiles' in the first draft of the Victorian Code where they state:

> *Young people are now seen as active partners. They are independent stakeholders who participate fully in the development process. For youth workers, this means that young people are no longer their 'clients' to whom they deliver a service. They are now partners who shape and chart the field of youth work together. Youth workers now play the role of 'facilitators' rather than 'providers'*
> (Corney & Hoiles 2007:23).

The Commonwealth's and the Victorian Youth Affairs Council's views are consistent with a human rights-based approach to youth work, a view that sees young people and youth workers as partners in the process of claiming and realising their human rights, rather than healing or restoring the social status quo. Applying Ife's (2012) arguments to the Fairbridge Code's use of the term 'client' when describing young people has implications for this codes use in those Australian states that have adopted or adapted it, including Western Australia, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania (YACWA 2002; YAPANSW 2004; YCACT 2007; YNOT 2012). Such implications also lend credence to calls for the development of codes that pay closer attention to not only the principles of human rights, but also, importantly, the very language in which such codes are couched.

The Obligations and Responsibilities of Human Rights and Citizenship

With rights come responsibilities and obligations: our responsibilities and obligations to each other and to the wider community. For those who claim their own human rights, there comes the key obligation to acknowledge the human rights of others and the responsibility to treat others with the same respect and dignity that is sought by one's self. The rights and privileges afforded by citizenship similarly require the exercise of obligations and responsibilities. The privilege of participation as a citizen brings with it not just the responsibility to exercise this right, but to do so constructively, to use the privilege to emancipate and enfranchise others; to enable the participation of others who are socially, politically or economically marginalised; and to build both social solidarity and social capital in the pursuit of the positive transformation of society (Marshall 1949; Etzioni 1993; Bulmer & Rees 1996; Dwyer 2000).

Conclusion

Rights-based practice in human service occupations is not new (Kenny 1994; Ife 2012). However, recognising and claiming young people's rights (in line with the UDHR 1948; and CROC 1989) as *current* rather than as *future* citizens and the enshrining of rights-based frameworks in youth work codes of practice, is a particularly recent perspective (CYP 2006; Seebach 2008). Despite acknowledging from time to time that young people may be able to contribute to society in the present, governments have often focussed their efforts on 'youth development' programs that define young people as a resource to be prepared, refined and then drawn upon at some time in the future (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995). Implicit in such views is an assumption that young people *presently* lack something, or need to be developed further before their contribution can be valued fully. Such a negative, deficit-based concept of young people (Wyn & Harris 2004) is rightly criticised as not being truly developmental in the sense of actively involving young people in the present co-creation, development and/or transformation of their societies. Rather, it serves only to disregard young people's agency and interest in acting as current citizens, and works to colonise and assimilate young people into the dominant social, political and economic discourses and structures of the day that perpetuate their inequalities (Skott-Myhre 2004).

Social exclusion precludes the possibility of active participation. Negative, condescending views of young people that are often promulgated by the media (Pearson 1981) – as having, being or causing problems (Devlin 2006) – and systemic political, economic and social inequities perpetuated by governments in the forms described above, reinforce the marginalisation and disenfranchisement of young people, and such social exclusion and isolation limits their agency and opportunities to participate as active citizens in the positive transformation of their own communities and wider society.

Youth workers believe in the full humanity of young people, despite them not always having access to full human rights. Youth workers also believe that young people have much to offer their communities, and so should be encouraged to exercise their human rights and participate as full citizens in the making of their lives, and the shaping of wider society (CROC 1989; Seebach 2008; Wood 2009).

Youth workers may often, therefore, be called upon to mediate between the law-making and law-keeping institutions of the state (Seebach 2008), assisting young people to find their voices, advocating for them, and demanding that, as human beings with human rights, they be listened to by those in power who make decisions on their behalf. This makes youth workers more than advocates; it makes them enablers and partners in the process of young people asserting their humanity and gaining access to the full spectrum of human rights and citizenship. Developing rights-based codes of practice, as advocated by the Commonwealth, will not only formalise the day-to-day practices of youth workers, but will ensure the further enfranchisement and empowerment of all young people.

Author's Note

It is important to note that the initial impetus for this article came from discussions, about the right to vote and the value of participation in the political process, with five remarkable young people - Matt, Fearn, Dan, Joel and Sophie.

References

Annan, K. (2001). *Saluting international youth day*. United Nations 7th Secretary-General International Youth Day, 12 August, 2001. Press Release, SG/SM/7909 OBV/228: United Nations.

Archard, D. (1993). *Children; rights and childhood*. Routledge, London, UK.

Armstrong, D. (2009). Educating youth: assimilation and the democratic alternative. In J. Wood & J. Hine (eds.), *Work with young people* (pp.75-87). Sage, London, UK.

Ayton-Shenker, D. (1995). *The challenge of human rights and cultural diversity*. United Nations Background Note. UN Department of Public information.

Belton, B. (2012). *Establishing a professional youth work association. A concept and strategies*. Commonwealth Youth Centre Asia Region. Commonwealth Secretariat, London, UK.

Brown, C. (1992). Ideology and ethics in youth work practice. *Youth Issues Forum*, Spring, pp.14-19.

Brown, C. (2010). Marginalised young people and decision making. In R. White, (Ed.), *Youth work and youth issues* (pp. 25-36). Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies, Tasmania, Australia.

Bull, M. (1999). Do youth wages create jobs – or slaves? *Green Left Weekly Melbourne*, March, Issue 351.

Bulmer, M., & Rees, A. (1996). Citizenship today: *The contemporary relevance of T.H Marshall*. University College London Press, London, UK.

Child Safety Commission. (2006a). *A guide for creating a child-safe organisation: Promoting the safety and wellbeing of children*. Child Safety Commissioner Australia, Melbourne, Australia.

Child Safety Commission. (2006b). *A code of ethics for youth work: It's time*. Address by Child Safety Commissioner to the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, October, 2006.

Chouhan, J. (2009). Anti-oppressive practice. In J. Woods & J. Hine, *Work with young people* pp.60-74. Sage, London, UK.

Columbus, F. (1978). *The history and development of public school adult and community education in Michigan*, 1862-1977. Michigan State Department of Education, Michigan, US.

Commonwealth of Nations Youth Forum. (2007). *Breaking barriers: Unleashing young people's potential for development*. Final Communiqué, 6 November. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (1971). *Singapore declaration of Commonwealth principles.* Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (1991). *Harare declaration of Commonwealth principles*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (2006). *Commonwealth Youth Programme*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (2007). *Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (2011). *Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (2012). *Concept Note from the 8th Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (2013a). *Commonwealth Youth Programme*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (2013b). *Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting Papua New Guinea*. April 2013 Communiqué. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). (2008). *Diploma of Youth in Development Work Graduation Ceremony*. South Pacific Centre, Official remarks by Hon. Peter Tom, Minister for Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Solomon Islands, January 2008.

Corney, T. (2004). Youth work: The problem of values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp. 11-19.

Corney, T. (2009). *Road map to professionalisation of youth work in the Pacific*. Commonwealth Youth Centre Pacific Region. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Corney, T., & Hoiles, L. (2006). Why the youth sector in Victoria needs a code of ethical practice. *'Yikes' Journal of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria*, 4(10), pp. 1-6.

Corney, T., & Hoiles, L. (2007). *Victorian youth sector code of ethical practice: Consultation draft*. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Crooks, M. (1992). 'If it gets too hot in the kitchen... you know what choices you've got.' Core values of youth work. *Youth Issues Forum*, Spring, pp. 20-24.

D'Aprano, Z. (1995). *Zelda: the becoming of a woman*. Spinifex Press, Melbourne, Australia.

Devlin, M. (2006). *Inequality and the stereotyping of young people*. Equality Authority, Dublin, Ireland.

Dwyer, P. (2000). *Welfare rights and responsibilities: Contesting social citizenship*. Policy Press, Bristol, UK.

Etzioni, A. (1993). *The spirit of community: Rights, responsibilities and the communitarian agenda*. Crown Publishing, New York, US.

Fair Work Ombudsman. (2012). *National minimum wage fact sheet*. Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from http://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/national-minimumwage/pages/default.aspx

Farson, R. (1974). *Birthrights*. Macmillan, London, UK.

Goodwin, V. (1991). Youth worker perception of the term professional: a Victorian study. *The Australian Education Researcher*, 18(2), pp. 43-63.

Graubard, A. (1972). *Free the children, radical reform and the free school movement*. Random House, New York, US.

Greenberg, D. (1998). Is Sudbury Valley a school? In M. Sadofsky & D. Greenberg (Eds.), *Reflections on the Sudbury School concept*. SVS Press, Framingham, US.

Gribbin, C. (2004). *Lowering the voting age: A discussion of the issues from the Victorian Electoral Commission's perspective*. Victorian Electoral Commission. Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved from https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/files/RP-LoweringtheVotingAge.pdf

Griffin, R., & Luttrell, E. (2011). *Future focussed: Youth work in Australia: Reflections and aspirations*. Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, Sydney, Australia.

Grogan, P. (2004). *That old chestnut - The professional development of youth work in Victoria*. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Hawes, J. (1991). *The children's rights movement: A history of advocacy and protection*. Twayne, Boston, US.

Holdsworth, R. (1992). Alternative and community schools in Melbourne. *Connect,* 75, October-December, pp. 40-44.

Holdsworth, R. (2003). *Towards a typology of Australian alternative education*. Youth Research Centre Melbourne University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Ife, J. (1995). *Community development: Creating community alternatives –vision, analysis and practice*. Longman, Australia.

Ife, J. (2012). Human rights and social work - towards rights based practice. Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, Australia.

Illich, I., Zola, I., McNight, J., Caplin, J. & Shaiken, S. (1977). *Disabling professions*. Marion Boyars, London, UK.

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Joseph, J., Akpokavi, K., Chauhan, V., & Cummins, V. (2002). *Towards global democracy: An exploration of black perspectives in youth work*. Development Education Association, London, UK.

Kenny, S. (1994). *Developing communities for the future: Community development in Australia*. Thomas Nelson, Australia.

Marshall, T. H. (1949). *Citizenship and social class and other essays*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Matthews, H. (2001). Citizenship, youth councils and young people's participation. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 4, pp. 299-318.

Maunders, D. (1980). *A study of the community centre movement in Australia 1943-1955, its contribution to education, and an evaluation of the effect of government policy*. Master of Education thesis, La Trobe University, Victoria.

Mutua, M. (2002). *Human rights: A political and cultural critique*. Pennsylvania Studies in Human Rights Series. University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvaina, US.

National Youth Agency. (2004). *Ethical conduct in youth work: A statement of values and principles from The National Youth Agency*. The National Youth Agency, Leicester, UK.

Neil, A. S. (1974). *Free schooling*. Penguin, Ringwood, Australia.

Norchi, C. H. (1995). Human rights and social issues. In D. Ayton-Shenker (Ed.) *The challenge of human rights and cultural diversity* (p. 2). United Nations Background Note. UN Department of Public Information.

Parsons, T. (1951). *The social system*. The Free Press, New York, US.

Pearson, G. (1981). *Hooligan - A history of respectable fears*. Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK.

Peterson, V. S. (1990). Whose rights? A critique of the givens in human rights discourse. *Alternatives*, 15(3), pp. 303-344.

Procunier, D. (1991). *The origin of and evolution of the community school in Flint: The Frank Manley influence*. National Community Education Series. Florida Atlantic University, Florida, US.

Quixley, S., & Doostkhah, S. (2007). *Conservatising youth work? Dangers of a code of ethics*. Youth Affairs Network of Queensland, Queensland, Australia.

Rees, N., Lindsay, K. & Rice, S. (2008). *Australian anti-discrimination law: Text, cases and materials*. Federation Press, Australia.

Republic of Ireland. (2003). *Code of good practice: Child protection for the youth work sector*. Department of Education and Science. Stationary Office Government Publications, Dublin, Ireland.

Sanderson, W. C., & Sergei, S. (2007). A near electoral majority of pensioners: Prospects and Policies. *Population and Development Review*, 33(3), pp. 543-554.

Seebach, M. (2008). Youth participation and youth work: a conceptual review. *Youth Studies Ireland*, 3(2), pp. 37-53.

Sercombe, H. (1997a). *A (draft) code of ethics for youth work (Fairbridge)*. Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia.

Sercombe, H. (1997b). The youth work contract: professionalism and ethics. *Youth Studies Australia*, 16(4), pp. 17-21.

Sercombe, H. (2010). *Youth work ethics*. Sage, London, UK.

Skott-Myhre, H. (2004). Radical youth work: creating a politics of mutual liberation for youths and adults: Part I. *Journal of Child and Youth Care Work*, 19, pp. 89-94.

Warwickshire County Council. (2006). *Code of Practice for Youth Workers*. Warwickshire, UK.

Wood, J. (2009). Education for effective citizenship. In J. Wood and J. Hine (Eds.) *Work with Young People*. Sage, London, UK. pp. 141-153.

Wood, J. (2010). Young people as activists: Ethical issues in promoting and supporting active citizenship. In S. Banks (Ed.), *Ethical issues in youth work*. Routledge, New York, US. pp. 192-206.

Wyn, J., & Harris, A. (2004). Youth research in Australia and New Zealand. *Young*, 12(3), pp. 271-289.

Youth Action and Policy Association of New South Wales (YAPANSW). (2004). *Code of ethics for youth work*. www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/ethics/codetextwithcomment.php

Youth Affairs Coalition of the Australian Capital Territory (YACACT). (2007). *Youth work code of ethics*: May. www.youthcoalition.net

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic). (2007). *The Victorian youth sector - code of ethical practice*. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA). (2003). *Code of ethics: A code of ethics for youth work*. Youth Affairs Council of WA, West Leederville, Western Australia.

Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT). (2012). *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania: A Consultation paper*. Youth Network of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia.

Declarations

Commonwealth of Nations. (1991). *Harare Declaration of Commonwealth Principles* (1991). Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Commonwealth of Nations. (1971). *Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles* (1971). Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

United Nations. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948). United Nations General Assembly.

United Nations. (1966). *International Bill of Human Rights* (1966). United Nations General Assembly.

United Nations. (1989). *Conventions on the Rights of the Child* (1989). United Nations General Assembly.

Legislation

Australian Industrial Relations Act 1988 Commonwealth of Australia.
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, Victoria. Australia.
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, Victoria. Australia.
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, Victoria. Australia.
Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2012. Victoria. Australia.
Commonwealth Arbitration Commission, *Equal Pay Case 1969* Volume 127 Arbitration Reports p. 1142. Commonwealth of Australia.
Commonwealth Workplace Relations Act 1996. Commonwealth of Australia.
Republic of Ireland Youth Work Act 2001. Ireland.
Working With Children Act 2005. Victoria. Australia.

Chapter 2

Youth worker perception of the term 'professional': A Victorian study

Veronica (Dawn) Goodwin

This article is an exploration of the Youth Workers' Association of Victoria (1967-1982), and highlights the tensions among youth workers and the difficulties they experienced as they attempted to move their occupation towards a profession and to establish themselves as professionals in society. In studying the Youth Workers' Association through the focus of professionalism, the article critically examines the approach to education, qualifications, membership, ethics, industrial awards, response to government and relationship with young people. After tracing the demise of the Association (see Editor's Note), the article raises doubts about the future of youth work as a unified field of endeavour given the fragmentation and diversification that was evident in Victoria at the time.

What it meant to be professional in the youth affairs field in Victoria was the subject of much debate in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s. The debate reflected various understandings and perceptions of youth workers, of those employing them in youth work agencies and of the vast number of volunteers, many of whom resisted any emphasis on being professionals, as they feared that their own contributions would be eroded. The Youth Workers' Association of Victoria attempted to achieve consensus on professionalism, but failed and disbanded in 1982.

Difference of Opinion

It appeared that there were differing opinions among youth workers concerning the way the term 'profession' was interpreted and applied. Some assumed that the main task was to work towards establishing youth work as a profession, although they were not clear what this meant in practical terms, or what shape this profession should take or what the boundaries should be. Many youth workers wanted professional status that came from a rather narrowly defined base, which separated the lay-person from the professional who was full-time

and salaried; while for others their attitude towards their work and young people determined their status as professionals. This difference stemmed from the lack of a common understanding of professionalism (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973: 26-34, 152). This was understandable as youth work in Victoria was an aspirant profession which had to make its own way in determining its direction. It was unlike youth work in Britain – although it had been patterned upon it (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973: 22), which '"..entered the seventies pursuing the goal of professionalism within the traditional model" (Holmes 1981: 32).

On the whole, youth workers tended not to see their occupation determined by some objective set of criteria against which youth work could be judged or measured. They were also aware that youth work was dominated by voluntarism and were respectful of the vast numbers of volunteers who were dedicated to working with young people without any monetary reward. It would appear that towards the end of the 1960s and through the 1970s, youth workers grew in their understanding of what being a professional involved and the shape that their own occupation as a profession could take.

It must be remembered that there were very few youth workers who had any formal qualifications in Victoria in the 1960s. Youth work provision was limited and inadequate in terms of providing any preparation for professional status. It was not until the establishment of the Youth Workers' Association of Victoria (YWA) at an inaugural meeting, 19th April 1968, that there was a further attempt at defining youth work (Connell 1964), deciding under what circumstances the youth work occupation could be termed a 'profession' and, by implication, the right of youth workers to call themselves professionals. Prior to the establishment of the YWA, there had been two other professional associations which had relatively short life-spans. The first of these was the Victorian Association of Youth Leaders which was established in 1945 and gradually over five years built up a membership of 49 with 13 associate members. Its major aims centered on the personal development of youth leaders by providing a meeting ground where the concerns and issues facing youth leaders in their work could be discussed openly. In a general way, the Victorian Association sought professional status for youth leadership and pursued the issue of training for all such leaders (VAYL Annual Report 1949-50). The second professional association (established in 1957) was the Institute of Professional Youth Leadership, which had approximately

30 members who were mainly managers of youth clubs such as the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs (VAYC), City Newsboys' Club, Try Boys' Society, The Brotherhood of St. Laurence Fitzroy Branch, and Playgrounds Association. It had similar aims to its predecessor, being established for the purpose of securing for those engaged on a full-time basis in youth leadership the status of a profession, and to provide a common ground where problems associated with leadership could be discussed. In addition, it aimed to raise the standards and status of youth leaders in community service by obtaining good industrial conditions for its members in terms of salary, sickness and superannuation benefits and annual leave, functioning somewhat like a trade union. It is interesting to note that the term 'professional' in the title referred to salary and status (Victorian Institute of Professional Youth Leadership Annual Report 1959). It could be said that during the life-span of this particular association there was a general attempt to produce standards for youth leadership (Hamilton-Smith 1989).

In more recent times there has been no debate around the professional issue or around terms associated with it. This reflects, in part, the changing nature of the youth affairs field which is highly diversified, fragmented and dependent on the labour market, and the complex nature of Australian society which has raised a plethora of issues that occupy the energies of youth workers. The question of whether youth workers have a clear professional identity, whether they understand what distinguishes youth work from other human services (whether they can articulate this clearly for themselves and others), and whether they have a sense of their own boundaries, does not seem important. A report for the Youth Sector Training Unit in Melbourne, concerning field induction training for the youth affairs sector, noted that the field needed to "open itself up to overt rather than covert discussions of professionalism" (Harrison 1990). The report also revealed that youth workers were very uneasy about using words such as 'profession' and 'professional'. However, what seems to be important for youth workers today is the establishment of directions and priorities and attempts to come to terms with severe funding cuts by the state government, and infrastructure and political processes which influence many issues impacting upon young people.

In this article attention will be given to the Youth Workers' Association of Victoria and while it is recognised that YWA was not the first of its kind to be concerned with professional standards, this Association was selected for three reasons, namely:

1. Its membership was drawn from a variety of agencies concerned with young people and reflected a diversity of opinion;
2. Its actual aim was to assist the development of youth and community workers towards professional standards and status (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973: 1); and
3. The YWA was a body whose history reached into the early 1980s when its demise took place because of social change and lack of committed membership.

Development of the Youth Workers' Association of Victoria

The question of what it meant to be professional was a contentious one for the members of the YWA. At the first Annual Meeting held on 21st July 1969, the guest speaker, Elery Hamilton-Smith, addressed the members on the topic of 'What it means to be professional – within the youth work field'. The address, published as a paper, listed a number of characteristics which determined whether an occupation could be described as a profession. These were stated as (Hamilton-Smith 1969: 4):

1. *Being paid for one's service (a professional salary level).*
2. *A corporate organisation which regulates admission to its own ranks.*
3. *Educational preparation.*
4. *Pride in the standards of its work and a real conviction about the importance of these standards.*
5. *High status in the community.*
6. *Practitioner–client relationship.*
7. *Professional integrity.*

The paper pointed out areas where the YWA had not achieved these characteristics to any great extent and called upon the Association to critically evaluate youth work:

> *If we are to be truly professional, then we must be constantly seeking to improve that which we are doing. Unless we develop a tradition of thorough and critical examination of our work, bad practice will drive out the good and bad policies will drive out the good because they are both easier and cheaper*
> (Hamilton-Smith 1969: 5).

This was the essence of the youth worker being professional: competent, dedicated work from the base of professional training, with critical evaluation of that work with and for young people. This paper set the tone for the Association to begin taking its charter seriously and to evolve a professionalism based on a well developed sense and practice of integrity, which had to do with such matters as competent standards of work, setting and achieving goals, having ethical standards by which decisions were made, and contributing to corporate knowledge. In achieving this, the members of the Association were called upon to:

> *Record [their] practice experience, critically evaluate it and communicate [this] learning to others. [They] must examine research data and conceptual work, test this out in their practice, again communicating results to others… this [meant] reading and writing*
> (Hamilton-Smith 1969: 5).

So the infant Association was encouraged to begin to shape its own future and to create its own body of knowledge through rigorous research, documenting experience and communicating with others in the field, and thus to gain recognition as a profession without 'empire-building or setting up of barriers' in their efforts. Youth workers, unlike teachers, had no external authority to regulate practice and no authority they could appeal to on professional concerns. While this had its advantages in that their future could be shaped in less conventional ways, it also posed a dilemma as to whether the Association could be strong enough to pursue the above course, and whether individual members, who were caught up in youth work agency politics, would see the wisdom of that course of action. Already there were signs of internal disagreement, as some members assumed that 'professional' meant 'salaried' and this clouded the debate, because it effectively set a barrier against those who did not work for a salary, and thus was a narrowing of the wider concept of being professional. One member writing in May 1971 had this to say:

> *Other professions in the welfare field recognise reports, recording and documentation as being a very important part at least, of justifying their existence and building up a 'body of knowledge'. We must do the same, not just for the sake of the often onerous title of 'professional' but for the sake of our clients, ourselves and our fellow workers, present and future. We can be professionals in our work without being burdened by the airs and supposed social status often associated with other professional groups*
> (YWA Minutes May 1971).

This was a reminder of the focus given by the address at the Annual General Meeting in 1969, and a strong plea for the Association to shape its own future and not to compare itself to other professional groups who may be taking more traditional approaches in seeking professional status. The difficulty was compounded by the agencies which employed youth workers. Many youth workers were caught up in agency policies, structures, and in achieving agency goals (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973: 117; Appendix A). Some agencies were employing youth workers as 'professionals' yet not giving them work commensurate with that title. Some agencies had a very narrow concept of what the term 'professional' meant, and this inevitably affected the worker's own perception of being a professional. This also worked in the reverse when youth workers were employed to carry out tasks demanding skill and competency (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973: 56).

Volunteers

As already stated, there were vast numbers of volunteer workers who had no professional training, but had practical experience and were the backbone of the youth work field. They brought to their work skills from their own paid occupations, so that those with administrative abilities were often found in significant administration positions in voluntary youth organisations. In a study by the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation in Victoria called *Voluntary Recreation Workers in Victoria*, the point was made that there was no way of estimating the number of volunteers working in agencies in rural and urban Victoria, but 3,000 questionnaires were sent to voluntary recreation workers (Dept. YS & R 1977). The agencies to which the volunteers belonged were not specified in this study, however, in section 4.6 on the relationship between the volunteer and the professional, it was noted that there was considerable friction between them, because volunteers felt that the professional was invading an area where they had given good service and were proud of that fact. Also it created areas of uncertainty and posed such questions as (Dept. YS & R 1977):

> *"Does the expertise of professional staff justify their expense?" and "What should be the lines of demarcation of responsibility and function for volunteers and their professional counterparts?"*

Any emphasis on the professionalisation of youth workers caused an air of disquiet among volunteers (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973: 57). Would there continue to be a partnership between volunteer and trained youth worker,

or would the professionals, increasing in numbers, relegate volunteers to monotonous type tasks with no status and less of the face-to-face intervention with young people? Neil Sleep, President of the YWA, in writing the preface to *Youth Workers and Their Education*, paid tribute to the voluntary unpaid worker, and called the role of the volunteer an intrinsic part of youth work in Australia (Sleep, quoted in Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973). The research itself highlighted the work done by thousands of volunteers in youth work, and recognised the expertise they brought to the field and the effective sharing between youth worker and volunteer. In many organisations such as YWCA and the YMCA the trained youth worker ran in-service courses for volunteers and supported them in their role. The Victorian Association of Youth Clubs (VAYC) had a well defined policy on the training of volunteers who worked face-to-face with young people. The professional in VAYC was concerned with the recruitment and training of, and consultation with, volunteers (Gearing 1963). There was a general agreement that volunteers should not be replaced or displaced by paid workers. YOUTHSPACE, a youth service planning newsletter (VAYC), listed twenty-four leadership training courses for volunteer workers, and noted that there were many more such opportunities omitted because of the number and extent of these (YOUTHSPACE 1973: 11-12). In 1973 a statement by the YWA extolled the great worth of voluntary, part-time workers, and it recognised that a partnership must be developed between professionally trained youth workers and volunteers (YWA Information Sheet 1973).

Qualifications

The YWA set up a series of sub-committees to further its work, rather than rely on drawing together the entire membership for any decision that had to be taken. These committees were the Editorial Committee (information dissemination through the Newsletter), the Industrial Committee with Carol Russell as convener (salaries and conditions) and the Education Committee with Linda Loader as Chair (education policies and actions). The last two committees formed in 1971 played a major part in attempting to establish youth work as a profession. The Training and Education Committee, in order to fulfill its mandate of investigating the kinds of education and/or training that was essential for youth workers and the resources necessary for such education, realised that no thorough study could take place without finance to employ a researcher and a research assistant. An approach was made to the Myer Foundation which, after investigation into

the proposed project, agreed to financial backing. The Youth Services Planning Division of the VAYC agreed to carry out the study for the Association. Elery Hamilton-Smith, who had been outspoken in this belief that youth worker training should be firmly established in the tertiary system, headed the project with Donna Brownell as his assistant in the collection and analysis of data. The Education Committee of the Association contained some very significant people who were mainly high level agency managers, believed in the research and the value of professional training and contributed strongly to it. These were Linda Loader the Chairperson of the Committee (Congregational Department of Christian Education), Len Goodmann (YMCA), Vernon Knight (Andrew Kerr Memorial Home), Julie Rodgers (YMCA Essendon), Newland Hutchinson (YMCA), Vernon Davies (YMCA), Ken Grant (Institute of Social Welfare) and Neil Sleep (VAYC). One of the basic tasks of the Committee and of the project was to define terms including the precise meaning of 'youth worker'. This lead to a wide consultation so that a list of appropriate work categories could be represented in the sample of 100 professional youth workers (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973: 19). Analysis showed four major categories (1973: 18-19):

i. *Administrative (approx. 30% of the survey);*
ii. *Supervisory/training/field work (41%);*
iii. *Working with young people and in charge of salaried staff (14%);*
iv. *Working with young people and having no responsibility for salaried staff (7%); Others working in part-time or consultative positions (6%).*

One of the more striking differences in the research on the role of youth workers was that between males and females, males were in the majority in category I, while in category II, males and females were equally represented. Women, however, were in the majority in categories where little responsibility was involved. They were engaged in activity type interactions with young people, displaying good interpersonal skills. The research recognised that there was a cultural bias towards women even though they had the same youth work training as their male counterparts. In organisations where all female staff were employed, such as Girl Guides and the YWCA, women were found in roles in all four categories (1973: 49-64, 155-56). The sex-linked differential highlighted by the research posed some important issues for the YWA when women workers:

> *[tended] to be localised in their activities and denied the value of extensive communication on a professional basis with other youth workers*
> (1973: 127).

Seven proposals resulted from the research. Three of these had to do with professional education for youth workers within mainstream tertiary education; two proposals pointed to the professional development and upgrading of professional competence; one other highlighted value assumptions about sex-linked differentiations; and the final proposal urged the development of strategies to maintain both flexibility and responsiveness to change. Comments made in the report pointed to the processes that were taking place in the youth work field towards a healthy professionalism, and the part the YWA was taking in that:

> *Only a self-aware, self-questioning profession would look to such a study at an early stage in its development… Although an infant profession, it is nevertheless likely that youth work can influence to a significant degree aspects of its own development*
> (1973: 152).

This report proved to be a highly significant document as it began the debate in the YWA about the quality of training that was to have ramifications well into the 1980s. The YWA came to be dominated mainly by graduates from the Institute of Social Welfare (ISW) and YMCA graduates. Yet, there were members who did not hold any such qualifications, and the Association was to travel a difficult path before it could support the education of youth workers in a tertiary institution, as recommended by the research.

At an ad hoc consultation held in July 1975 involving representatives for the YWA, the ISW Training Course and the YMCA College for Leadership Training, two issues were discussed: the future significance of youth work and the desirable level of training for youth work. Out of this meeting came the statement dealing with these issues – 'The Future Significance and Desirable Levels of Training for Youth Work' (YWA Annual Report 1975: 15). Some interesting points were raised in this discussion document concerning the term 'professional'. The document pointed to achievements such as the development of two training courses for full-time workers, the 350 graduates with professional training, and the formulation of a professional association of youth workers. It went on to state that "those involved in youth work (were) now searching for a 'clear identity' and a distinctive 'area

of expertise'" – particularly against the background of development in the fields of Recreation and Community Development (1975: 19). It defined two essentials that distinguished a professional youth worker: special knowledge, skills and ability in working with young people and in understanding their needs; and in stimulating the total personal development of young people.

> *…youth work has one solid core: it is concerned with work in the interests of the total development of young people. It is this concern which provides youth work with the distinctive identity among the 'caring' professions*
> (1975: 19).

Despite the above claims, the paper admitted that professional identity was still a concern of youth workers with issues such as "role, function, classification, membership, training, standards and ethics" (1975: 19). Yet it was recognised that a longer period of specialised training was necessary if the youth worker were to lay claim to professional authority. It was the nature of this specialised training that caused the greatest debate. While the Youth Workers' Association was highly appreciative of the course conducted by the ISW, both pre-service in-training for youth workers and in-service for volunteer workers, they saw advantages if the Diploma in Youth Leadership (DYL) were offered at a tertiary institution, because of:

1. *Higher professional standing for graduates. As a note – DYL (was) not accepted for the Public Services Board as a professional qualification… If the training were to take place in a recognised tertiary institution, recognition of the qualifications would be much easier to obtain.*
2. *Higher standing of the profession would lead to increased demand both by employers and workers for better training*
3. *Youth work (was) a profession that (was) establishing itself. Increased status of qualification would help in this process*

(Clark 1975: 2).

The YWA was represented on a committee to study the relationship between courses for youth workers, and became involved in the negotiations between the ISW and Preston Institute of Technology (PIT) concerning the future of the ISW Diploma in Youth Leadership course and its possible transfer (Eadie 1977).

Given these negotiations between ISW and Preston Institute of Technology, the YMCA College decided to investigate the desirability and feasibility of transferring its diploma course to a College of Advanced Education (CAE) or, alternatively, of the YMCA College becoming affiliated with a CAE. Consequently it began negotiations with the State College of Victoria (SCV) in 1975, which finally resulted in the transfer of the Diploma of Youth Work course to SCV Coburg in January 1977. Youth work staff were appointed at SCV and a Youth Work Advisory Board was formed. The Board consisted of members representing the SCV, students, National YMCA, CAYO, YWA and ISW (Eadie 1977).

As the negotiations with Preston and ISW had been aborted because of PIT's unwillingness, ISW approached SCV on a formal basis in 1976 to request that the ISW youth work students be transferred to SCV. This request was denied because of the limitations on funds and on the total number of students in the course. ISW therefore was not able to phase out its Diploma in Youth Leadership until 1979. The YWA gave its support to the new Youth Work course at Coburg and in the Annual Report of 1979 the YWA noted that the Diploma of Youth Work course at SCV Coburg was now the only such course in Australia (Hill 1979). The YWA played a vital role in the Diploma of Youth Work by keeping the youth work field informed about the development of the course and the course staff about the field. Thus, the recommendations expressed in *The Future Significance and Desirable Levels of Training for Youth Work*, that youth work training should be specialised and conducted by a recognised tertiary institute, were realised in a three year Diploma of Youth Work at SCV.

In 1980 a Graduate Diploma was introduced at SCV which was to cater for those graduates who wished to gain further credentials, although the number enrolled were few. The course in youth work at SCV ensured the training of youth workers to a professional level at that particular time and affirmed the influence of *Youth Workers and Their Education* written in 1973.

It must be noted that due to the size and complexity of SCV and with the introduction of the B.A. Youth Affairs degree in 1982, the youth work staff were unable to give continuing support for the YWA that there had been at ISW. In appreciation of the support given by Michael Clark who was the course co-ordinator at ISW, the YWA awarded him life membership (YWA 1979: 2). In

justice, it must be recognised that some staff members at Coburg put energy into trying to assist the ailing YWA to survive, but by then (in 1982) it was past resurrection (YWA 1982).

Industrial Conditions

While the qualifications and status issues were satisfactorily resolved despite some tensions, youth worker industrial conditions were far from professional, especially in the employment of young women youth workers who were poorly paid. The Youth Workers' Association Industrial Committee began work towards wages determination for all youth workers. This was one of the major tasks of the Association which took until 1978 to have youth workers fully covered by the determination of the Social and Community Services Board. In the Industrial Committee progress report of 1974, it was noted that instead of negotiating directly with major youth organisations for a wages scale, the Committee decided to make an application to the Minister for a Wages Board.

The YWA wanted to push on with the Wages Board because of the salary injustices found in a number of small organisations, particularly those employing young women (YWA 1974: 1-2). However, the Minister for Labor, through Mr. Keith Dunn, advised the Industrial Committee that its application for a Wages Board had been delayed pending some legal term of reference to be made at a later date. It seemed that a variety of occupations concerned with youth such as welfare workers, physical educationalists and some categories of social workers would all be grouped under the proposed Wages Board. This was unsatisfactory for the YWA as it was leading to protracted delays. The Industrial Committee approached Colin Benjamin for advice because of the delay. He suggested that the youth workers should reapply and request an expansion of the Social Workers' Board to include youth workers. This was done and readily agreed to by the Minister who saw in this a way out of the dilemma (YWA 1974: 2).

In the Industrial Committee Report of 1976 it was observed that time was spent deciding membership of the Wages Board and reducing the groups from 11 to 5 currently working together, negotiating with social workers to allow the Board (which was exclusive to social workers) to be extended to include youth workers and other allied professions, and developing a working relationship with employer groups. One point made was that there had to be good communication

and cooperation between the various allied fields and that the interrelationship of all the disciplines – youth work, social work and recreation, etc. – had to be recognised (YWA Annual Report 1976: 7). This shows a profession 'coming of age' in not seeing the other professions as rivals and uniting for the common good, at least in industrial matters.

The 1977 Industrial Report noted that negotiations with social workers had been successful and that with the extension of the powers of the Social Workers' Wages Board, representatives from youth workers, recreation workers, community development officers and social planners were to present a log of claims to employers "under the title of Social Welfare Workers" (YWA Annual Report 1977). The union involved was the Australian Social Welfare Union (ASWU), and it was this union that took the initiatives in the future. Now with the log of claims put forward by the ASWU for youth workers to the employers, the YWA, although it was a professional body with a constitution and a definite membership criteria, had to establish an ethics committee and a membership committee to show that its membership was not open to "anyone" (YWA Industrial Report 1977: 1). This demand was seen as delaying tactics on the part of the employing body, so that the YWA member reporting on the industrial situation commented that while the issue of being a professional was important at that time, that after the determination he expected that the emphasis would lessen as the employers accepted the situation and did not continue "to examine the issue" (YWA Industrial Report 1977: 2). The YWA did eventually produce a code of ethics for youth workers which arose out of practice and experience. There was no indication from the Minutes of the Association or from interviews that there was much argument about the code or that it was seen to be overly significant. There was no way of enforcing this code, which had to operate according to each youth worker's sense of professionally acceptable conduct.

After seven years of work on the part of the Industrial Committee of the YWA, youth workers were fully covered by the determination of the Social and Community Services Board in October 1978. This was a landmark for the YWA as a body of professional workers to have achieved, for the first time in Victoria, standard wages and conditions for all youth workers. More work remained to be done by the ASWU to establish an award for unqualified youth workers.

The award was to prove a protection against the exploitation of youth workers and would, through its progressive structure, keep youth workers from leaving the field. Members were urged to join the ASWU to strengthen it and to ensure that salaries and conditions were not eroded (YWA Annual Report 1976: 6). Yet in 1979 it was noted that only five youth workers were union members, and the Executive of the Association determined to push the issue of unionism at the Annual General Meeting by having John Spiering (YWA representative on the ASWU) address the members (YWA Executive Meeting 1979). It seemed that many youth workers were prepared to accept what the ASWU had achieved without joining that Union.

Membership

This issue, over time, revealed the basic disagreement among members over the set of standards by which the YWA would accept numbers into its ranks. Unlike the Victorian Association of Youth Leaders (VAYL) which preceded this Association, the YWA had no qualifications approval committee to regulate membership. The VAYL Advisory Committee consisted of John Medley, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, A.G. Scholes, the Director of National Fitness, Ruth Hoban of the Department of Physical Education, and Dr Fritz Duras, Social Studies Department, Melbourne University (VAYL Annual Report 1949-1950). While the YWA had a Membership Committee it was composed of members of the actual Association and this proved to be its undoing in the latter years.

The YWA began its life with 60 members and a healthy gender mix and by 1973 the membership had grown to 119 (YWA Annual Report 1973: 2). As early as June 1968 the question of membership of the infant Association was raised and a sub-committee appointed to consider the matter.

In initial discussions it was decided to make the membership open so as not to exclude workers who had no formal qualifications, and in consideration for the status of volunteers. In 1971 the classification of persons eligible for membership was:

> *(a) Those who (were) employed full-time in youth work and who (held) professional qualifications approved by the Association (were) eligible for admission to full membership.*

(b) Those who (were) employed full-time in youth work but who did not hold professional qualifications as in paragraph (a) above, together with those who (were) students of a course leading to such an approved qualification or by those who may be admitted by special resolution of the Executive (were) eligible for admission to association membership.

(c) Provided that until June 1975, persons who have been employed full time in youth work for not less than two years, but who did not hold qualifications as in paragraph (a) above (were) eligible for admission to full membership

(YWA Annual Meeting 1971: 2-3).

However, in the News Bulletin of the YWA 1973, strong criticism was levelled at the eligibility criteria for membership which classified members into three divisions:

1. *Professionally trained youth workers.*
2. *Associate members (unqualified, full-time workers).*
3. *Student members (attending a professional course).*

Criticism was centered on the exclusiveness of those who were 'professionally trained', asking the question whether the YWA should want this type of 'professionalism', given the fact that openness toward all youth workers with young people regardless of training would make for better relationships. With full voting rights, people would be encouraged to seek training, not for its own sake, but for the good of the community as a whole (YWA Annual Report 1975: 5). This question was to occur again when new criteria were floated by the sub-committee which tried to broaden the base of membership in 1974 (YWA Annual Report 1975). In the Annual Report of 1975 it was indicated that there had been a movement from the membership policy which was defined as 'open' to a 'closed' membership policy and this at the express wish of "the members' explicit directions". By the time the Constitution was printed in September 1979 (it had gone through several amendments in its history), there were still members who were dissatisfied with various sections, including those on membership (YWA News Bulletin, August 1979: 3-5), and who objected to the manner in which the Constitution was changed to leave the numbers which made up the Executive open, and allowing only seven members to call a Special General Meeting (YWA News Bulletin 1979: 4). Perhaps this was symptomatic of the many questions concerning the term 'professional' that the Association had to face. There

were issues that confronted the members about a professional framework, the communication patterns within and outside the Association, the type of influence it could bring to bear on government legislation that affected young people, and the promotion of youth work in the public sphere as a service of quality, and the image of the youth worker as a professional.

Relationship with Government Concerning Youth Policy

At the time of the establishment of the Youth Workers' Association of Victoria (1968), government policy in the 1950s had been motivated by the need to do something about juvenile crime in response to adult reaction against apparent juvenile anti-social behaviour. However, with the advent of the Whitlam government in 1972, and the welfare programs such as the Australian Assistance Plan which enabled Commonwealth funding to be made available for a range of services within a region "without any strings attached" (Davis 1979: 3), young people were now seen in a positive light rather than an anti-social one.

The Victorian government had to be seen to be doing something positive for young people, so it established the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, with Brian Dixon (ex-VFL football star) as Minister advised by a State Youth Council. The non-government organisations were represented by the Youth Council of Victoria which was funded to represent and co-ordinate the voluntary sector (Davis 1979: 4-7). It seemed possible that at last there would be a mechanism and finances available to unite the youth work field with the co-operation of these bodies and the Workers with Youth (of which the YWA members were most vocal). This did not eventuate because of differing agendas, approaches to young people and the lack of appropriate structures that would facilitate communication in a climate of suspicion and isolation (Davis 1979).

The Youth Workers' Association was often seen as anti-authoritarian and suspicious of the state government's new Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation because there was no one in that Department who was directly concerned with youth. In addition, this was just one of the portfolios of the Minister, Brian Dixon, who was not able to give his total attention to the youth area. Many youth workers resented the Department which was more concerned with sport and recreation, and therefore they did not want it to have influence

over the youth work field (Hamilton-Smith, interview 1989). They accused the Department of engaging in "ad hoc policies" which bore "little significance and relevance to the overall development of young people" (YWA Submission, Baillic Task Force 1977: 2). The Association also attacked the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation over its sponsorship of the Youth 2000 series which had "negligible effects on those young people who were privileged enough to participate" (YWA News Bulletin Dec. 1977), highlighting the lack of real decision making on the part of young people.

The Youth Council of Victoria (YCV) had developed the Youth 2000 series as a way of consulting with young people and broadening youth policy, given the lack of emphasis on youth by the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation. However, the YWA was opposed to the series and questioned whether it had been a truly consultative process. It cited a case of the Minister overriding the decisions made by young people who had participated in Youth 2005, by telling them that there would be a Youth 2006 whether they approved or not (YWA News Bulletin Dec. 1977). Commenting on the Youth 2000 series, Brian Lewis for the YWA had this to say about YCV:

> *If YCV was seen as the autonomous, youth representing agency it claims to be, truly serving the interests of young people through its members, there would undoubtedly be greater support. But while there is the shadow of political pressure and direction over the 2000 series, while YCV appears to be serving its own structure instead of young people, then youth workers will continue to do something more worthwhile with their time – like working with young people?*
> (YWA News Bulletin 1977).

This was a condemnation of the work of YCV by YWA in attacking the very basis of its work in the policy area. Yet the YWA and the YCV were part of some groups that had approached Brian Dixon to suggest that statewide coordinating bodies be consulted about the formation of an overall Youth Policy, and suggest a possible process for this consultation (YWA Submission to Policy Review 1977). A working group composed of John Shone (YCV), Richard Hill (YWA), Rob Fallshaw (SYC), Pauline Cross (ISW) and a Department representative, was established to work on the proposal.

In December 1977 an all day workshop was held on Youth Policy. The participants put much energy into defining Youth Policy and working towards a policy for the State of Victoria, and towards a suitable process. The Minister was somewhat disappointed with the workshop as he wanted definite guidelines on how to allocate the $2 million Youth Fund and less on Youth Policy (Davis 1979: 8-9). Following the workshop a committee was set up to clarify the broad determinants of Youth Policy. Confusion was created when in July the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation's internal draft policy to create a Department of Youth/Funding Policy was totally rejected by the SYC (Davis 1979: 10). The SYC advised the Minister to commission a recognised youth expert to co-ordinate all the material that had come out of the December workshop and material from submissions. Dr. David Merritt, Executive Director of the Joint Board of Christian Education, was appointed to write a draft Youth Policy, and in so doing to untangle conflicts and prove that the state government was serious about doing something for young people. Also, there was the matter of the $2 million Youth Fund that had to be allocated in a politically accepted way (Davis 1979: 11). The draft Youth Policy was distributed widely for comment and had to be submitted to Dr Merritt by 10th July 1978. Following that process, Dr Merritt presented the second draft Youth Policy to the Minister and the SYC in August 1978, and the final Youth Policy was released in April 1979. The final policy was not that written by Dr Merritt, but one hastily put together by the state government because of impending state elections. Comments by the YWA on the draft policy did not endear the Association to Dr Merritt.

The saga of the Youth Policy was likened to the serial 'Blue Hills' which looked "like a flash in the pan next to the long running drama of Youth Policy Development" (YWA News Bulletin May 1978), while another member referred to the process as "more irrelevant shit" (YWA News Bulletin, September 1977).

The YWA contributed to all phases in the development of a State Youth Policy, and worked hard to keep the debate open and communication lines effective. They tried to "open 'closed doors' and remove the 'window dressing' that governments [tended] to erect" (YWA News Bulletin, September 1977). They wanted to have a Youth Policy that would reflect solid research and wide consultation with better youth services by all agencies. The central aim of the YWA in all this and in their activities was "to close the gap between those who create, implement and receive policy" (Hill 1979).

The Demise of the Youth Workers' Association of Victoria

At the conclusion of 1975, the membership of the YWA stood at 91 full members and 68 associates (YWA Annual Report 1976: 8), but by 1977 of the 60 members who were contacted by the Executive through a sub-committee, the majority saw the Association as something where fees were paid on a yearly basis and then considered the Association of little importance (YWA Annual Report 1977). In an article by John Pearson, the Secretary of the YWA in 1978, members were called upon to respond to issues for the direction of the future of the YWA and told that if they did not respond then it was likely that the Association would disband (YWA News Bulletin, April 1978: 3). In 1979 it was noted that full membership had diminished by 34 to 92 (on the books) and that General Meetings had faded (YWA Annual Report 1979).

It seemed that at this stage there was a core group of members doing most of the work, while the rest of the membership paid yearly fees and then forgot about the YWA as they moved on with agency tasks, and, as observed in 1978, there was a limit to what the few could do given the fact that they too were voluntary members (YWA News Bulletin 1978: 3). It was unfortunate for the YWA that it was left with a core of members who pursued the original goals, while the leadership who had guided the Association though its early days and during its growing stages, left the Association for other structures and for other career options.

The National Youth Workers' Conference held in Fremantle 18-24 July focussed on the theme 'Youth Workers in Australia – Who are we and Why are we here' and in the decision of the youth worker's role, it was proposed that youth work along with the other human services should re-group under a coherent and coordinating network of 'Workers with Youth', who together could influence government policy decisions in relation to young people at the local level (YWA News Bulletin, September 1979). It was hoped that the YWA would be part of the process. The YWA held a General Meeting to discuss what had happened at Fremantle and invited John Uren, Victoria's contact point for following up the Conference, to brief them (YWA Executive Minutes July 1979). Following this meeting, another General Meeting was planned by the Executive of the YWA on the topic of the direction of the Association leading into a discussion on

the network/forum ideas (YWA Executive Minutes October 1979). However, it became obvious that this whole issue needed further deliberation, so a Special General Meeting was called for 13th November 1979 to discuss the question of whether the YWA should support the paid workers only or support all workers with young people. Underlying this question were the aims of the YWA and the relationship with the proposed state and federal Youth Forums. There were some suspicions that should the YWA join such a forum, it would lose its own identity.

Frank Hytten, a member of the YWA, criticised the Executive for being overly concerned about the Workers with Youth Forum and of engaging in trivia when the real focus should be on the plight of young people in society. He considered that the Association should seek alternative ways of being professional, ways that were creative and innovative so as not to be caught up in a 'secure nest of professionalism', and entered a plea for support for all workers with youth and not just those who met the requirements of some arbitrary cut-off point (YWA News Bulletin, August 1979). As mentioned previously, the changing of the YWA Constitution in 1979 reflected the difficulties the Association had experienced in filling the Executive positions by leaving the number of the Executive open (YWA News Bulletin, August 1979). For some time the Association had been unable to function on many occasions through lack of a quorum, and had been plagued with rivalry and petty jealousies which prevented youth workers from involvement in the Association (YWA News Bulletin, September 1979).

One of the major foci of the YWA had been the industrial negotiations for youth workers and the establishment of a Wages Board to determine a log of claims. However, industrial matters were then taken over by the Australian Social Welfare Union which pursued the determination for unqualified workers in the Social and Community Services field (YWA Annual Report 1979). While there continued to be a representative of the YWA on the ASWU, this major work of the Association commenced by the sub-committee of Fay Lewis, Tricia Szirom, Geoff Rawson and Peter Evans and completed by Mike Dobson, was over (YWA Annual Report 1979). There were many members who considered that with the new industrial awards and improved working conditions their needs had been met, and they did not put any further effort into the YWA or support it actively (interview material 1989-90).

By 1982 it was obvious that there were many organisations, groups of workers and new networks appearing. Changes in society which affected young people and caused a rise in unemployment, saw the Commonwealth government put into effect a Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS). Although Victorian CYSS workers considered themselves part of the youth affairs field and many local CYSS structures were staffed by professional youth workers, it did have a marked bias and other workers with CYSS were not required to have any formal qualifications. Other organisations such as the Youth Accomodation Coalition and Workers with the Disabled, to mention but a few, had their own unique focus and their own Associations. The last Newsletter of the YWA in 1982, commented on the proliferation of groups:

> *Anyone would think that there were about 200,000 youth workers (or workers with youth) in Victoria to need so many separate bodies.*

The picture was of an Association that was dying and "all but buried" (YWA Newsletter 1982). Despite the efforts of the 'Salvage Committee' to keep the Association going it eventually folded that same year. The Youth Workers' Association of Victoria was born out of the era of the protest movements of the 1960s, and ended its history in very different times and circumstances.

Yet, the YWA had many achievements to its name. The members, under dedicated leadership and solid guidance, had pursued professional standards in the workplace by consciously researching, planning and evaluating practice on the whole, and providing clear directions. Significant members held out against pressures from within the Association, and from outside, to move youth workers towards traditional professional structures. They did not want a professional body that was concerned with exclusiveness, monopoly of services (because of the number of volunteers) and its own professional advancement.

Rather, they were concerned with the professional practices of youth work having realised that recognition came from the professional manner in which work for, and with, young people was pursued and reflected upon, before further action was taken. One of the last remaining members, Madgi El Hag, summed up the issue of being a professional in his paper to the Workshop conducted by the Victorian Workers with Youth, September 1982:

It is quite apparent that youth work being a professional has been solved. There are some 3,000 of us being paid to operate as youth workers; we have a particular task to do and we do it using a particular knowledge base and particular skills; professional training is here and it's arguably producing practitioners who are of good quality. The simple definition of professional is someone who sets out to do something and in attempting to achieve it, behaves appropriately. To say that youth work is a profession is not to say that it is about being snooty-nosed or elitist; it is about us behaving responsibly and in the interests of young people; I believe that most of us are on about that.

One of the past Presidents of the YWA during its declining years commented that towards the end of the Association the members were more inclined to talk about issues rather than take action on them. However, he saw that the strength of the YWA lay in its function of giving a structure and support to youth workers in a divided and fragmented youth affairs field, so that they had the opportunity of raising issues of concern about youth work and young people (Hill 1989).

The YWA believed that youth workers needed to be qualified and the members worked consistently to support courses that would train and educate youth workers. When the Diploma of Youth Work was established at SCV and the Diploma conducted by the ISW phased out, the members put time and energy into discussions with SCV about the nature of the youth work course. When the B.A. degree in Youth Affairs was introduced at Coburg in 1982, the Association was in its dying phase, so there was no input of significance from the youth work field. Other major achievements of the YWA included the establishment of a relevant Wages Board and cover by a state industrial award; contributions to the State Youth Policy and to the formation of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation and to adequate staffing for the youth affairs field. In 1979, Dick Hill summed up the action component of the YWA as:

- *Improvement of formal training for full-time youth workers.*
- *Creating more opportunities for youth workers to gain more in-service training and support.*
- *Improving wages and conditions for youth workers.*
- *Advocating youth needs and issues.*
- *Improving communication and co-ordination between agencies who impinge on the lives of young people.*

Finally it may be said that the Association to 1976 always referred to youth work as a vocation, and this emphasis led the members to reject narrow self-interest and to seek that professionalism which recognised a partnership with other helping professions, and as a part of the total community services sector. In later documentation, the word 'vocation' was rarely used, which is not to say that the core emphasis of the Association changed, but there were more obvious divisions appearing among the membership.

From 1982 to 2008 there was no other professional Association of youth workers in the field (see Editor's Note regarding re-establishment of the YWA). There was no coordination between agencies and organisations dealing with young people. Each group in the youth affairs field was generally well structured within its own organisation, but there was little meeting point between the various agencies and organisations, and there was no unifying structure across the youth affairs field at that time. The Youth Affairs Council of Australia with its various Forums had the potential to unify the field, but it was split by divisions and so did not live up to expectations.

Conclusion

The YWA had two major accomplishments to its credit by commissioning the research on youth workers and their education which eventually led to youth work education being established in the tertiary sector; and the establishment of an Industrial award for youth workers. However, the YWA was unable to establish youth work on a solid professional base for several reasons. There was a lack of consensus among the membership on professional identity and there was no real mechanism for solving these differences. After the mid-1970s, it was obvious that there was a growing anti-professionalism evidenced by the refusal of some members to use the words 'professional' or 'professionalism' (YWA News Bulletin, July 1978: 4). The Association was unable to insist on the Code of Ethics being observed by all members, and it had no real power to compel the membership to behave in certain ways. All members belonged to other organisations and agencies and the Executive gave their time on an unpaid basis. So, apart from membership fees that went towards essential running costs, the membership was entirely voluntary.

The membership was divided over the YACA Forum of Workers with Youth. Some saw this Forum as providing broader contact with workers involved with young people, while others were very suspicious of the Forum and feared the loss of the YWA identity if members were to join. The ASWU had taken over the major function of the YWA and it was this union that now pursued industrial matters for youth workers. There was also a lack of clarity about the vocational field which was fragmenting and diversifying as it moved into the 1980s. Despite the achievements of the YWA it was unable to resolve differences between members and so failed to achieve consensus and to firmly establish youth work as a profession.

Editor's Note

Since the time of writing the re-formation of a professional association for youth workers has been an important priority for the youth sector nationally, particularly in the state of Victoria. In Western Australia an association was formed in 2002 and in Victoria, following the re-establishment of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria in the late 1990s, a sub-committee on youth work professionalisation was formed. This led to an association working group in 2008 and the election of the inaugural board of the new Youth Workers' Association (YWA) in April 2011. Presently there are over 400 members of the YWA in Victoria. For a more in-depth analysis of the re-establishment of the YWA see Chapter 10.

References

Clark, M. (undated). Factors Affecting Decisions Regarding the Possible Future of the DYL in this Institute, Letter to YWA.

Connell, W. F. (1964). The Provision of Adequate Youth Leadership in the Community. Australian Frontier, Canberra, Australia.

Constitution of Victorian Association of Youth Leaders, NFCSA Archives, Public Records Office of South Australia, GRG95 Box 21.

Davies, F. (1972). Professional Socialisation as Subjective Experience. In H.S. Becker (Ed.), *Institutions and the Person*. Aldine, Chicago, US.

Davis, R. (1979). The Development of a State Youth Policy in Victoria, A Case Study in Influencing Policy Formation.

Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation. (1977). *Voluntary Workers in Victoria*. Victorian Government, Australia.

Eadie H.A. (1977). Transfer of Diploma of Youth Work from YMCA College to SCV Coburg, A Background Statement.

Gearing, J. W. (1963). Policies in the Training of Youth Leaders – Professional and Voluntary, VAYC Paper, 11 June 1963.

Goode, W. J. (1969). The Theoretical Limits of Professionalism. In A. Etizioni (Ed.), *The Semi-Professions and their Organisations*. The Free Press, New York, US.

Hamilton-Smith, E., & Brownell, D. (1973). *Youth Workers and Their Education*. Youth Workers' Association of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Hamilton-Smith, E., & Brownell, D. (1973). Dilemmas of an Infant Profession. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, 9 (3).

Hamilton-Smith, E. (1989). Interviews.

Harrison, L. (1990). Field Induction Training for the Youth Affairs Sector. Unpublished Report for the Youth Sector Training Unit, Melbourne.

Holmes, J. (1981). Professionalisation – a misleading myth? National Youth Bureau, Leicester, UK.

Interview material with former members of the YWA. (1989-90).

Victorian Association of Youth Leaders. (1949-50). Annual Report.

Victorian Institute of Professional Youth Leadership. (1959). Annual Report.

Victorian Workers With Youth. (1982). Bi-Annual Workshop Report, 15 September 1982.

YWA. (1969). Annual General Meeting July 1969.

YWA. (1969-72). Review of Progress 1969 – 1972.

YWA. (1971-79). Constitution Amendments.

YWA. (1971-79). Annual Report 1971-79.

YWA. (1973). News Bulletin October – November 1973.

YWA. (1973-79). Annual Report 1973 – 1979.

YWA. (1974). News Bulletin January – June 1974.

YWA. (1974). Newsmagazine September/October – November/December 1974.

YWA. (1975). Newsmagazine April – June 1975.

YWA. (1977). Industrial Report 24 February 1977.

YWA. (1977). News Bulletin September – December 1977.

YWA. (1977). Submission to the Ballie Task Force 17 November 1977.

YWA. (1977). Submission to Policy Review 1977.

YWA. (1978). News Bulletin February – November/December 1978.

YWA. (1979). Executive Minutes 12 February 1979- 17 September 1979.

YWA. (1979). News Bulletin April – October 1979.

YWA. (1982). Letter to Members by the 'Salvage Committee' 1982.

YOUTHSPACE, A Youth Planning Newsletter. VAYC Melbourne No. 3. March 1971.

First published in Australian Educational Researcher, V.18, n.2, pp.43-63, 1991.

Chapter 3

Youth work as a response to social values

From the development of 'character' to the concept of 'empowerement' - A comparison of youth programs from the Depressions of the 1890s, 1930s and 1970s.

David Maunders

This article examines three examples of youth organisations in three periods of economic depression in relation to Weber's theory of value rational action. Background information on the Try Movement and the rural Christian family; League of Young Democrats and the pursuit of justice at work; Account on the Youth council of Victoria and the rise of empowerment.

It is argued that youth programs have been oriented more towards the transmission of values related to a perceived right order of the interrelationship of God, Society (Man) and the Individual, rather than towards rationally calculated ends. Expressed in the nineteenth century as the development of character, these values embodied commitment to Christian faith, the work ethic, patriotism, clean living and a rural lifestyle. The Try Excelsior Movement, founded in the 1880s, claimed to protect society from the larrikin scourge, to reform those within its clutches, and to contribute to the technical education of working class youth. Consideration is given to the overwhelming influence to the value base of the approach of reformatory superintendent Max Brown, values that were far removed from those of the boys in his care. Comparison is made with working class, communist backed youth movements which emerged in the 1930s, taking the name (from 1941) of the Eureka Youth League. Their activities led to some courageous, though at times nearly irresponsible, actions to try to raise the consciousness of factory workers. The final example is the concept of empowerment which gained in strength in the 1960s, and which is explored through the recent structural changes of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.

The Try Movement and the rural Christian family

The argument that youth work has been a process of value rational action implies that workers have acted in accordance with beliefs, rather than consideration of the outcome. Weber defined it as:

> *. . .actions of persons who, regardless of possible cost to themselves, act to put into practice their convictions of what seems to them to be required by duty, honour, the pursuit of beauty, a religious call, personal loyalty or the importance of some 'cause' no matter in what it consists*
> (Weber 1958: 25).

The larrikin was a familiar sight to Melbournians of the 1880s and 1890s, with his black slouched hat, crimson cravat and rolling, rollicking gait. He took delight in jostling helpless women into the gutter, swore horribly, chewed malodorous tobacco and spat abundantly.

While strategies for eradication of larrikinism might well be seen as instrumentally rational social action, (action rationally pursued for calculated ends), it is argued that they were in fact value rational. The Try Movement was based on the belief that the model of a rural Christian family was a solution to this urban social problem.

The Toorak and South Yarra Try Society was established in 1883 by William Mark Forster, a Melbourne saddler. Forster saw his initiative as a contribution to the "moral and social elevation of a certain section of the youths of the District" (Forster 1887) but these were initially a few boys invited to his home to spend the evening with his sons Arthur and William, aged 14 and 12. Documentary evidence suggests that the occasion may have been a birthday party for William (Try Archives: a) and a comparison of the society's membership roll with Sands and McDougall's Melbourne Directory shows that the original members, Williams, Chalker and Platt, were, in fact, near neighbours of Forster's home in Canterbury Road, Toorak (Sands & McDougall's 1883: 9).

Forster encouraged the boys to improve themselves. They should expect to meet with obstacles, but they should not be discouraged and should try with all their might to overcome them. To support each other they might form a Try society (Butler 1925: 18ff). Later that year, Forster's attention was drawn to a leader in

the *Herald*, on the subject of Larrikinism and its Prevention (*Herald* 19 October 1883), which commented favourably on the work of a Mr Groom of the Christian chapel in North Fitzroy who had organised a free gymnasium, coupled with instruction in reading, writing and singing. This he called the Excelsior Class and it had been running for 15 months (*Advertiser* 18 October 1883). Forster met Groom and proposed a merger in order to develop their classes into a movement, subsequently known as the Try Excelsior Movement.

Forster, an evangelical Christian, was impelled by "Christ-like pity for friendless children" (Butler 1924), and after the Movement had been organised on a firm basis, he established a non-denominational Children's Church, which claimed an attendance of several hundred. For some, such as Father Mulhall, senior priest at St Ignatius Roman Catholic Church in Richmond, larrikinism was caused by the want of religion in the young and sprang into life with the Education Act of 1872 (*Herald* 13 April 1887). His cure was the re-establishment of denominational education. Others made claims for the moral value of teaching the Bible in state schools. Supporters of this included Vida Goldstein, women's suffrage campaigner and leader of the Girls' Try Society from 1897 to 1900 (Goldstein 1908), James Balfour MLC and Sir Frederick Sargood, both Try benefactors (*Australian Woman's Sphere* 1900).

Forster's views are not on record, but he was quoted in the same edition as Father Mulhall arguing that employment was the solution to larrikinism (*Herald* 13 April 1887). The Try movement aimed to give boys technical training to enable them to enter skilled trades. Throughout the 1890s, attendance at classes was low (Maunders 1987: 457) and Forster constantly warned boys about missing opportunities which were presented to them (Try Archives: b). Many already had skills (Maunders 1987: 454) and the 1890s depression saw a decline in demand for skilled labour. Forster and his associates were nevertheless adamant in urging the acquisition of skills at a time when boys could earn more by street trading. Charles Barber, one of Forster's co-workers, regarded the streets as so powerful a force of corruption that he campaigned throughout the 1890s to restrict young people earning a living in them.

In 1891 Barber and Forster took part in a deputation to Sir Frederick Sargood, Minister of Education, arguing that newsboys "were of a type of those who ultimately drifted into crime" (*Standard* 19 February 1891).

Seven years later, Barber headed a deputation to the Premier urging control of juvenile street trading. He claimed "there was no calling which led so many young people into criminality" (*Herald* cutting *n.d.* 1898). The *Herald*, with a vested interest in the character of its sellers, took issue with this statement, pointing out that there was no proof "beyond bare assertion". It interviewed Forster, who conceded that many "assisted to a very large extent in supporting their families and to prevent these boys from earning a livelihood would be an injustice".

Joseph Bride, "an old newsboy of seven years standing" wrote the *Herald* to emphatically deny that the greater proportion of the newsboys go to swell the ranks of the criminal classes:

> *I, along with others, feel aggrieved at the unwarranted insult that Mr Barber has hurled at the newsboys generally inasmuch as there are a great number of the old newsboys occupying good positions here and abroad. l am at present in business for myself in the city and have been instrumental in placing others in a similar position ...*
> (*Herald* cutting May 1898).

The paper went further and interviewed William Groom, who declared that there was not a single newsboy currently in gaol and that in his extensive experience of work with young offenders, he had only encountered ten or eleven who were genuine newsboys.

Charles Barber, manager of the Gordon Institute, part of the Try movement, advertised in 1893 for a man and wife to take charge of the Olinda Farm Reformatory, located on land near Lilydale owned by the Wiseman brothers:

> *The first thing to consider in this work is that the superintendent and his wife must be earnest Christians who will train boys to be true citizens from a Christian standpoint, to conduct family worship and to develop the faculty of `love' for God and humanity in lads who have been neglected*
> (*Spectator* 31 March 1893).

Max Brown and his wife Louisa were appointed. Max was a 46-year-old pharmacist and Methodist lay preacher. He had been born in England into a farming and butchering family, and had been in the colony for 24 years. He and Louisa had been married for 17 years, but had no children. Most of their married life had been spent in St Arnaud (Maunders & Jaggs *n.d.*).

The pharmacist set about clearing the land and training the six boys allocated to him in the skills of horticulture. It is clear, however, that his primary aim was to bring them to the Lord, and that he was never happier than when he thought he was helping them come to a Christian commitment:

> *Last night after the boys had retired they called me in to them and I found them in great trouble earnestly wishing me to tell them what they were to do to be saved. After questioning them and finding them sincere, I talked and prayed with them ... Today they have been full of their new found joy*
> (Brown 3 September 1894).

Max and Louisa aimed to provide a Christian, middle class home for their city street boys. They were encouraged to call the superintendent and his wife "Mother" and "Dad" and were provided every material need, especially at Christmas:

> *Fruit, plums, cherries, raspberries without stint and a table supplied as well and delicately as any middle class table can be*
> (Brown 24 December 1893).

Yet, the country pharmacist did not really understand the city lads, particularly their urge to run back to the attractions of the city, when he treated them well:

> *Ted has expressed his sorrow for running away and causing so much trouble and promises to remain although he says he hates the country and wants to get to Melbourne. Poor boy. He has more love and kindness shown him here than he ever before experienced yet the would rather be a city arab again*
> (Brown 11 November 1893).

Max did not resile from his responsibility to administer a sound flogging when necessary, though he felt that he suffered more than the boys. His belief that punishment was necessary to bring his boys to good, and his revulsion of administering it, imposed such great mental stress on Max that on occasions he had to retire to bed with a headache (Brown 16 October 1893). The ineffectiveness of beatings caused him to look for other methods:

> *I made them strip and dress in some old garments of the wife and work in them all day. They were greatly ashamed and wept bitterly. I expect passers-by must have thought we had a girl and boys home combined*
> (Brown 16 October 1893).

Max Brown considered that his work was largely successful. When boys left his care, they were placed with employers, usually on farms. Many did not last long, and after a number of years at the reformatory, Brown concluded that the fault lay as much with the employers as with the boys. His work remained based on the values of the Christian family, but he diverged from his colleague McAskel at the neighbouring Fernydale reformatory, who, doubtless committed to the same values, operated a more instrumental approach:

> *McAskel says he will not take a boy's word avowing that he cannot trust any. I am sorry for him for I find unless I can trust a boy I can do nothing with him. If we have no respect for a boy or confidence it is certain the boy will have no respect or love for us. He does not appear to feel the boy's misdeeds. If detected he punishes and all is right until the next offence. I cannot do thus. If one of my boys sin I feel it as though I may be disgusted with their ingratitude etc. yet I still love them and therefore suffer with them. I may be a fool but after four years experience I cannot act otherwise for I feel that if reform is to be accomplished it will have to be through love and not terrorism alone*
> (Brown 26 April 1897).

The League of Young Democrats and the pursuit of justice at work

The depression of the 1890s brought the Browns into reforming young people as their contribution to regenerating society in the belief that social and political change must be "baptised and permeated with the Christianity of Christ" (*Observer* March 1892). In the 1930s, a new player entered the field of youth work, with differing values, but, as will be argued, whose action was equally value rational. Weber argues that communist movements depend on value rational arguments to their disciples (1968: 154). The Australian Communist Party had established a Young Communist League (YCL) in the late 1920s. The YCL operated very differently from the evangelical youth organisations of the 1890s: they organised the young unemployed and investigated working conditions in factories, and the information was compiled into bulletins which were distributed to young workers (*Mac's Mince* 1935). At the MacRobertson's chocolate factory in Collingwood, the lunchroom had been burned down and not replaced, and workers were sacked when eligible for adult rates. Working conditions were injurious to health:

> *Croak Croak Croak Your health for a chocolate frog*.

Here young girls have to stand for the whole (ten and a quarter) hours with just the lunch time break, emptying chocolate frogs out of a heavy mould (Mac's Mince 1936*).*

The threat of fascism in Europe led to a change of policy by the Comintern, and communist parties cooperated with other anti-fascist organisations in a national front. The Young Communist International followed this line, and youth leagues were directed to become broader based educational organisations aiming to unite working class youth against fascism. They should promote trade unionism among the young and work for the improvement of working conditions (Young Communist International 1938). In Australia, the YCL developed clubs with a range of activities including sports teams, drama, picnics and dances (Blake 1984: 77). In 1939 the YCL disbanded to become the even more broadly based League of Young Democrats. The president of the League was Audrey Blake, who had recently returned from a year in the USSR serving at the Young Communist International. The secretary was Ken Miller.

The YCL played an active part with other youth organisations (significantly the YMCA and YWCA) in the Australian Youth Congress held in Sydney in 1938. Bishop Burgmann encouraged delegates to relate the issue of peace to unemployment (Challenge to Australian Youth 1938: 5). An Australian Youth Council was formed where the communist members were highly respected for their values, even by those who disagreed with them. Marjory Cardwell, a young YWCA worker who led the Australian delegation to the Second World Youth Congress in Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1939, recalled "they put many a Christian group in the shade for their devotion". Communist involvement in the World Congress was used to try to discredit it (Cardwell interview).

In 1939, the war broke out and was initially supported by the communists, though they changed after the Nazi-Soviet Pact. The League of Young Democrats was banned shortly after, but was re-established in 1941, after the Curtin government came to power and after Soviet entry into the war, under the name of the Eureka Youth League (EYL).

During the Second World War and after, the EYL engaged in a range of activities. War work in factories involved the organisation of shock brigades to increase

production. Work with troops offering recreational and social facilities for those on leave, and developing consciousness for those serving. Campaigns for improving working conditions were organised. The most successful of these was the achievement of daytime training for apprentices in 1945. Educational and cultural activities were promoted: Camp Eureka, near Warburton offered camps with "lectures there sitting under the trees, listening to old trade unionists, talking about Marx and their view of things" (Willshire interview 1986). The league promoted Australian jazz and folk music and gave a start to the Graham Bell Jazz Band (Stein 1986: 22).

League leaders were motivated by a sense of vision of a new world. In this respect, they were similar to the evangelist youth reformers of the previous century. Wendy Lowenstein, a young journalist, who became editor of the Youth Voice in the late 1940s, described the vision of the EYL leadership:

> *You were going to change the world. You were the youthful vanguard of the Proletariat. It wasn't a very big organisation, but it had enormous ambition. It had enormous achievements. Camp Eureka: we built it with no money.*
>
> *Out of the new generation. Reborn on the battle for truth. You were going to rebuild the world. You had models in the socialist countries where all these wonderful things were happening, so we thought. The world was our oyster* (Lowenstein interview).

The EYL's ambition led to a call for young people to work in factories to raise the consciousness of the workers. It was an approach which had little chance of success:

> *I went to Eveready Batteries. The point was of course, this idea of sending the radical youth into the factories - I suppose it has some validity - but you can't send one single person aged 20 with no experience into one factory to organise the workers. Most of the people who went into the factories didn't stay because (workers were) mostly women and weren't even unionised.*
>
> *Then I went to Radio Corporation where I was foolish enough to go to a meeting to set up the union. I think I was the only one who joined. I was then transferred into a very large room on my own with a million boxes of aluminium strips that go into condensors and they had an oil spill and I had to wipe them all* (Lowenstein interview).

The Eureka Youth League, spurred on by the communist values of the 1930s, reached its peak in the 1940s. It provided support to an increasingly narrow range of young people during the persecutions of the 1950s and dwindled away in the 1960s.

Peace and justice in the workplace were prominent among the values of the Eureka Youth League. Peace, in the form of opposition to the Vietnam War and nuclear disarmament, brought young people into the limelight in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Young people's economic position had also changed since the Second World War, and they had become a recognised consumer group with significant spending power.

The Youth Council of Victoria and the rise of empowerment

During the 1970s, youth became increasingly subject to government attention, and the concept of youth work and services to young people, offered largely by non-government organisations, was replaced by the concepts of youth affairs or youth policy, the process of resource allocation and coordination. In this social climate, the significant value influencing youth organisations was neither the rural-Christian-family basis of the 19th century Try, nor the peace-justice basis of the depression YCL/EYL, but participation/ involvement/empowerment.

Participation by young people in youth programs did not emerge for the first time in the 1960s or 1970s. William Forster established a system of self-government giving a certain amount of responsibility to a committee of 13 which was regarded as an elite (Try Archives: c). The YWCA Girl Citizens of the 1920s offered a range of leadership and committee roles which were frequently rotated (YWCA 1925: 15). Whilst most youth organisations of the 1970s paid at least lip service to empowerment, it formed a significant basis for the work of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic).

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria was established in the early 1940s as the Associated Youth Committee of the National Fitness Council, and in its early days offered some small grants, coordination and training. In 1960, with the introduction of state National Fitness legislation, it separated as the Youth Council of Victoria. The change of name to Youth Affairs Council in 1980 was part of a deliberate attempt at youth involvement.

In 1972 the Victorian Government passed the Youth Sport and Recreation Act, which established a department of that name. The objects of the Act required government assistance in the "growth of the individuality and character" of the youth of Victoria, and it required the minister to "encourage and facilitate the participation and involvement of youth in community life" (YSR Act 1972: S3al). With the bureaucracy focussing more on sport and recreation, the minister, Brian Dixon, looked to his advisory council (the State Youth Council) and to the Youth Council of Victoria, for assistance with this duty.

From 1973 to 1980, the Department of Youth Sport and Recreation funded the Youth Council of Victoria to conduct a series of "consultations" with young people. These projects, later known as the Youth 2000 series, began with "Views of Society in the Year 2004" and were based on the belief that it was "possible to involve young people collaborating with adults in public policy formulation, implementation and evaluation". Youth 2004 was a week-long live-in conference for 350 young people aged 16-24 from all walks of life. Youth 2005 was an intensive small group planning process, involving 60 young people and adult facilitators. A model for state-wide youth involvement was developed though it was "politically and culturally unacceptable" (Shone & McDermott 1980: 26). Youth 2006 involved four rural and four urban workshops and a state-wide conference, in developing a locally based, state-linked process of consultation between young people and government. Youth 2007 looked at young people and local government and produced two short handbooks aimed at fostering youth involvement in this area (Youth Council of Victoria 1976a & b). Youth 2008 focussed on unemployment and was based in 18 local areas.

Youth 2009 was recognised as the final project from the time of its commencement. Many of the professional staff involved in the consultation series, particularly YCV associate director John Shone and director Michael Cusack, had experienced a succession of consultations. Youth 2009 set out to move from consultation to collaboration. It posed the question to "youth affairs politicians": will they replace funding for Youth Consultation by funding for Youth Action and Collaboration? (Shone & McDermott 1980: 26). The project was essentially an action research program about structures of youth participation. It became actively involved with junior councils (Echuca, Sunraysia, Benalla, Wodonga), youth action in school (Ballarat, Brunswick, Footscray, Warracknabeal), and

action against unemployment (Heidelberg). The project also set out to define the parameters of youth policy, and established a number of principles and a dynamic model closely tied to policies in the education and employment areas.

The Youth Council of Victoria's development of a theoretical model of youth participation in policy coincided and interacted with a number of similar initiatives in the youth arena. First, experiments with youth action in schools (eg. the Ballarat youth action teams and resource action groups), (Kent 1980) resulted in wider support for youth participation in schools through student representative councils and on school councils, particularly after the election of a state Labor government in 1982. Second, a national youth affairs conference held in Fremantle in 1979 set in train the establishment of a Youth Affairs Council of Australia (YACA). The National Youth Council of Australia (NYCA) was formed in 1960 to give young Australians the means of participating in international youth congresses. By the early 1970s, NYCA had placed age restrictions on delegates and had begun to adopt a political position on issues such as the Vietnam War. In 1975, 20 national youth organisations formed the Council of Australian Youth Organisations (CAYO), an effective breakaway by the adult dominated traditional agencies. This left NYCA to develop as a forum for young people (Ewen 1983: 43-4).

The Fremantle conference devised a structure to bring NYCA and CAYO together into a coordinated lobby with a forum of state youth affairs councils (NFSYAC: National Forum of State Youth Affairs Councils) and a forum of professional workers (NWWYF: Nationwide Workers with Youth Forum). This development was influenced by, and also encouraged, structural change within the Youth Council of Victoria (Michael Cusack was a significant contributor to Fremantle and shortly became director of NYCA, and in this capacity acted as midwife for the formation of YACA). YACVic emerged, also based on four forums: statewide youth organisations, workers with youth, young people and local youth councils. The outcome of Youth 2009 was a structural reorganisation to give young people a more effective role in the peak youth affairs coordinating body.

The avenues for youth participation in YACVic were the Young People's Forum and the Local Youth Councils Forum, both of which needed resources and support to be effective. Support was offered in the early 1980s: Jacqui

Mason held the office of director from 1981 to 1983. A youth worker of long experience, she operated from a similar value base to Michael Cusack. John Harris, youth development officer of YACVic, one of the body's principal resources for young people, was a passionate advocate of youth participation. "If youth participation is not on about power, then it is a sellout" he declared in the report of the youth participation workshop of the 1981 NWWYF National Conference (NWWYF Report 1981: 36).

Not all youth workers shared this view. Cusack stated that when the Youth 2000 idea was first mooted "a great deal of negative reaction erupted (mainly from professional youth workers)" (Cusack 1978). The influence of professional workers led to the restructure of YACVic in 1986 on the lines of individual membership and incorporating specific interest groups, such as the Youth Accommodation Coalition and Youth Development Workers Coalition.

YACVic continued to promote empowerment. In its 1986 Consultation Report (YACVic 1986) used extensively by the State Youth Policy Development Council in its own Future Directions report (YPDC 1986: 21), the idea was promoted of youth workers as partners with disadvantaged youth in the pursuit of a more equitable society (YPDC 1986: 8). Youth participation might be more effectively developed at the local level or using different structures to those used for adult decision making (YPDC 1986: 21). The YPDC itself determined that empowerment was closely related to access to information (1986: 58). Empowerment also became closely related to the idea of advocacy (1986: 8).

Joan Benjamin, 1989 chairperson of YACVic, in a paper presented to the South Australian Youth Affairs Conference in August 1989, identified three major themes influencing youth work for the last 100 years, which she termed enlightenment, empowerment and enterprise (Benjamin 1989). Enlightenment encompassed the ideas of child rescue and Christian family values such as those ascribed in this paper to Forster and Brown, as well as the EYL's attempts to improve employment conditions in factories.

Empowerment, Benjamin argued, was in response to the emerging issues of greater citizen participation and questioning of government authority worldwide. These ideas first surfaced during the 1960s, but during the 70s they

were embraced with almost evangelical fervour by most youth workers. The 80s has seen the institutionalisation of empowerment and advocacy through Government funding. Social justice policies indicate government intention to increase not only the quantity of participation, but the quality of it at all levels.

The rise of the empowerment idea was influenced by feminists and professional youth workers. Benjamin suggests that this will be superseded by enterprise culture based on economic rationalism and focussed on work, business, training and self help. Nevertheless, she concludes that enterprise-based youth policies could give economic and social power to young people through small work units where they can contribute to decision making and share in proceeds.

Conclusion

Benjamin's analysis highlights the changes in youth work values in relation to changes in social values over time. This paper argues that youth work has been a process of value rational action, that youth workers have acted in response to values and beliefs rather than to the expectation of results. William Forster, Max Brown, Audrey Blake, Wendy Lowenstein and Michael Cusack were all prompted by a social vision. Brown considered his work successful (one of his charges became a missionary), but he ignored the urge of many of his boys to continue an urban lifestyle. Lowenstein optimistically engaged in factory work, but saw the task as impossible. Cusack, Benjamin and many others maintained a belief in empowerment in spite of the evidence that many young people (and older people) maintain a healthy cynicism about participatory processes (such as involvement in school councils, junior councils or student councils), which can themselves be a method of control. Active participation in the allocation of small sums of money isolates people from questioning the fate of larger sums. The rise of empowerment structures during a period of increasing youth unemployment could be seen as a policy of diversion on the part of government. Youth workers did, and do, believe in its value for its own sake.

References

Advertiser. (1883). Cuttings in Try Archives.

Australian Woman's Sphere. (1900). In Goldstein papers, La Trobe Library, 1(1).

Benjamin, J. (1989). Out of the Sixties and into the Nineties. Youth Work: The Quantum Leap. Paper presented to the South Australian Youth Affairs Conference, August.

Blake, A. (1984). *A Proletarian Life*. Kibble Books, Malmsbury, Australia.

Brown, M. (1893-1900). *The Olinda Farm Diary*. Try Archives, LaTrobe Library MSS9910.

Butler, J. C. (1925). The Life of William Mark Forster the Boys' Friend. *Try Boys' Society Annual Report*, LaTrobe Library MSS9910.

Cardwell, M. (1986). Leader of the Australian delegation to the Second World Youth Congress, staff member YWCA, interviewed 7 July.

A Challenge to Australian Youth. (1938). Report of the First Australian Youth Congress held in Sydney, January, McLaren Collection, Ballieu Library, University of Melbourne.

Cusack, M. (1978). Consultation with Youth to the Year 2000. Paper presented to the ACOSS Conference, Sydney, May.

Ewen, J. (1983). Youth in Australia. A new role and a new deal for the 80s. Centre for Youth and Community Studies, Melbourne, Australia.

Forster, W. M. (1887). Report on the Opening of the New Hall at Toorak, 11 November, manuscript, Try Archives, LaTrobe Library MSS99210.

Goldstein, V. (1908). Diary 17 February, copies of Fawcett Society papers held by LaTrobe Library.

Herald. (1883-98). Cuttings from Try Archives.

Kent, G. (1980). Report on Youth Action Programs within the Ballarat Region, Ballarat Regional Transition Task Force.

Lowenstein, W. (1986). Former editor of Youth Voice and Eureka Youth League member. Now noted depression historian. Interviewed 11 February.

Mac's Mince 1935-6, University of Melbourne Archives, Vol. 1, No. 4.

Maunders, D. (1987). Keeping them off the Streets, Youth Organisations as Instruments of Hegemony. PhD Thesis, LaTrobe University.

Maunders, D. & Jaggs, D. *n.d.* Explanations and commentaries on the Olinda Farm Diary.

Nationwide Workers with Youth Forum (NWYF). 1981. National Conference Report.

Observer. (1892). 31 March.

Sands & McDougall's. (1883). Melbourne Directory, Melbourne, p. 9.

Shone, J. & McDermott, J. (1980). Local Youth Policy Development. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Spectator. (1893). 31 March.

Standard. (1891). Cutting in Try Archives.

Stein, H. (1986). If these walls could only speak. *Jazz*, Summer/Autumn.

Try Archives, (a) Society Histories LaTrobe Library MSS9910 Box 5. (b) Minutes of Monday Night Meetings, 5 March 1892,30 April 1894, 11 February 1895, 29 April 1902. (c)Annual Report 1889, p.4. LaTrobe Library MSS9910.

Weber, M. (1968). *Economy and Society*. University of California Press, Berkeley, US.

Willshire, M. (1986). Former Eureka Youth League member, interviewed 8 April.

Young Communist International, Sixth Congress, 'Extracts from the Report of Comrade Woolf', October, paper held by Mrs Ruth Crowe, North Melbourne.

Young Women's Christian Association of Australia and New Zealand (YWCA). (1925). The Girl Citizens' Movement of Australasia. Document in personal collection of Mrs E Garnett, Ascot Vale.

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic). (1986). Report on the Consultation on the Development of Youth Services in Victoria, Melbourne.

Youth Council of Victoria. (1976a). Local Government for Beginners, Melbourne.

Youth Council of Victoria. (1976b). Action at the Local Level, Melbourne.

Youth Policy Development Council (YPDC). (1986). Future Directions for Youth Services and the Youth Policy Sector, Melbourne.

Youth Sport and Recreation Act (YSR). (1972). No. 8344.

First published in Youth Studies, v.9, n.2, pp.42-51, 1990, and reproduced with permission.

Chapter 4

Youth work: The problem of values

Tim Corney

Research suggests that there are specific value frameworks and practices that currently underpin the university training and education of youth workers, and that this has ramifications for TAFE-level training and the professionalisation of youth workers.

The notion of a particular set of values underpinning both the education and training of youth workers and their practice, has long been of interest to those working in the youth sector. For instance the historical work of Irving, Maunders and Sherington (1995) shows clear connections between the value-driven activities of organisations and institutions such as the church, the state and political organisations, and that of Australian youth work practice. The research of Maunders (1990) also shows these connections but goes further not only to draw a connection between values and youth agencies, but also to suggest that youth workers themselves are positively motivated by values.

Maunders' work (1990: 48) draws on the earlier work of Max Weber (1964) to show that youth work is driven by a process of "value rational action" and that "youth workers … acted in response to values and beliefs rather than to the expectation of results". Concurring with Maunders, the recent work of Phillips, Stacey and Milner (2001) concludes that it is not possible to act objectively or remove personal values from youth work, and that personal values will influence and determine the way people work in the human services sector.

Fook, Ryan and Hawkins (2000) suggest that professional practice frameworks in the "helping" professions, such as youth work, are primarily determined in terms of the practitioners' adherence to values based "meaning systems" and that a professional practitioner is a person who:

> *... acts from a particular knowledge and value stance through the medium of a particular job ... In this sense the professional works from broader meaning systems, but is able to transfer these meaning systems between contexts* (Fook, Ryan & Hawkins 2000: 243-44).

It is clear to Fook, Ryan and Hawkins that professional practice is not enacted in a meaning vacuum, but prefaced on underpinning knowledge and experience. They illustrate this point by drawing on the critical work of Freire (1972) to the banking approach in education, pointing out the fact that in the context of human service work neither the practitioner nor the client are empty vessels, but that "... their thinking has been shaped by prior personal experience" (Fook, Ryan & Hawkins 2000: 243-44).

They go on to determine that one of the key objectives for professional practice in the human services is the Freireian notion of "praxis". That is to say that the implementation of the theory (values), action and reflection continuum is integral to the professional practice process. This is described by Fook, Ryan and Hawkins (2000: 201) as the:

> *... development of an ability to articulate a value base and framework for deciding priorities in a particular situation, that is, to translate broad mission statements of values and ideals into specific contextual priorities .*

Youth work typologies

Neville Knight (1991: 51-55) also suggests values are at play within youth work. Building on Maunders' (1990) findings, he suggests a Weberian typology for youth work that falls into two broad categories. Knight (1991) describes these categories as either "pioneering" or "settling". The "pioneering" category being based on Weber's (1964) "charismatic leader", and the "settler" category being based on Weber's "traditional" and "bureaucratic" typologies.

Cooper and White (1994: 30-35) have also developed a series of typologies for youth work. However, they suggest that the context in which youth work takes place, as well as the youth worker's political and ideological values, will impinge on and influence the type of youth work that a youth worker will engage in. They go on to suggest that there are six value-laden "models" of youth work. They describe these models as "treatment", "reform", "advocacy (non-radical)", "advocacy (radical)", "empowerment (non-radical)", and "empowerment (radical)".

Social justice values and youth work

In more recent times, youth workers have suggested that social justice is the primary motivating value of youth work. Mary Crooks (1992), the former chairperson of the Social Justice Consultative Council of Victoria, suggested in her address to the State youth workers' conference held in Adelaide 1992 that "social justice" is the core value of youth work. As such, she suggested that youth work had moved from a "… middle-class welfare and recreation ideology that was essentially paternalistic in practice … focused on individuals and ignored structures and institutions" to a form of practice that was motivated by "… advocacy and the pursuit of fairness and justice" (Crooks 1992: 20).

Brown (1992) develops the social justice theme further by suggesting that youth workers should be initiators of structural social change, dealing not just with the symptoms but also with the causes of social conflict. He further suggests that youth work rejects victim blaming and amusement practice paradigms, and supports both individual and collective consciousness raising and direct action to change unjust social structures.

However, none of the recent commentators on the values underpinning youth work practice have articulated a primary philosophical or political source to which the "social justice" ideal pertains. Recent studies of Australian youth workers and youth work education, such as the National Youth Work Training Project (NYWTP) (1997) and Houston and Pelavaniuc (1998), have found values such as social justice at play. However, they have been inconclusive in their definitions of values, the influence of values and the specific ideological, philosophical or religious worldviews from which these values stem.

Given the previous research, it was assumed that youth workers had at some point early on in their career been exposed, and subscribed, to a set of values that motivated them and made sense of their professional vocation. However, the question of what was the primary source of the values that drove the value rational action of youth workers, and who was involved in the process of imparting values, particularly in the education and training of youth workers, appeared to be important but under-researched issues in the youth sector.

The rise of the National Training Reform Agenda

The introduction of the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA) (Smith & Keating 1997) saw the introduction of so-called value neutral competencies (Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project (CSICMP) 1992a, 1992b; Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) 1996) and a behaviourist form of competency-based training (CBT) (Schofield 2001; Mounier 2001) imposed on those training in the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system for a career in youth work.

Critics of the NTRA and, in particular, CBT, suggest that it is driven by behaviourism (Schofield 2001; Mounier 2001). Robertson (1985: 20) suggests that behaviourism is limited to what can be observed "externally" and "objectively". He suggests that the ideology of the learner cannot be studied as this is related to the matter of "subjectivity". Abercrombie, Hill and Turner (1988: 19) concur, suggesting that "behaviourism disregards subjective human activities such as consciousness, intention and meaning". They go on to suggest that behaviourism is antithetical to Weberian "value rational action" as Weber (1964) sees action defined in terms of meaningfulness and the values and worldviews that give actions their meaning (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner 1988: 3).

As the NTRA process unfolded, grass roots youth workers and youth work educators became concerned that the values underpinning and driving professional youth work might be lost from the youth work training process as a direct result of the introduction of a behaviourist form of youth worker training (Flowers 1996; Broadbent 1998). This led to the question that if values were fundamental to defining professional youth work (Maunders 1990; NYWTP 1997) then what exactly were those values? Furthermore, if the application of the NTRA process in the youth work sector was disregarding the current and historical values driving professional youth work and professional youth work education, then what would be the possible consequences of those values being excluded from the training process?

To examine these questions in detail, research needed to be carried out to determine the historical, sector-wide values and to determine the current values underpinning and driving the education, training and practice of professional youth work in Australia. This in essence was the impetus for the research project.

Methodology

To achieve the aims of discovering and describing what values and subsequent worldviews underpin current degree level youth work courses in Australia, the research drew on qualitative methodology and employed analytical approaches of an interpretative inquiry.

Qualitative method – an interpretative, case study approach

A qualitative approach has a variety of meanings; however, in its simplest form, it may be regarded as a research method that uses words rather than numbers to give form to its data (Connole, Smith & Wiseman 1993: 106). As such, the interpretative approach gives priority to discovering what is taking place according to the interpretations of the research participants. As Connole, Smith and Wiseman (1993: 105) suggest:

> *... the interpretative approach places a priority on searching for and interpreting what is happening and being done according to the interpretations of the participants in the activities being studied.*

Central to the interpretative approach is the method of data presentation. Connole, Smith and Wiseman (1993: 105) suggest that it is in essence making the responses, interpretations and descriptions of the participants intelligible to people through the preparation of interpretative accounts and then reflecting and acting on these accounts. This description summarises the desired outcomes of the current research.

Case studies

The research used what Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe as "purposeful case study interviews" to gather initial data. The case study is not a clearly defined methodological approach per se but rather it is a "choice of objects to be studied". Guba and Lincoln (1981) go on to describe a case study as a "snapshot of reality" that portrays the complexities of a situation. Yin (1994: 4) in concert with Wadsworth (1997: 57) has suggested that the case study's unique attributes are its flexibility and ability to deal with a variety of evidence such as documents, interviews and observations. As such, this research has dealt with various sources of data, including participant case study interviews, document searches and literature reviews.

The case study sites

The number of sites and their geographical location was determined on the basis that they were the only universities known to the researcher to be offering degree level training (specifically in youth work) at the time of investigation. They were: the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology; Edith Cowan University; The University of Western Sydney; and Victoria University of Technology.

At the beginning of this project the Australian Catholic University (ACU), at the St Patrick campus in Melbourne, was in the initial stages of developing a youth studies stream within the Bachelor of Social Science degree. However, as the ACU was still in the start-up phase and a full three-year cohort was yet to complete the course, there were insufficient numbers across the three year-levels to include the ACU as a case study site.

The case interview subjects

Case study interview participants were selected according to a strategy of opportunistic sampling, this is to say that participants volunteered to participate on the basis of their availability at that time (Guba & Lincoln 1981). The case study interview participants were students, teachers and curriculum developers currently involved in an Australian university youth work course. Subjects were recruited, at their own volition, through the relevant university departments. None of the participants were placed in a vulnerable or dependent relationship to the research investigator. All participants were over the age of 18 years at the time of the investigation. All participants were volunteers and were not coerced or hand chosen.

The case interviews

Focus group interviews of approximately six or more students, from each of the case site's three academic program levels, were conducted across each of the four university case sites, for a total of approximately 18 undergraduate youth work students per site. The participants were representative of age, gender and ethnicity within the case site. The total number of undergraduate youth work students interviewed across all four sites was 72 students.

Interviews were conducted with two or more lecturers teaching at each of the three academic year levels, and one or more curriculum developers from within

the youth work departments of the four university case sites, for a total of 12 lecturers and curriculum developers. Case participants were sourced with the permission of the relevant head of department and teaching staff.

The case interview process

The interviews and sourcing of curriculum data were carried out over two consecutive university semesters with participants responding and dialoguing with set questions in a semi-structured focus-group-style interview format. Lecturers, curriculum developers and student participant categories were interviewed separately. This format was consistent with the natural setting of the classroom, and was a format that both students and staff felt comfortable with. The format was consistent with a qualitative questioning process as described by Neville, Willis and Edwards (1994).

An open-ended conversational process of questioning was used within the interview process, beginning with set questions and then moving to a more abstract level as the interview progressed and as data was identified and fed back to the respondent. Guba and Lincoln (1981) describe this type of interview process as the "funnel sequence" that allows for open-ended responses, participant interaction, dialogue and analysis within the interview.

Formulation of the interview questions

In regard to the framing of case study questions, Yin (1994: 1) suggests that "what"-type questions point to a case study with descriptive findings and "why"-type questions point to an exploratory study, and that both are possible within the one case study. As such, this research was interested in formulating both descriptive and exploratory questions.

The following are examples of questions that were used for generating focus group dialogue:

- What do you understand values to be?
- Where do values come from?
- What sort of values have you experienced in the youth work course?
- Why do you think values may be present in the course?
- To what body of knowledge, worldview or belief system do you think youth work values pertain?

Case data analysis and codification

Lincoln and Guba (1985: 202-03) suggest that qualitative analysis is inductive. That is to say that qualitative research is taken from the stage of collection of initial data or "raw units of information" to the stage of coding or "putting into categories" that may then suggest a theory or "working hypothesis" that can then be further explored, and so on. As such, this research used an inductive approach, analysing and classifying data into categories from the case report transcripts and field journal notes. Participant verbatim responses as given by students, lecturers, and curriculum developers, and as they appeared as overt statements in curriculum or course materials, were used to form value categories and classifications.

For example, students at all year levels were animated and detailed in their responses, proffering a perspective that their courses were politically "left of centre" and focused on "social justice". They described the bias as broadly "left wing" and "socialist". Students also elaborated on the notion of "youth" as a socio-political category, representing social and economic marginalisation.

The following are examples of student verbatim responses:

> *… written material, information that teachers recommend, everything, they all have a particular bias. It definitely comes through in both the course work and just in the whole course. It's definitely left wing* (Student).
>
> *There's a perspective in the course of youth, and young people as being the marginalised. They are the poor, the disadvantaged. This perspective comes from a socioeconomic ideology of the socialist parties* (Student).
>
> *I think social justice that's the biggest thing. The biggest thing that's come out in the course, there's been almost like a red line through all of our subjects* (Student).

Miles and Huberman (1994) concur with Guba and Lincoln (1981), but go further, suggesting analysis beyond the classifying or clustering of themes. They suggest the tabulation of themes and patterns into contrasting diagrammatic comparisons (Miles & Huberman 1994: 254). As such, the classifications of this research were examined using frequency, regularity or the lack thereof,

as an analysis classification to sort and categorise verbatim responses (such as those illustrated above) into patterns of repetition. The pattern classifications that appeared within the individual cases were then compared across the four cases. The outcomes of these comparisons were then tabulated into diagrammatic tables that visually expressed the comparisons. These comparisons form the nucleus of the research findings and inform the recommendations.

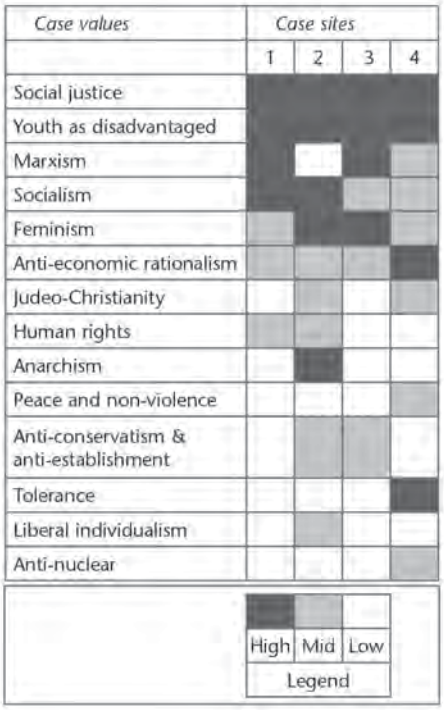

Table 1: Political, ideological and philosophical worldviews

Results and case comparisons

The case study reports are presented university by university within Tables 1 and 2 under broad subheadings denoting particular "worldviews" and "strategic practice values" as found in the case sites. The category of "worldview" or *wissenschaft* refers to broad value sets that represent particular ideological, religious or political beliefs (Robertson 1985; Abercrombie, Hill & Turner 1988) (see Table 1). The category of "strategic practice values" refers to those values that, when applied in the context of youth work practice, help to facilitate or bring about the broader political or ideological worldviews undergirding professional practice (see Table 2).

In locating and describing the underlying values and worldviews, the researcher found that all four case studies exhibited a number of similar and complimentary values and values sets, as well as case-distinct values (Table 1). Some of the values and worldviews were unique to that particular case, whereas others were similar or the same as those of the other cases. The values common to all four cases resonated strongly with those found in the youth work literature (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973; Booton & Dearling 1980; Ewen 1981; Smith 1988; Benjamin 1989; Maunders 1990; Brown 1992; Crooks 1992; CYP 1997;

Bessant, Sercombe & Watts 1998; Cohen & Ainley 2000; Webber 2000; Mizen 2002).

Social justice values

In all case studies, students' strong commitment to their courses was underpinned by values belonging to a particular notion of social justice. The value frameworks suggested for either describing or achieving social justice were diverse. However, it was clear that in all four cases, social justice was regarded as a primary and foundational value that motivated the practice of youth work. This is consistent with the literature: as Crooks (1992: 20) clearly states, "social justice is the core value of youth work".

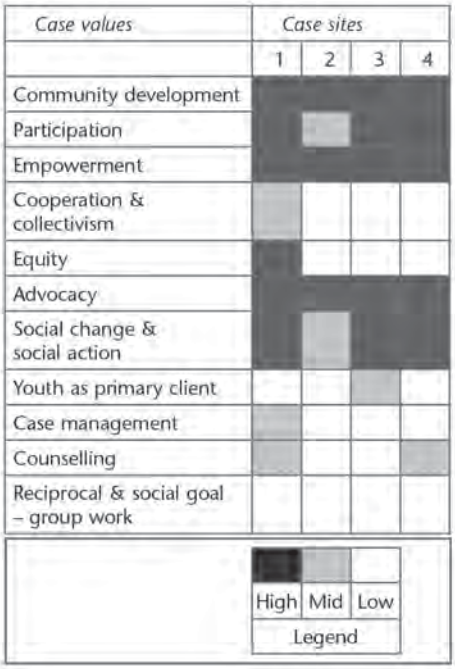

Table 2: Strategic practice values

All four case studies appear to favour a politically left-of-centre framework for the analysis of social justice. This appears to be based on a broad left political, ideological or philosophical economic and social critique. This is consistent with the collective case definition of the concept of youth as disadvantaged, and is again consistent with the youth work literature cited above.

Social justice and youth as disadvantaged

All four cases linked the idea of social justice to a particular conceptualisation of the notion of youth, defining youth as socially, economically and politically disadvantaged and suffering particular inequalities. This is strongly supported by a chorus of voices from the literature, Benjamin (1989), Crooks (1992) and Brown (1992) to name but a few.

It is clear that this concept of youth as a disadvantaged and socially marginalised group in society fuels the social justice imperatives undergirding the cases' view of youth work. The limitations of the research did not allow for the further

exploration of the concept of youth as socially marginalised and the implications for youth work practice, though further research is recommended in this area to determine the boundaries of youth work practice.

Political values and social change

The political values of all four cases are clearly presented as favouring a structural view of social inequality, and declare a goal of preparing students to advocate for social justice via the empowerment and inclusion of young people in a process of social action and social change. The process by which social action is taken and social change is engendered is also based on a broad left political view. This is a view that encompasses the full spectrum of possibilities for social action from pragmatic reform to radical revolution, and is in concert with the work of Maunders (1990), Brown (1992) and Crooks (1992).

Particular political values

The particular case values and worldviews pertaining to a broad left view of social justice were more diverse than the common commitment to social justice across the cases. In general terms, all cases expressed some level of bias towards a Marxist/socialist/feminist analysis of social justice issues. However, individual cases also strongly expressed other left-of-centre value frameworks peculiar to that case.

Feminism was expressed strongly as an underpinning value by two of the case sites and relatively strongly by the others, as was the expression of anti-economic rationalism. However, secondary values and particular interpretations of the value frameworks were also evidenced, and common values were not always emphasised to the same degree across cases. Within the commonalities there was overlap with other value frameworks, thus creating a shaded or multi-layered effect. For example, feminism and social justice were interpreted broadly across the four cases. The different cases included different and/or particular perspectives, such as anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-elitism, anti-ethnocentrism and anti-heterosexual values within the context of defining, for example, a feminist view of social justice.

Other left-of-centre value frameworks were expressed strongly but varied by individual cases. Case site 2 expressed strong support for frameworks such as anarchism and, to a lesser degree, liberal humanism. Case site 4 expressed strong

support for tolerance of minority groups and Ghandian values of peace and non-violence along with relatively strong anti-nuclear values. These were as strongly represented in one or more individual cases as the Marxist/socialist/feminist values were expressed across the whole.

Interestingly, Judeo-Christianity as a value system was also expressed relatively strongly across two sites. This was, however, a very general expression and non-sectarian in nature. It could also be construed to correspond with both the dominant anti-state and anti-institutional tenets of anarchism, and the tolerance, peace and non-violence values of each of the individual cases.

All these value paradigms generally correspond with Brown's (1992) thoughts that a variety of broad left perspectives inform the majority of frameworks by which youth workers may achieve the empowerment of young people. This also accords with the views of Maunders (1990) and Irving, Maunders and Sherington (1995) that although the Australian youth sector has historically had a relatively stable mix of traditional Marxism/socialism and Evangelical Christianity, both have now been overlaid with a variety of derivative values from the New Left. The general political values expressed across the cases resonate strongly with recent international calls for a return to politics within the field of youth studies (Cohen & Ainley 2000) and specifically to a Marxist critique (Mizen 2002).

It can be suggested, therefore, that Australian youth work education regards social justice as a primary and foundational value that motivates and informs the practice of youth work. It can also be suggested that Australian youth work education clearly favours a left-wing framework for the analysis of social justice, particularly the ideological and political frameworks of socialism, Marxism and feminism and the related values of anti-economic rationalism.

It can also be suggested that a number of minor, but significant, value paradigms underpin Australian youth work education. They are the value frameworks of anarchism, Judeo-Christianity, tolerance and Ghandian peace and non-violence.

Youth work practice values – case comparison

The category of strategic practice values refers generally to those values which, when applied in the context of youth work practice, help to facilitate or bring

about the broader political or ideological worldviews undergirding professional youth work practice.

All cases were concerned with the values underpinning the practice of youth work and described various practice values (Table 2). Most of the values common to the four cases could be best described under the heading of community development or the related derivative practices of reciprocal and social goal forms of group work, or social change/action as defined by the work of Bessant, Sercombe and Watts (1998).

However, there were other values expressed by particular cases that could not be construed as pertaining to community development or emancipatory forms of group work. All cases touched on, or specifically taught, the practices of counselling, case management and therapeutic group work within their curriculum. These frameworks were not, however, referred to specifically by case participants as primary practice frameworks for youth work.

Most sites appeared to take either a pragmatic view of the practices of case management and counselling, or were hostile to them, as in the case of site 3. The pragmatic response appeared to be that youth workers needed to be exposed to these practice frameworks in order to enable them to gain employment as a youth worker, rather than seeing them as foundational to professional youth work practice. Case site 1 suggested that they were now teaching "case management", for example, where they had not done so in the past.

This appears to be consistent with the literature (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995), and the view of all cases that the policies of economic rationalism, when applied to youth work, see youth workers as case managers and counsellors working within a managerialist and blame-the-victim values framework that is antithetical to the primary political and ideological values of professional youth work. The literature suggests that this, in turn, leads to a de-professionalising of youth work via the redefinition of primary values and practices.

All four cases clearly identified a commitment to community development as the primary framework for professional youth work practice and/or the related community development practice values, such as empowerment, participation,

advocacy or social action. This corresponds with the findings of the National Consultation Report (NYWTP 1997) and with the strength of both the Australian and international literature (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973; Booton & Dearling 1980; Ewen 1981; Commonwealth Youth Programme South Pacific Centre 1997; Bessant, Sercombe & Watts 1998; Webber 2000).

Observations

The research finds that values are foundational to youth work and youth worker education. This finding is consistent with the literature (Maunders 1990; NYWTP 1997; Phillips, Stacey & Milner 2001). However, this finding also suggests that there may be problems associated with the implementation of the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA) in the youth sector and, in particular, with the Community Services Industry Training Advisory Board (ITAB) Nationally Endorsed Youth Work Competencies, Competency Based Training Packages and Learning Resources.

The Community Services Training Packages and the problem of values

The implementation of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) in the higher education sector is fraught with difficulties, if the TAFE sector competencies are considered value neutral (CSICMP 1992a, 1992b; ANTA 1996), or if the certificate and diploma-level competencies do not reflect the broad political and ideological value commitments discovered to be at work within degree-level youth work.

There are also questions about the ability of the community services training packages to deliver "professional" youth work graduates to the sector, that is, youth work graduates who can articulate and practice the value frameworks that currently undergird a general consensus concerning professional youth work practice.

If the TAFE-level community services training packages and competencies are not value neutral but are in fact driven by values, then what are those values? And are those values compatible with current degree course values and current consensus within the sector and higher education regarding the values that should underpin professional youth work education and practice?

Ascertaining the specific values underpinning the NTRA and the TAFE-level Community Services Diploma (Youth Work) was not a focus of this research and, as such, is a limitation of this study. However, a recommendation of this research is a further exploration of the NTRA process and the Community Services (Youth Work) Training Packages and Learning Resources to determine their underpinning values in spite of their claim to neutrality.

Class and the National Training Reform Agenda – training is not education

It could be argued that the NTRA has created a two-tiered class system of education versus training. As Smith and Keating (1997) have pointed out, if Competency Based Training (CBT) is good enough for the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system, it must also be good enough for higher education. Chappell, Gonczi and Hager (1995) echo this in their criticism of CBT. They suggest that the NTRA has created an educational class system, with a privileged class of people educated in the universities for the professions, and a lower class of people trained in the TAFE system like subordinates to be led by the professions.

If this is the case, will the application of the NTRA in the youth and community services sector create a class system of youth workers? And how does this harmonise with the foundational Marxist, socialist and feminist values of professional youth work that, by definition, challenge these assumptions?

It could be argued that this class system is further entrenched via the exorcising of youth work values from the community services endorsed youth work competencies and training packages (CSICMP 1992a, 1992b; ANTA 1996) via a behaviourist form of so-called 'values neutral' CBT. It appears to be more than ironic that the very values that would critique the inequitable outcomes for youth workers trained under the NTRA's behaviourist model (Schofield 2001; Mounier 2001) are potentially missing. Further research regarding the inequitable outcomes of a two-tiered approach to youth worker training is recommended.

Value rational action and youth work

Abercrombie, Hill and Turner (1988: 19) suggest that behaviourism is antithetical to Weberian "value rational action", as Weber sees action defined in terms of meaningfulness, and that values give actions their meaning (3). This suggests

that a behaviourist form of CBT that measures actions, regardless of the values that give them meaning, will specifically undermine the "meaningful action" of youth work. Both Maunders (1990) and Knight (1991) have found that youth work is motivated by Weberian "value rational action". This would appear to suggest that a behaviourist form of CBT would be incompatible with the training of youth workers. As such, this has profound implications for the validity of the community services youth work training packages and their delivery within the TAFE system as a legitimate form of youth work training.

In summarising, Brown (1992: 14) of the Youth Sector Training Council of the Northern Territory suggests that ideological values are vital for providing meaning for youth work practice. He suggests that using youth work skills without a value framework to guide them can, in fact, be dangerous. The community services youth work training packages and endorsed competencies may in fact be imparting youth work skills to students without them knowing what they are trying to achieve or why. Further research is needed to assess the potential damage of behaviourist pedagogy to youth work training and practice.

Recommendations

Values charter

Given that it appears that youth work practice and education are value driven, it is recommended that the youth affairs sector undertake the construction of an agreed "values charter" that facilitates a values consensus in the sector for both youth workers and those who teach youth work. It is envisaged that the "values charter" would describe a consensus about what is "good" youth work and what constitutes appropriate "value frameworks" for determining and implementing "good" youth work practice. This would enable the sector to meet the challenge laid out by Fook, Ryan and Hawkins (2000), that for youth work to be considered a professional form of human service work, an agreed set of values is essential.

Values subjects

In order to enable students to openly study and critique particular value traditions within the youth affairs sector, and to allow lecturers and students to safely reveal their value bias, it is recommended that a specific "values" subject be included in all youth work course curricula. The subject could be similar to the first-year introductory subject taught in the Edith Cowan University youth work

course entitled "Ideologies and youth work". Such a subject could facilitate a process which allows students to make independent judgments about values, and openly examine, critique, understand and determine for themselves the merit of particular value frameworks. This process, while modelling the empower-ment, participation and tolerance values championed by youth work courses, would enable values teaching to become learning rather than indoctrination (Scheffler 1965).

Further research

Further research is recommended to investigate the extent to which behaviourist pedagogy underpins the Community Services Diploma (Youth Work) nationally endorsed training packages and learning resources. In addition, research is recommended into the ramifications of the continued use of the package for the youth work sector in general and, more specifically, the possible changes to the essence of Australian youth work, its nature, professional practice, certification, and recognition of skills which may occur as a result of the continued use of the package.

Conclusion

In answering the primary research question, this study found that there is strong evidence of both underlying and overt values and value frameworks operating in four of the current degree-level youth work courses in Australia.

This study has also found evidence to suggest that implicit and explicit values define the very notion of youth work, and underpin both the education and the professional practice of youth workers.

This research also suggests that the discovery of values frameworks underpinning the education and practice of youth workers will have ramifications for the application of the Community Services Diploma (Youth Work) nationally endorsed training packages and, ultimately, the concept of youth work as a professional form of human service work.

Editor's Note

The above article called for a sector wide agreed 'values charter' and for the inclusion of specific 'values subjects' in the university training courses. It is interesting to note that since the time of writing, the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, after consultation with the youth sector, published a values based Code of Ethical Practice (2007) for youth workers. Significantly, the code was located within a human rights framework of practice and acknowledged the key values of social justice, empowerment and participation for young people. The universities also followed the YACVic lead with the inclusion of subjects in youth work training courses specifically focussed on the values based Code of Ethical Practice (for more details on the Code of Ethical Practice see Chapters 1 & 9).

References

Abercrombie, N. Hill, S. & Turner, B. (1988). *Dictionary of sociology*. Penguin, Ringwood, Australia.

Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). (1996). *Youth sector national competency standards*, Community Services and Health Training Australia Ltd, Sydney.

Benjamin, J. (1989). Out of the sixties and into the nineties. Youth work: The quantum leap. South Australian Youth Affairs Conference Report, South Australian Youth Affairs Council, South Australia.

Bessant, J., Sercombe, H. & Watts R. (1998). *Youth studies: An Australian perspective*. Longman, Australia.

Broadbent, R. (1998). *The community services training package – is it good for industry?*, Institute for Youth, Education and Community, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia.

Booton, F. & Dearling, A. (Eds). (1980). *The 1980s and beyond*. NYB, Warwickshire, UK.

Brown, C. (1992). Ideology and ethics in youth work practice. *Youth Issues Forum*, Spring, pp.14-19.

Chappell, C., Gonczi, A. & Hager, P. (1995). Competency based training. In G. Foley (Ed.) *Understanding adult education and training*. Allen & Unwin, Australia.

Cohen, P. & Ainley, P. (2000). In the country of the blind? Youth studies and cultural studies in Britain. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 3(1), pp.79-95.

Commonwealth Youth Programme South Pacific Centre. (1997). *Human resources development working paper 6A*, Regional Advisory Board Meeting, Honiara, Solomon Islands.

Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project (CSICMP). (1992a). *Setting a policy framework for formulating competency standards in the community services industry: Issues*, discussion paper no.1, February.

Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project (CSICMP). (1992b). *Setting a policy framework for formulating competency standards in the community services industry: Issues*, discussion paper no.2, August.

Connole, H., Smith, B. & Wiseman, R. (1993). *Issues and methods in research*. Deakin University, Geelong, Australia.

Cooper, T. & White, R. (1994). Models of youth work intervention. *Youth Studies Australia*, 13(4), pp.30-35.

Crooks, M. (1992). Social justice: Core value of youth work. *Youth Issues Forum*, Spring, pp.20-24.

Ewen, J. (1981). *The education and training of youth workers in Australia*. Office of Youth Affairs, Canberra, Australia.

Flowers, R. (1996). Can competency assessment support struggles for community development and self determination? Address given to a conference: Assessing Student Achievement, Auckland Institute of Technology, NZ.

Fook, J., Ryan, M. & Hawkins, L. (2000). *Professional expertise, practice theory and education for working in uncertainty*. Whiting and Birch, London, UK.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Sheed and Ward, London, UK.

Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1981). *Effective evaluation*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, USA.

Hamilton-Smith, E. & Brownell, D. (1973). *Youth workers and their education*. Youth Workers' Association, Melbourne, Australia.

Houston, W. & Pelavaniuc, P. (1998). Studying to be a youth worker. *Youth Studies Australia*, 17(2), pp.29-35.

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Knight, N. (1991). "Pioneering" and "settling" activities of youth workers. *Bulletin of the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies*, 10(2), pp.51-55.

Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage, California, US.

Maunders, D. (1990). Youth work as a response to social values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 9(2), pp.42-50.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, US.

Mizen, P. (2002). Putting the politics back into youth studies. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 5(1), pp.5-20.

Mounier, A. (2001). *The three logics of skills in French literature*. NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training, Australia.

National Youth Work Training Project (NYWTP). (1997). *National Consultation Report*, Curriculum Development and Research Unit, Victoria University of Technology.

Neville, B., Willis, P. & Edwards, M. (1994). *Qualitative research in adult education*, Centre for Research in Education and Work, University of South Australia, SA.

Philips, T., Stacey, K. & Milner, J. (2001). You're a peer what? *Youth Studies Australia*, 20(4), pp.40-47.

Robertson, D. (1985). *Dictionary of politics*. Penguin, Victoria, Australia.

Scheffler, I. (1965). Philosophical models of teaching. *Harvard Education Review*, 35(3), pp.131-32.

Schofield, K. (2001). *Vocational education and training – lessons learned*, Education For Work Coalition conference paper, IYEC, Victoria University, VIC.

Smith, E. & Keating, K. (1997). *Making sense of training reform and competency based training*. Social Science Press, Wentworth Falls, Australia.

Smith, M. (1988). *Developing youth work: Informal education, mutual aid and popular practice*. Open University Press, Milton Keynes, Australia.

Wadsworth, Y. (1997). *Do it yourself social research*, 2nd ed. Allen and Unwin, Australia.

Weber, M. (1964). *The theory of social and economic organisation*. The Free Press, New York, US.

Webber, R. (2000). Field education practices in youth studies courses in England, USA & Canada. *Youth Studies Australia*, 19(1), pp.31-37.

Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods*, 2nd ed. Applied Social Research Methods Series, v.5, London.

First published in Youth Studies Australia v.23, n.4, pp. 11-19, 2004, and reproduced with permission.

Chapter 5

Participation and empowerment: Is youth work a form of community development?

Tim Corney

In the youth and community sector the debate about the place of emancipatory practice frameworks such as 'empowerment' and 'participation' to both youth work and community work is ongoing, as is the debate about the relationship of 'youth work' to the practice of 'community development'. However, recent research exploring the values, ideology and practice frameworks underpinning the training and preparation of professional youth workers suggests that youth work is firmly rooted in the theory and practice of community development.

Introduction

The question of whether or not youth work is a valid form of community development work is not new (Hamilton-Smith and Brownell 1973; Smith 1988), and the debate about the relationship of youth work practice values such as 'empowerment' and 'participation' to that of community development has been a lengthy one. However, recent research exploring the values, ideology and practice frameworks underpinning the training and preparation of professional youth workers would suggest that youth work training and practice are firmly rooted in the theory of community development.

Although in recent times youth work has been seen as having a progressive and alternative image, this has not always been the case (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995). Youth work has had various historical associations and has been used at different times as a kind of 'Pied Piper' to further the conservative and radical ideological and political ends of particular organisations. For example, the co-opting of youth work by nationalistic political organisations, with uniformed and militaristic youth wings, is well documented (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995). Youth work has also had a long association with both church- and state-

sponsored welfare institutions and juvenile reform programs. This has meant that radical and emancipatory forms of youth work have often been tarred with the brush of welfarism (Maunders 1989; Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995).

However, there is evidence of a strong alternative tradition of youth work associated with, and underpinned by, progressive political and social perspectives. Irving, Maunders and Sherington (1995) outline the historical importance of youth work to left-wing politics in the 1930s and 40s, found in organisations like the Eureka Youth League, and again in the 1960s and 70s, particularly in the Civil Rights and Peace Movements of the New Left.

This has meant that historically there have been various forms of youth work. As such, Cooper and White (1994) developed a series of typologies for youth work that outline the various types or practice frameworks that youth workers may adopt. They suggest six 'models' of youth work: treatment, reform, two types of advocacy (non-radical and radical), and two types of empowerment (non-radical and radical). These models tend to reflect the full spectrum of political possibilities (Cooper & White 1994).

Irving, Maunders and Sherington (1995) argue convincingly that the New Left youth movements of the 1960s and 70s were different from earlier progressive movements in that they were essentially run by young people, rather than adults. This, they suggest, redefined youth work terms such as 'participation' and 'empowerment' to mean work that is (or should be) owned, controlled or led by young people. In addition they suggest that these terms became synonymous with youth policy in the 1980s and 90s and influenced a whole generation of youth work practitioners.

English youth work educator Mark Smith (1988) suggests that underlying the practice frameworks or 'typologies' of youth work are two apposing themes, those of either "education or amusement/welfare". Smith asserts that youth workers who align themselves with the 'educational theme' practise a form of youth work that is quite distinct from the traditional 'amusement/welfare' model. He suggests that the educational model " … entails a different relationship between practitioner and young people than that which usually exists within schools or, indeed within much (entertainment) youth work" (1988: 119).
Smith adds that the " … educational form of youth work is more akin to the

relationships of a community worker to a neighbourhood group". As such, he states that these youth workers make a contribution within the youth work field that is not dissimilar to that of community workers. The underpinning values of these "community youth workers", according to Smith, appear to be their understanding of, and commitment to, a process that allows individual young people to act together to collectively promote human wellbeing (1988: 119–123).

Smith further asserts that as a result of the success of the community education model of practice, the primary focus of youth work has moved away from welfare and entertainment models that are exclusively concerned with the individual, toward a broader community-wide approach (1988: 123).

Martin Strube, writing from a North American perspective, concurs with Smith, claiming that the 'social education' model forms much of the basis of youth work practice. However, he suggests that there are two distinct approaches within the 'social education' paradigm, the first being a 'community development' approach that focuses on social structures and ensures that young people recognise that collectively they have the potential to " … self organise" and "initiate cooperative decision making and action". He describes the second approach as a "social control" or "therapeutic" model that focuses on the individual and an analysis of the " … individual's feelings and motives" as the " … individual struggles for self betterment". It is the first approach – that of community development – that Strube recommends (Booton & Dearling 1980: 102).

Community development and Australian youth work

At the time, Hamilton-Smith and Brownell's 1973 report saw youth work and community work as synonymous. In the preface to the report, Neil Sleep, then president of the Youth Workers' Association, described the establishment of the association as " … assisting the development of youth and community workers" (1973).

Neil Sleep went on to suggest that Australian youth work was widely recognised as significantly contributing to the notion of community development, and should take on a larger role in contributing to the field of community development in Australia (Hamilton-Smith 1973). The Hamilton-Smith and Brownell report highlighted the importance of community work to youth work practice, and also

the implications of developing a form of youth work that drew on a community development model (1973: 160).

John Ewen, in his 1981 study on the education and training of youth workers in Australia, suggested that youth work was established educationally on a conceptual basis, and that the primary academic core of the course was prefaced on teaching the " … development and methods of youth and community work". This he saw as encompassing the key youth work values of 'enabling' and 'facilitating' young people within their community context to fulfil their needs. He said of the Coburg course (forerunner to the current RMIT degree course) that it viewed youth work as:

> *enabling young people to develop their own leadership functions, decision making faculties, the design and direction of their own leisure time pursuits and influence on the development of their own communities* (Ewen 1981: 43–45).

In concluding his report, Ewen proffered a view of youth work as strongly influenced by the theory and practice of 'community development'. He based this view on what he had found in the various Australian courses:

> *Much has been written about community development. In essence the process is simple; it is about the awakening of a community to its own potential for action in problem solving through cooperative effort …. It is also about the value of the process itself as encouraging an active participating society, not a passive recipient one …. The most effective youth policy therefore is one aimed at educating young people through experience to be effective participants in communities, in enabling them to contribute now on a partnership basis with older people, so that they will continue to contribute throughout their lives in a participatory democracy. Such an approach has clear implications for the role of the youth worker* (Ewen 1981: 104).

The 1985 report by the Municipal Association of Victoria, on local Government Youth Work, concurred strongly with Ewen's earlier findings that community development was the primary practice framework for youth work. This was also supported by the 1987 report entitled 'Time for Training', funded by the Victorian government Office of Youth Affairs, and carried out by the Victorian Youth Sector Training Unit under the auspices of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria. The

Time for Training Report found that "the philosophical basis of [youth work] is the empowerment of youth and their communities …" (1987: 64).

Denholm and Ling's study of Australian youth work courses found that two of the three courses that were then being taught in tertiary institutions included 'community development' as a specific subject in their curricula (1990: 25–27).

Houston and Pelavaniuc, in their 1998 study of Victorian tertiary-level youth work courses, found that two of the three university courses taught community development as core subjects. Their study recognised community development as a critical part of the " … new and growing body of knowledge that some argue constitutes a unique youth studies entity". They used a student participant's verbatim response to illustrate the point that, in the context of the broader course curriculum and despite other views on the course, students had at least been given a framework for practice: "I learned a framework for community development …" (1998: 31–32).

Judith Bessant, then teaching the Australian Catholic University's youth work course, suggested that "… information technology would be of great assistance for youth workers to connect young people to social action campaigns and community development processes". She clearly identified that it would greatly assist the community development model of practice, and that youth workers could better facilitate young people to organise themselves for collective action as a result (1998: 25–26).

The findings of the 1997 National consultation report, produced by the Australian National Youth Work Training Project, were based on the analysis of participant youth workers' responses to the following request: "Please identify critical and discrete areas of training that workers with young people require to work effectively within a changing social, economic and policy environment." As such, the National Youth Work Training Project's summary of results listed 'community development' as being crucial to good youth work practice. The report stated the clear finding that "… community development clearly underpins all aspects of service delivery for young people" (NYWTP 1997: 5–11).

Current research

Recent research (Corney 2002) regarding the training of youth workers suggests that the theory of community development and the various community development practice values, such as 'participation' and 'empowerment', clearly underpin the training of youth workers in Australia.

The research was carried out over the three-year cycle of degree-level training in four Australian universities. The research investigated the role of community development in professional youth work education and practice by using a qualitative, interpretative framework of inquiry, a strategy of purposeful case study sampling, and literature review. The research clearly identified community development as the primary practice framework underpinning the teaching and practise of youth work (Guba and Lincoln 1981, 1985; Connole, Smith & Wiseman 1993; Neville, Willis and Edwards 1994; Yin 1994; Wadsworth 1997; Corney 2002).

To facilitate the triangulation of data, a number of sources were used: students, lecturers, curriculum designers, curriculum documents and sector literature. The research sites were four Australian universities teaching degree-level youth work courses. The youth work courses, students, teachers and those developing curricula constituted the cases. The four case study sites were the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in the state of Victoria, Edith Cowan University in the state of Western Australia, the Victoria University of Technology in the state of Victoria, and the University of Western Sydney in the state of New South Wales.

Students, in a focus group setting, were asked to identify dominant theoretical perspectives and practice frameworks they had experienced or been exposed to within their course of study. Teachers and curriculum developers were also asked to identify the dominant theoretical perspectives and practice frameworks that they believed underpinned the training they were delivering or facilitating.

The findings of the research have been tabulated and presented in a diagrammatic form to enable a compact summary of the values, as represented in each of the four case sites. The representation of data in this way also facilitates an

overview of the case sites, enabling a visual comparative analysis of the common and distinctive case perspectives. This form of tabulation and diagrammatic representation of data is consistent with the data collection and analysis process.

Results of the research are shown below, in diagrammatic form.

CASE VALUES	CASE SITES			
	CASE 1	CASE 2	CASE 3	CASE 4
Community Development				
Participation				
Empowerment				
Cooperation & Collectivism				
Equity				
Advocacy				
Social Change & Social Action				
Youth as Primary Client				
Case Management				
Counselling				
Reciprocal & Social Goal – Group Work				

High | Moderate | Low

Table 1: Youth work practice frameworks

Participant responses

When talking about community development, most second-year students not only identified that they did a subject specifically on the application of community development values and practices for youth work, but also that community development principles were heavily emphasised and appeared in other subjects within the course. For example:

> *Last year there was a huge emphasis on community development and they still mention it in other units as well*
> (Student).

Third-year students concurred with second years and elaborated, seeing the emphasis of community development as being focused on the participation and empowerment of young people, and a radical notion of social change. For example:

> *... when we did community development, it was participation, young people don't get to participate or get empowered. We use the word 'empower' all the time. We have to empower all these young people that are being, you know, oppressed in society*
> (Student).

Lecturers and curriculum developers also acknowledged the role of community development for youth workers, particularly as agents of social change. For example:

> *You know I believe that youth workers are agents of social change at an individual, and community level. And you know it's one thing to be working at an individual level with young people. That's very relevant and that's very appropriate. But then if we're not also looking at the other end of the spectrum, at what actually causes young people to be in that position in the first place, well we're missing the other half of the story*
> (Lecturer).

> *The course talks about macro social change and social action, but the thing is community activism. I don't think it always means overthrowing capitalism. I think it's more about changing the community where you live and are involved both professionally and probably personally in community development*
> (Lecturer/curriculum developer).

Research findings

The curricula of the four universities that participated in the research appear to be strongly supportive of community development, and practise values of 'empowerment', 'participation', 'advocacy' and 'social change' at both the macro and micro levels. These practice frameworks appear to be delivered in the context of community development theory, as community development is taken as a compulsory subject in all four of the universities' youth work courses.

As such, all four case study sites clearly identified a commitment to 'community development' as the primary framework for professional youth work practice and/or the related community development practice values, such as empowerment, participation, advocacy and social action. This corresponds with the findings of the National youth work consultation report and with the strength of both the Australian and international literature (Hamilton-Smith & Brownell 1973; Booton & Dearling 1980; Ewen 1980; Smith 1988; CYP 1997; Bessant, Sercombe & Watts 1998; Weber 2000).

Conclusion

If Australian and international perspectives on youth work concur, as both the literature and research suggest, then community development theory and practice values such as 'participation' and 'empowerment' underpin both the recent and current training and practice of youth work. As such, youth work is more than just a complimentary community practice, but can be viewed legitimately as a valid form of community development work.

References

Azzopardi, A. (1998). Curriculum power: Developing a youth studies curriculum in Malta. *Journal of Youth Studies,* 1(3), pp.333–346.

Benjamin, J. (1989). Out of the sixties and into the nineties. Youth work: The quantum leap. South Australian Youth Affairs Conference Report, South Australian Youth Affairs Council, South Australia.

Bessant, J., Sercombe, H. & Watts, R. (1998). *Youth studies: An Australian perspective*. Longman, Melbourne, Australia.

Bloxham, S. & Heathfield, M. (1995). Rejecting the theory/practice dichotomy in youth and community work training. *Youth and Policy,* 50 (Autumn), pp.35–48.

Booton, F. & Dearling, A. (Eds.). (1980). *The 1980s and beyond*. NYB, Warwickshire, UK.

Brown, C. (1992). Ideology and ethics in youth work practice. *Youth Issues Forum* (Spring), pp.14–19.

Cohen, P. & Ainley, P. (2000). In the country of the blind? Youth studies and cultural studies in Britain. *Journal of Youth Studies,* 3(1), pp.79–95.

Commonwealth Youth Programme South Pacific Centre. (1997). *Human resources development working paper 6A*, Regional Advisory Board meeting, Honiara, Solomon Islands.

Connole, H., B. Smith and R. Wiseman. (1993). *Issues and methods in research*. Deakin University, Geelong, Australia.

Corney, T. (2002). *A study of underpinning values in the curriculum of current Australian degree-level youth work courses*. MIT University, Melbourne, Australia.

Crooks, M. (1992). Social justice: Core value of youth work. *Youth Issues Forum* (Spring), pp.20–24.

Ewen, J. (1981). *The education and training of youth workers in Australia*. Office of Youth Affairs, Melbourne, Australia.

Flowers, R. (1996). Can competency assessment support struggles for community development and self-determination? An address given to a conference assessing student achievement at Auckland Institute of Technology.

Fook, J., Ryan, M. & Hawkins, L. (2000). *Professional expertise, practice theory and education for working in uncertainty*. Whiting and Birch, London, UK.

Freire, P. (1970). *Seeing education whole*. World Council of Churches, Geneva.

Freire, P. (1977). *Cultural action for freedom*. Penguin, Australia.

Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1981). *Effective evaluation*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, US.

Hamilton-Smith, E. & Brownell, D. (1973). *Youth workers and their education*. Youth Workers' Association, Melbourne, Australia.

Houston, W. & Pelavaniuc, P. (1998). Studying to be a youth worker. *Youth Studies Australia,* 17(2), pp.29–35.

Ife, J. (1995). *Community development, creating community alternatives – vision, analysis and practice*. Longman, Melbourne, Australia.

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage, Beverly Hills, US.

Maunders, D. (1990). Youth work as a response to social values. *Youth Studies Australia,* 9(2) (May), pp.42–50.

Mizen, P. (2002). Putting the politics back into youth studies. *Journal of Youth Studies,* 5(1), pp.5–20.

National Youth Work Training Project. 1997. *Draft report*. Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia.

Neville, B., Willis, P. & Edwards, M. (1994). *Qualitative research in adult education*. Centre for Research in Education and Work, University of South Australia, South Australia.

Philips, T., Stacey, K. & Milner, J. (2001). You're a peer what? *Youth Studies Australia* 20(4), pp.40–47.

Smith, M. (1988). *Developing youth work: Informal education, mutual aid and popular practice*. Open University Press, Milton Keynes, Australia.

Stacey, K. (2001). Achieving praxis in youth partnership accountability. *Journal of Youth Studies,* 4(2), pp.209–231.

Wadsworth, Y. (1997). *Do it yourself social research*, 2nd ed. Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, Australia.

Webber, R. (2000). Field education practices in youth studies courses in England, USA and Canada. *Youth Studies Australia,* 19(1), pp.31–37.

Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Applied social research methods series (volume 5, 2nd ed.). Sage, Thousand Oaks, US.

Part of this article first appeared as a workshop presentation at the Community Development & Grass Roots Conference Melbourne, and it was first published in its current form in Commonwealth Youth and Development, v.7, n.2, pp. 2-10, 2009. It is reproduced here with permission.

Chapter 6

Professional education for youth work: An expanding field

David Maunders & Tim Corney

The Era of Consensus

The field of professional youth work in Australia, in common with social work and technical education, can trace its origins to 19th century philanthropic organisations. Though significant programs such as the scouts and guides depended on volunteers, there emerged in cities and suburbs a variety of boys' and girls' clubs offering physical recreation and personal development, under the leadership of full-time salaried workers. Most cities had the YMCA and YWCA, and in Melbourne, just prior to the Second World War, Opportunity Youth Clubs were established in inner suburban slums and the Victorian Association of Boys' Clubs (VABC) provided a network of leader training and club support. The VABC was successful in obtaining a state government grant in 1941 which prompted other organisations to form themselves into a co-ordinated lobby under the auspices of the National Fitness Council. This became known as the Associated Youth Committee (AYC) and parallel bodies were formed in all states (many of which became state youth councils such as the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria). A consensus emerged that professional youth work was concerned with urban club leadership, and was maintained until the 1960s when it was modified to include the increasing number of volunteer support and co-ordination workers. The definition of youth work as the leisure time development of post-school youth remained until the mid 1970s.

National Fitness Councils emerged from the pre-war concern with the health and fitness of those likely to serve in the armed forces. In 1935, the National Council for Women commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research to conduct an enquiry into physical education which resulted in the establishment of a physical education course at the University of Melbourne in 1937, directed by Dr Fritz Duras. In New South Wales, the government appointed

a Director of Physical Education (Gordon Young). National Fitness Councils at the Commonwealth and state levels were established just before and after the outbreak of war.

The Commonwealth provided funding for physical education courses at universities in all states (except Tasmania where the funds were used to send students to Melbourne) and state councils trained volunteer leaders, supported community activities particularly for youth, and developed a fitness campaign. Youth organisations were seen as vehicles to develop fitness for post school youth. The Victorian National Fitness Council agreed to aim its campaign primarily at the 14-18 age group, initiated the foundation of a Youth Hostels Association and conducted its first volunteer youth leaders training course in September 1940. The Commonwealth Council urged co-operation with universities and state education and health departments to train youth leaders, playground supervisors and community centre supervisors, but in Victoria, the youth organisations took the initiative to establish professional education for youth work. The National Fitness Council (NFC) provided both the appropriate network and the resources to fund a formal course. Its membership included Dr Fritz Duras and John Medley, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne. The NFC convened a meeting of the Training Executives of youth organisations in February 1944 which was attended by the major church denominations (Baptist, Church of Christ, Church of England, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Salvation Army and Catholic) as well as the Guides, Playgrounds Association, YMCA, YWCA and Victorian Association of Boys' Clubs.

A course committee chaired by Professor G.S. Browne was established, including two representatives of the AYC with Professor Boyce Gibson, chairman of the Board of Social Studies, Dr Fritz Duras from the faculty of physical education, Colin Badger of the University Extension Board, Jocelyn Hyslop, of the social studies department and Elaine Swires, National Fitness Women's Organiser. They supervised a ten month emergency course, operated by the social studies (i.e. social work) department but which did not offer a formal university qualification. In this respect the course started in an almost identical way to the social work courses which originated in the previous decade, under special boards of study, but conducted within the universities. These courses were taken over by the universities in Victoria, NSW and South Australia in 1940 and 1941.

The first intake numbered 19 nominated largely by church youth departments and city youth clubs and typified the nature of professional youth work in the period. Of these, the YMCA was the only organisation which offered any possibility of transfer of employment or career development. The second course included four students with scholarships from the South Australian National Fitness Council, and the Tasmanian Associated Youth Committee lobbied government to fund four more nominees. Students also enrolled from NSW and Queensland and from 1946 the course was approved under the Rehabilitation Training Scheme. After the first three intakes, nearly 60 students had graduated and were employed by youth organisations or churches. This approached a quarter of the number of qualified social workers.

In parallel with the university professional training course, a professional body, the Victorian Association of Youth Leaders, was founded in 1945. By 1950 it had 49 members and 13 associates. Full membership was open to those who held qualifications recognised by the Association's advisory board, or who had no less than three years professional experience. The advisory board consisted of John Medley, university vice-chancellor, A.G.Scholes, Director of National Fitness, Dr. Fritz Duras and Ruth Hoban of the university social studies department. The Association aimed to provide a meeting ground for youth leaders, and to provide opportunities for personal growth through the discussion of problems which arise in youth work, and also to educate the public mind on those problems. It also aimed to secure for youth leadership the status of a profession and to secure the training of all leaders. In spite of this strong foundation, the association disappeared in the early 1950s.

In 1947 the university extended the Diploma of Social Studies from two years to three. The third year offered an option to specialise in case work or group work. It considered that the future leadership needs of the youth field can only be met by the provision of a more comprehensive, thorough and consequently longer course of training. The three year diploma, specialising in group work, offered thorough training with a university qualification. No essentially new subjects would be offered to those found in the emergency course and constant attention would be given to the acquisition of practical skills. This decision might have laid the basis for a North American approach of multi-disciplinary group workers, but the organisations continued to offer explicit youth services with a largely untrained staff.

The university intended to meet the future training needs of youth workers through a specialist option in social work training, but professional youth workers maintained an identity (and professional association) while social work educators soon forgot this area of work. In a letter (1959) to the secretary of the Sub-Committee on Professional Youth Leadership Training, G. B. Sharp, the acting director of the university social studies department, asserted that there was no connection between the emergency course and the three year diploma, and was surprised to receive information to the contrary through a copy of 'Origin and Development of the One Year Professional Youth Leader Training Course' which was subsequently sent to him.

Specialist youth work education remained in Sydney, but on a more limited basis than the Melbourne course. In 1947 the YMCA had established a two year professional youth leadership course. Since the beginning of the century, a few staff had undertaken studies at the YMCA College at Springfield Massachusetts in the USA, and an Australian foundation had long been a goal. There is consequently no evidence that the timing in any way related to the phasing out of the Melbourne University course. Like Melbourne, there was university involvement as classes were taken by lecturers from the University of Sydney, Department of Tutorial Classes (i.e. extension studies or adult education). In 1949, a 15,000 pound donation was made to establish the college as a War memorial, which enabled the YMCA to purchase a building at Homebush which was opened in 1952. Between 1947 and 1963, 124 students passed through the course, 78 of whom graduated. In the late 1950s and early 60s, the YMCA explored the possibility of developing a Leadership Training College under the auspices of the University of New South Wales, in relation to the NSW Youth Advisory Committee recommendations, but nothing came of this. The college was moved to Melbourne in 1964.

The Reinforcement of Consensus: the Barry Report

The publication of the report of the Victorian Committee of Inquiry into Juvenile Delinquency, the Barry Report, in 1956, reinforced the view of professional youth work as club leadership. The report gave extensive support to the idea that youth clubs played a significant role in the prevention of delinquency and recommended adequate state support for youth clubs and approved schemes of training for youth leaders. In October 1956, the Victorian government introduced

legislation to provide for the funding of youth organisations and the training of leaders. The sum of 20,000 pounds was allocated, intended primarily for training.

The National Council of Women (NCW), which had initiated professional training for physical education teachers and social workers before the Second World War, established a committee in 1956 which drew up plans for a two year course for professional youth leaders. The first proposal was left on the table by the Youth Organisations Assistance Committee and in 1958, the NCW established a Committee on Professional Youth Leader Training composed of professional workers, which was convened by Elery Hamilton-Smith of the Brotherhood of St Laurence. It was supported by the Institute of Professional Youth Leadership which had been founded in the Barry era. A proposal for a one year course at the Royal Melbourne Technical College was prepared, which contained a high level of activity skill training. The proposal was thwarted by the state government's intention to establish a Social Welfare Training Division, which would coordinate the work of all youth training organisations, and not to fund an alternative.

The aftermath of the Barry Report saw a shift in the focus of youth work to the community level. There was a great expansion of community based youth clubs, run by volunteers, but often supported and serviced by the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs, which had emerged from the Victorian Association of Boys' Clubs. The YMCA, YWCA and VAYC came to employ one third of the total professional youth workers between them by the early 1960s. The VAYC defined the methods and standards of youth work to operate within its clubs and the roles of professionals and others involved.

The VAYC mounted a strong challenge to the approach of the Institute of Social Welfare course. Its general secretary was Jim Gearing and his staff included Elery Hamilton-Smith who had been appointed as development officer in 1959. The VAYC policy saw the professional and volunteer as working on entirely different levels. Volunteers worked face-to-face with groups of young people. The role of the professional was concerned with the recruitment, training of and consultation with the volunteer. The development of professional work was inhibited by the lack of adequate remuneration and the opportunity for advancement and transfer. Gearing thus raised the issue of career structure and recommended that no action be taken to establish professional training, but consideration be

given to the provision of training at university level for those intending to enter the field. There was doubt about employment prospects for Institute graduates; vacancies that did occur were often appropriate only for those over 25 years old (the proposed minimum age of entry was 18). It was also felt that the question of transferability of qualification should be considered to give workers the chance to move into related fields at the end of a career in youth work. The syllabus conveyed the impression that the professional leader was the norm and the volunteer a special case. This was wrong as the volunteer was 'the' leader and the professional existed to support and assist, but to never replace him.

The Institute course started in 1965 with youth and enthusiasm. Students numbered 23 with 11 of them men. The oldest girl was 20 years old. Nearly all were sponsored by youth organisations such as the Girl Guides, Brotherhood of St Laurence, YWCA and Social Welfare Department. Students worked from 9 to 5 three days per week and to 3.30 on the other two to compensate for two evenings practical work. Nineteen year old Peter Coghlan, sponsored by the Young Christian Workers, asserted that youth work was not only concerned with sport, but with anything that can bring good personal contact between young people and the leaders.

Other courses for youth workers were established in the 1960s. In New South Wales, the National Fitness Council offered a modular certificate course at its Narrabeen Lakes Camp from 1965. Although the South Australian National Fitness Council provided bursaries for a few students to attend the Institute of Social Welfare course in Melbourne, this did not meet South Australia's need. There was concern about providing effective youth leadership in the new towns of Salisbury and Elizabeth. By the end of 1967, National Fitness and the South Australian Institute of Technology had developed a certificate course in group work, one year full-time or two years part-time (which was seen as the norm). There had to date been no openings for group workers, as government organisations required case workers. The government fund for the establishment of youth clubs might change this situation. The course started in 1968 with 30 students, and like the Melbourne course of the 1940s, was situated within the social studies (social work) department. Staffing costs and bursaries for 22 students were met by National Fitness providing $12,000 from its $50,000 government grant for training.

The Move to Tertiary Education and the Breakdown of Consensus

It was in Victoria that the focus of professional development lay. The first graduates of the Institute youth leadership course took the initiative to re-establish a professional association and the Youth Workers' Association (YWA) was formed in 1967. There was an increasing realisation of the inadequacy of the qualification and in 1971 the YWA obtained a grant from the Myer Foundation to undertake research into the educational requirements of professional youth workers. Elery Hamilton-Smith and Donna Brownell were engaged as researchers for the project, the aims of which were to provide information on the roles filled by salaried youth workers, and the relationship of those roles to education for professional youth work. Their report, published as 'Youth Workers and their Education', made extensive recommendations. Consistent with the line that Hamilton-Smith had taken in the 1950s and 60s, it recommended that youth work education be located within the mainstream of tertiary education, which it defined as university, college of advanced education or teachers' college. This offered a greater likelihood for meeting the criteria of professional education, as well as attracting high calibre applicants and enhancing professional status. There should be consideration of both process and content elements of curriculum, and fieldwork teaching should be supported with an effective standard. Administrative and community work skills should be developed. Basic education should be at the three year diploma level, with shorter courses for those with extensive professional work experience or for graduates. 'Youth Workers and their Education' was an influential document which paved the way for the entry of youth work education into the tertiary sector. In 1974, Institute students pressed for the title of their course to be changed from Diploma in Youth Leadership, to Diploma in Youth and Community Work, as the trend was away from leading young people, towards providing guidance and support. The former was also seen as having patronising connotations. In July 1975 an ad hoc consultation took place between the principal staff of the YMCA and Institute courses and the YWA. The meeting concluded that basic pre-service training should be offered with at least one associate diploma course in each state, offered by recognised tertiary institutions. Two courses would probably be needed in Victoria and NSW. Institutions currently offering diploma courses (i.e. the Institute and YMCA) should seek affiliation with recognised tertiary bodies

(SCV or VIC). A one year postgraduate course should be offered for graduates of universities or teachers' colleges. Youth work graduates should be encouraged to gain further qualifications in specialised areas, such as psychology, sociology, social work, education, group work, administration, recreation management, etc. It was however noted that opportunities to gain further qualifications were limited unless the Diploma in Youth Work gained greater acceptance, through being offered within a tertiary institution.

The YMCA approached the Senate of the State College of Victoria in September 1975, and immediate interest was shown by the State College of Victoria at Coburg, one of the smaller colleges within the newly independent federation of teachers' colleges. John Banfield, the principal since 1974, was an Englishman who had seen the pressures for the diversification and merger of small teachers' colleges in the UK, and was committed to forestalling the worst effects. Against some resistance within the college he moved to offer courses beyond teacher education. The adjacent Pentridge Prison suggested tertiary training for prison officers; youth work was another available option. YMCA students were transferred and the Institute course ultimately phased out. A graduate course was established in 1980 in line with the Hamilton-Smith recommendations, but there proved little demand by graduates to take qualifications to enter the field.

Shortly after the location of youth work professional education in the tertiary sector, the YWA succeeded in establishing a pay award for youth workers at the state level which recognised formal qualifications. However, a number of changes occurred from the mid 1970s which ultimately shattered the consensus about the role of professional youth work. Firstly, recreation services emerged at state and local levels, which led a number of workers to redefine their role and move into a new range of jobs with government salary subsidies. Secondly, the rise in the level of youth unemployment led the Commonwealth to establish a national program, the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS). Although Victorian CYSS workers were initially paid on the youth workers award and many qualified workers took jobs in CYSS, its labour market focus prevented its construction as a youth work program. Staff formed their own association with no links with the YWA. The national award made no reference to qualifications at staff behest. The related increase in youth homelessness led to Commonwealth funding for a range of refuge and accommodation programs, which developed their own

coordinating mechanism (ie. the National Youth Coalition for Housing). Youth workers never fully reconciled their role in relation to volunteers and finally, the lack of a career structure led many tertiary graduates away from professional youth work.

The breakdown of consensus was not immediately obvious, although the YWA began to decline after the pay award success. It lingered on until 1982. The Nationwide Workers with Youth Forum, which emerged as a constituent element of the Youth Affairs Council of Australia founded in 1980, was torn apart by constitutional disagreement and personality conflicts and failed to offer any long term professional lead.

The Commonwealth Office of Youth Affairs (OYA), established as a coordination mechanism in 1977, approached SCV Coburg to undertake a nationwide review of the education and training of youth workers. John Ewen, newly appointed principal lecturer in youth affairs, was seconded for the task in 1980. Ewen reported that the number of professional workers had doubled in the last three years to over 2600 with around 100,000 volunteers. He defined youth as a period of transition and emphasised that although some experience problems, youth is normal and not pathological. Youth policy was both about the protection of a vulnerable age group, and enabling young people to make an immediate and future contribution to the development of their society. Youth policy was concerned with integrating rather than separating young people. The youth worker, therefore, was likely to be employed not in a unified youth service, but in a diversity of departments and agencies, with the task of sensitising the departments or agencies to the particular needs of youth within a broad societal context.

Ewen thus attempted to create a silk purse out of the proverbial sow's ear. His report recommended the expansion of tertiary course places and new courses emerged. Only in Western Australia was a specific youth work course developed. In New South Wales and South Australia courses were offered on the context of welfare studies or recreation. A Bachelor of Arts course was offered at Coburg from 1982.

The Commonwealth followed up the Ewen Report with a workshop on youth work training in July 1984. The workshop was organised by an Interim Steering

Committee on Youth Sector Training, consisting of the Director of OYA and its training consultant, representatives of the Youth Affairs Council of Australia, the Nationwide Workers with Youth Forum, the Australian Social Welfare Union, the Department of Employment and Industrial relations, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, and John Ewen. It set in process a consultation on training issues and needs in each state and territory, and made funding available for state level training committees and training officers. After a year, the process was reviewed and the interim steering committee's representation broadened to include representatives from each state, from the four tertiary college courses, and from students. The new interim committee was set the task of developing a national coordinating structure for youth work training and a Commonwealth policy. This involved the consideration of budget, traineeships in youth work, standards and ethics and the relationship of pre-service and in-service education.

The committee showed clearly the loss of consensus. It was plagued by inconsistency: representatives, particularly state and union representatives changed frequently and new members showed little inclination to accept progress made prior to their arrival. Representatives from NSW and also from Queensland opposed the idea of a national coordinating structure and even the involvement of tertiary courses. Tertiary courses were seen as inappropriate for youth work training as they were too remote and theoretical. Other states supported a national structure, but the Office of Youth Affairs proved indecisive, and minority views managed to prevent decisions from being made. A task force was established to finish the work of the committee, but the national coordinating committee was not set up. The government shortly abandoned youth as Priority One, but the committee did leave a few legacies. A National Association of Youth Work Trainers was established in April 1987, and its inaugural conference held at Phillip Institute of Technology (into which Coburg had been amalgamated in 1983) in April 1987. It was originally intended to provide a mechanism for trainer representation on the coordinating committee, but with the demise of this, continued with little strength of purpose. Youth work training units for in-service training were established in all states, but only in Victoria was Commonwealth funding continued by the state.

Curriculum Change

While the consensus view of professional youth work as recreational club work was maintained, courses of professional education offered a mix of sociological and psychological studies of youth, with a strong element of physical and recreational skill development and field practice. The 1944 ten month course held at Melbourne University covered the community, the individual and leadership. Students had an average of approximately six lectures per week, though the duration of each is not clear. In addition students had a fortnightly individual tutorial (weekly in the first month). Religious education was provided as an option (ten lectures). Around 40% of the course content related to the application of skills, over and above the field practice of three to five evenings per week and four weeks camping or holiday programs in January.

The YMCA course, offered over two years, covered the Christian Faith, sociology, psychology and health education, practices and techniques (group work, administration and camping) and practical skills. The weekly contact load was in excess of 12 hours plus field experience which was both continuous and in vacations.

The Institute of Social Welfare course, introduced in 1965, required 50 hours involvement for 48 weeks per year for two years. The syllabus also included strong emphasis on activities in its eleven subject areas: youth work and youth leaders; the history, principles and practice of youth work; human development; the physical and psychological significance of leisure-time activities and interests; legislation and regulations affecting young people and youth work; youth and the community; codes and values in society; English expression; practical training; proficiency in two arts, crafts or hobbies; and proficiency in two physical recreational activities. The Institute course was extended to three years in 1971, but this added more depth rather than breadth and subjects were defined more as conventional academic disciplines. In the late 1970s, the course moved away from physical and creative activities. The SAIT Group Work certificate course which started in 1969 also involved recreational activities in its six subjects. Of these, three were taken each year by part-time students. They were Human Development, Welfare in the Community, and Group Work 1 in the first year and Family and Society, Administration in Welfare and Group Work 2 in year two. Field work was also required. All courses were 2 hours per week except administration which was one hour.

The Coburg course which commenced in 1977, was based on the YMCA syllabus and maintained a strong practical skill element. The syllabus provided a balance of practical and academic subjects to allay fears that a tertiary course would be too theoretical and irrelevant to the needs of the youth worker in the field. Core academic units included principles and practice of youth work, psychology, sociology, group work and philosophy/ethical studies. Electives included human movement, health education, education, modern treatment (correctional programs) urban problems, ethnic problems, personnel administration, social administration, and environmental studies. Core skill studies included physical education (swimming, fitness and games) first aid and home nursing, creative activities (crafts and performing arts), communication methods, and administration (including legal aspects). Elective subjects were drawn from a wide range of physical and creative activity skills. Field experience was undertaken for three hours per week plus four weeks in vacations and supported by a seminar. A non-assessed personal professional development program aimed to integrate the course elements with the student's personal development. Average student contact hours were between 17 and 19 per week with approximately 12 separate assessment requirements per term.

In the first year, a fifteen week period of field experience was introduced in both second and third years in the middle trimester. This enabled a sequence of preparation, field experience, evaluation/reflection to operate. A major review took place in 1981 which reduced the number of subjects, and introduced a contract learning based procedure. The distinction between practical and academic subjects was abandoned and the number of physical education based subjects reduced.

In 1982, Coburg introduced a three year BA course with a major in youth studies, and a two year sub-major in public administration. There were also foundation subjects in sociology, psychology, group work, and community development, with three elective subjects taken from specific aspects of youth work, criminal justice or research. Research methods ultimately became a required unit and computer studies were added. Students were also given the option to take a three year sequence in a specific subject and, on completion of a diploma of education, to qualify for teacher registration. Though this attracted student interest, few entered the teaching profession. In 1985, the department of youth work staff,

aware of the general move in related professions (such as teaching) towards initial degree level qualification, and mindful of the limitations placed on career options by a diploma, phased out the diploma and offered the degree to trainee practitioners, as well as those preparing for management or public service. A new sub-major was introduced, entitled Youth Program Organisation, which aimed to provide the basis of working with young people in a face-to-face context. By student demand, this was later modified to incorporate public administration content. The result of this was that the practical physical education and creative activity side of youth work education had been eliminated by 1990. Camps were discontinued, largely on cost grounds as course funding was reduced and student numbers increased. The BA (Youth Affairs) came to focus on youth policy and the development of social criticism and policy analysis. The BA introduced by the WACAE in 1986, likewise, had little in the way of recreational activity skill content, but emphasised the development of knowledge and skills related to individual, project, advocacy, information, management or policy contexts of youth work.

With the move towards a unified system of tertiary education, the Coburg Youth Work Department rechristened itself the Department of Youth and Community Affairs, and began to develop research and research based teaching. This resulted on the one hand in criticisms that graduates lacked practical skills, and on the other reluctance by the Commonwealth to offer research contracts in youth affairs to a group associated with the consensus position of recreational youth work, though its teaching had long moved from that position.

The churches had strongly supported the YMCA youth leaders course and the original Institute of Social Welfare diploma, with their youth officers and denominational youth department representatives often providing lectures in the courses and/or sitting on their advisory committees. However, the new Coburg diploma was rightly seen as a secular course without religious content. It was during this period of transition that the denominational theological colleges began to develop and deliver their own youth work training courses and qualifications. In the early 1980s the Uniting Church began short courses at its theological Hall; in 1985 the Anglicans started a diploma course at Ridley College; the Baptists followed in the early 1990s with a course at Whitley College.

The Rise of the Social and Community Services Concept

By the end of the 1980s, youth work had less claim to the status of profession than in the early 70s. It had no unique area of operation, no professional association, and an ambivalent attitude towards courses of professional education. One of the largest employers of youth workers, CYSS projects, which the Kirby Report had recommended be constituted as an Australian Youth Service, had been reconstituted as Skillshare, a non age specific training program, in 1989.

In parallel with the breakdown of consensus was the rise of the concept of a social and community services industry. The concept of industry training councils originated during the Whitlam government, which established a National Training Council to achieve national improvement in training standards and practices. In 1975 the Commonwealth Department of Social Security commissioned Eva Learner to evaluate the need for a body such as a Council for Education in Social Welfare, and if appropriate to make recommendations on its possible structure, composition and function. Learner included youth workers in the occupational categories covered by her study, but defined youth workers in Victoria as being social welfare workers trained in group work skills. There were two distinct groups: youth workers and recreation workers. In NSW the term was used to refer to a residential care worker employed by the Department of Youth and Community Services. Aside from listing the Institute of Social Welfare and YMCA (by then discontinued) courses, Learner had little else to say about youth work.

Learner recommended the establishment of an Australian Council for Education and Training in Social Welfare, but the Commonwealth did not accept the community services sector as an industry. The position changed after 1986. The publication of Australia Reconstructed, which became a blueprint for Commonwealth social as well as economic policy, elevated training to a position of prominence as an industrial issue. This position was strengthened by the National Wage Case decision of August 1989, which introduced award restructuring. The establishment of the Department of Employment, Education and Training also reflected a view of *education* as training for employment. Following reviews of disability services and nursing homes, the Commonwealth funded a National Community Services Industry Training Council, which first met in December 1989.

In 1988, the Victorian TAFE Board was restructured as the State Training Board, and began to lay the foundations of substantially changed TAFE arrangements (termed the State Training System, which was planned to comprise sixteen industry training boards). The intention was for the system to be industry driven. Boards included representation from employers, employees and government, but not from education providers, TAFE or tertiary.

The Victorian Social and Community Services Industry Training Board (SACSITB) first met in February 1989, and in March 1990 published a Training Plan discussion paper. The plan left no doubt that it saw youth workers as part of the SACS industry workforce. Youth workers were identified as working in physical disabilities services, residential and family based care, youth support services, and ethnic services in the non-CSV sector. Within CSV, youth workers were employed in youth supervision units, extended family care, corrections and youth residential centres. In CSV funded programs, youth workers appeared in supported accommodation programs and programs supported by the Community Development and Consultation Unit. A wide range of skills were identified, in most cases including program design and implementation and policy analysis. Training needs and priorities were defined for all sectors.

The SACSITB identified industry sectors in terms of the UWASIS classification based on aims or goals. Four basic fields were identified: community information and development, community justice services, income security and employment and individual, family and support services. Most youth work positions were found in the last category.

Significant priorities included the development and articulation of generic training for SACS personnel. The report also alluded to the polarisation between training and education, and the need for delineation between higher education and TAFE. It pointed out the inability of higher education to meet demands, a dissatisfaction with the skill level of graduates, and inequities in relation to career advancement.

TAFE provision in the youth area became established after 1984 when the Victorian government conducted a review of the training of residential youth and child care staff. Previously they had been trained through a series of six week in-

service modules conducted at the Community Welfare Training Institute, formerly the Institute for Social Welfare, which had offered the youth work diploma until 1979. The review was conducted by Concetta Benn, a senior policy advisor who had recently transferred to the public service, having previously been head of the School of Social Work at Phillip Institute of Technology. Benn recommended that the government recruit staff who had undergone pre-service training, and that the appropriate training should be provided by the TAFE system. The Department of Community Welfare proceeded to develop a one year certificate course for residential youth and child care workers in association with RMIT TAFE College. The course development committee also included representatives of the Youth Affarirs Council of Australia (YACA) and Phillip Institute of Technology's department of youth work. The department was eager to see the course developed as quickly as possible; the YACA and PIT representatives were concerned with the course content and the development of the possibility for articulation, by ensuring that units of study might equate to the initial courses of degree studies. Whilst this process delayed the introduction of the course, it was finally offered in 1987 as the Advanced Certificate in Residential and Community Services.

Early in 1990, the Youth Sector Training Unit raised the issue of a broadly based youth work training course being offered by TAFE. Some sections of the field considered that degree courses did not produce enough graduates and that the courses were too academic, concentrating too much on policy and administration. The SACSITB expressed concern at the development of a TAFE youth work course. The implications of a two-tier approach needed to be considered, and also the ITB favoured an integrated system.

In 1991, the state based Youth Sector Training Units federated to form the Australian Federation of Youth Sector Training Councils, and from 1991 to 1993, as part of the Labor federal government-led training reform process, undertook an extended and detailed youth sector consultation in order to develop a set of 34 national competency standards for youth work. In 1996, under the incoming Liberal/National industry training policy, a review of the sector's youth work competency standards was undertaken. In July and October 1996, and then in October 1997, versions of a significantly reduced set of core competencies, nine in all, appeared for comment and endorsement. In May 1998, the 'final' endorsed

set of competencies was released to the sector. This process eventually resulted in the national delivery of a competency-based Diploma of Youth Work outside the universities in the colleges and institutes of Technical and Further Education (TAFE).

In 1992 the longest running youth work course in Australia moved to RMIT University, where the degree in youth work continued to be offered. The BA Youth Affairs was first introduced in 1982 at Coburg State College (which subsequently became Phillip Institute of Technology, which in turn was incorporated into RMIT in 1992). This three year vocational degree was preceded by a three year higher education diploma which was started in 1977, but discontinued in 1986, being replaced by the degree. From the late 1980s in Australia, qualification below the degree level (certificates and diplomas) became the preserve of the TAFE sector. The subsequent national TAFE level diploma in youth work was recognised by Philip/RMIT, and diploma holders were given credits within the degree in youth affairs. However, seamless articulation became increasingly difficult, as the competency-based TAFE qualification became more generic following the 1997 review, and the content held less in common with the higher education curriculum.

It was in this environment that youth work courses in other states began to emerge, with degrees being offered at Edith Cowan University (ECU) in Western Australia and the University of Western Sydney (UWS). The ECU youth work course was first offered in 1984, as an Associate Diploma at the Western Australian College of Advanced Education, and expanded to degree level in 1986. Following the creation of ECU the youth work course offered an Honours year and a graduate certificate in 1990. The UWS Macarthur campus first offered a Diploma of Youth Work course in 1984, and a three-year degree level course in youth work followed in 1989. The Australian Catholic University offered a degree in 1998, and a nested postgraduate certificate, diploma and masters degree by course work followed.

In 1995 Dr Robyn Broadbent, a Philip/RMIT youth work course graduate, was employed to coordinate the recently expanded Victoria University (VU) degree course. The VU course was the first fully articulated diploma/degree qualification in youth work specifically designed as a third year higher education pathway for

students studying the TAFE Diploma. Various postgraduate qualifications at VU followed, such as a pathway into a Graduate Diploma of Teaching and the Masters of Youth Services Management. Notably, in 1998 Dr Tim Corney, an RMIT graduate, took up a long term adjunct teaching position and in 2002 Dr David Maunders – a Cambridge University graduate who had been specifically brought out from the United Kingdom in 1977 to start the first youth work course in Australia – moved from RMIT to VU to specialise in postgraduate teaching and supervision. At the time of writing VU had the largest cohort of youth work students of any of the universities offering degree programs in Australia, with over 200 students enrolled in youth work programs in 2013.

The Commonwealth Youth Programme and Youth Work Training

The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) has also been providing youth work education in Australia and the Pacific region for some time. The CYP was established in 1974 for the education, training and resourcing of those working with young people in developing countries. Its general policy has been determined by the regular Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meetings (CYMM). In 1999 it began the delivery of the Diploma of Youth Development, a 14 module flexible delivery-styled course accredited and delivered via various universities and tertiary colleges across the world. In the Pacific region three institutions agreed to offer the Programme: the University of the South Pacific, RMIT University and the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (Notley1997).

The CYP tried hard to establish a Pan-Commonwealth standard and was, in many ways, successful. The CYP Diploma continues to be offered, and has proved to be a successful attempt to introduce a professional standard of youth work in developing countries, most of which could not afford a large paid youth worker profession. One further outcome was the establishment of an academic journal, Commonwealth Youth and Development, in 2003, and ongoing attempts to establish professional associations and code of ethics for youth workers in Commonwealth countries (Jones & Harris 2004; CYP 2007).

Conclusion

Major developments in professional youth work education have occurred in response to professional pressure corresponding with government and public concern about youth, following the war, the Barry Report, the rise of youth unemployment in the 1970s and youth homelessness in the 1990s. Since the mid 1970s, youth work as a professional occupation has had the potential to fragment without an enduring professional body to maintain it.

The development of the national SACS diploma offers an alternative, but one which has an applied industry focus, rather than a professional one, and which sees initial training being offered through TAFE rather than universities. However, university courses have begun to provide extensions to TAFE courses, with one or two years of study after a TAFE qualification conferring degree status and professional status. In the future this is even more likely as TAFE courses expand to associate degree level, and as university vocational courses explore honours and postgraduate options. Similar to other professions, youth work may in the future see membership, and/or certification to practice, related to research based study and higher degrees which are likely to be offered to a broader range of social and community service workers. This may have implications for concurrent field experience which has been a feature of all the youth work courses.

Youth work may remain an area of vocational preparation, but youth studies and management of youth services may be taken at degree or postgraduate level by a range of professionals, from correctional services, welfare, local government and education. In this sense, youth work may well become an expanding area.

References

Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). (2007). *Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, UK.

Community Services and Health Training Australia (CSHTA). (1996). Youth Sector National Competency Standards. Community Services and Health Training Australia, Sydney, Australia.

Community Services and Health Training Australia (CSHTA). (1997). An introduction to Community Services Training. Community Services and Health Training Australia, Sydney, Australia.

Community Services and Health Training Australia (CSHTA). (1997a). Youth Work National Competency Standards Revised Final Draft October 1997. Community Services and Health Training Australia, Sydney, Australia.

Corney, T. (2002). A study of underpinning values in the curriculum of current Australian degree level youth work courses and the implications for the national training reform agenda. Masters Thesis, RMIT University, Australia.

Corney, T. (2004). Youth work: the problem of values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp.11-19.

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Jones, H. M. F. & Harris, A. (2004). Evaluation of the Diploma in Youth and Development Work Commonwealth Secretariat, London, UK.

Maunders, D. (1987). Keeping them off the Streets, Youth Organisations as Instruments of Hegemony. PhD Thesis, LaTrobe University.

Melbourne YMCA Board Minutes 13 May 1941, 8 July 1941, 4 October 1941. University of Melbourne Archives, 1/1/9. Ramsay and Johnson, Physical Education in Victoria, ACER, Melbourne, 1936.

Notley, M. (1997). Human Resource Development for the New Millennium. Commonwealth Secretariat, London, UK.

Speech by Sir Frederick Stewart, Minister of Health, introducing the National Fitness Bill, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, Vol 167 28 May - 4 July 1941, p.371.

RMIT Youth Policy Archive

Anderson, N. D. (1963). National Fitness Council of Victoria, The First Twenty-Five Years, unpublished report.

Report of the Eighth Session of the Commonwealth National Fitness Council, Australian Archives CRS A461 item E347/1/11 part 3.

The Origin and Development of the One Year Professional Youth Leader Training Course, 1947. Hamilton Smith papers, Social Policy Archive, Phillip Institute of Technology. Lawrence, op.cit., p.112.

Origin and Development, op.cit. Lawrence, op.cit., p.96. Victorian Association of Youth Leaders, Annual Report 1949-50, and Constitution of the Victorian Association of Youth Leaders, NFCSA Archives, Public Record Office of South Australia, GRG95 Box 21. Origin and Development, op.cit.

Hamilton-Smith, E. & Brownell, D. (1973). *Youth workers and their education*. Youth Workers' Association, Melbourne, Australia.

Letters from G.B.Sharp to E. Hamilton-Smith, 8 June, 30 June 1959, Hamilton-Smith to Sharp, 28 June 1959. Hamilton-Smith papers.

Ewen, op.cit. Ibid., and Report of the Youth Policy Advisory Committee, Government Printer, Sydney, 1963, p.252.

Report of the Juvenile Delinquency Advisory Committee to the Hon. A.G.Rylah, Chief Secretary of Victoria, 17 July 1956. (VPP 1955-6 Vol 2) p.31. Ibid., Recommendation q, p.93. Victoria, Youth Organisations Assistance Act.

No 6026, 1956, especially section 6 (3). This is stated in Chief Secretary Arthur Rylah's second reading speech, VPD Vol 249 September 1956, p.4147.

Letter from Lois Edwards, assistant secretary, NCW to A.R.Whatmore, Office of the Chief Secretary, 26 August 1959. Hamilton-Smith papers. A Plan for the Training of Professional Youth Leaders. Age 17 July 1959.

Anderson, N. D. Professional Youth Leadership Training (collated information from questionnaires). National Fitness Council paper, September 1963.

Hamilton-Smith Papers. The Aims, Standards and Methods of the Community Youth Clubs in Victoria, VAYC, Melbourne, 1957.

J.W.Gearing, 'Policies in the Training of Youth Leaders - Professional and Voluntary' VAYC paper, 11 June 1963.

Hamilton-Smith Papers. Youth Leaders in New Course, Age, 23 March 1965.

Report of a meeting for the purpose of discussing a Community Group Leadership Course, 10 December 1965. Public Record Office of South Australia, GRG95 Box 70, item 673. Hamilton-Smith, op.cit., p.18. Ibid., pp.100 ff.

Correspondence from Austin Paterson to Elery Hamilton-Smith, 22 March 1974.

National YMCA of Australia, The Future Significance and Desirable Levels of Training for Youth Work, South Melbourne, July 1975.

Ewen, op.cit., p.3. Ibid., p.96.

The Origin and Development of the One Year Professional Youth Leader Training Course, op.cit. YMCA College, Prospectus 1958-9.

Youth Council of Victoria, Address Given by Mr G. Smale at the Annual Council Meeting. Hamilton-Smith papers.

Syllabus of Training approved by Social Welfare Training Council for a course in Professional Youth Leadership Training, 6 May 1964. Hamilton-Smith papers.

Social Welfare Training Council, Syllabus of Training, Youth Leadership Diploma Course, 1968, 1970, 1972.

Interview with Dr Michael Doyle, Dean of Education, Phillip Institute of Technology.

SCV Coburg, Diploma of Youth Work Course Accreditation Document, 1976.

Western Australian College of Advanced Education, Bachelor of Arts Youth Work, Course Proposal 1985.

Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs, AGPS, Canberra, 1985, pp.175-80.

Eva Learner, Education and Training for Social Welfare Personnel in Australia, AGPS, Canberra, 1979, p.1. Ibid., p.14.

Australian Council of Trade Unions-Trade Development Council, Australia Reconstructed: ACTU-TDC Mission to Western Europe, AGPS, Canberra, 1987.

Social and Community Services Industry Training Plan, SACS Industry Training Board, Melbourne, March 1990, pp.139-40. Ibid. Ibid., pp.93-135.

Ibid., p.65. Ibid., p.39. Footscray College of TAFE, Prospectus and Syllabus Description, Advanced Certificate in Residential and Community Services. Correspondence between SACS ITB and YSTU, March 1990.

Part of this paper was first published by the Australian Association for Educational Research Conference, Sydney, 27-30 November 1990.

Chapter 7

Youth work training package review: More of the same or radical rationalisation?

Tim Corney & Robyn Broadbent

The development of a national youth work training package in Australia began over 15 years ago. The current package sits under the umbrella of the general Community Services Industry Training Package. The first stage of a review of this package has been completed, and the subsequent report not only confirms the recent trend towards the privatisation and employer domination of the training process (and the subsequent de-professionalisation and multi-vocational skilling of traditional youth work), but also raises serious questions regarding the future of stand alone youth work training in the VET and TAFE sectors in Australia.

The Community Services Training Package (CSHISC 2002) is the national "umbrella" package covering training courses for most areas of work in the community services sector.

As a part of a national Training Package development process, National Competency Standards have been developed for each industry sector. The standards are statements that set out the skills and knowledge required to perform a job or function to the standard of performance acceptable in the workplace (Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) 1997). They are also the means by which industry expresses its education and training requirements for entry into the profession. Through the development of industry competency standards, industries are able to make an explicit statement to training providers about the skills and knowledge they require from people in the workplace (ANTA 1997).

In the 1980s, training reform was linked to economic development. LeDuff (1994) reported that, "the common theme associated with the reported changes to national training was the need to increase the skill level of the

population to generate economic activity, improved productivity, innovation and responsiveness to technological and social change". This was also the case in the international arena: as Bowie (2004b) has pointed out, Australia mirrored the "entrepreneuralisation" of the vocational training sector across the English-speaking world at that time.

In this period, the (then) federal Labor Party and the union movement saw national competency based training as not only necessary to reform vocational training and work in Australia, but also as an integral part of their social justice strategy. The labour movement in this country believed that a national training scheme underpinned by the credentialling of worker skills and knowledge in a more flexible and user-friendly training environment, would be able to attract a wider range of participants. Women, disadvantaged young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and rural and isolated communities could be encouraged, it was believed, to join a more flexible and user-friendly vocational training system. More importantly, their skills and knowledge, and the subsequent qualification gained, would be recognised throughout Australia by both the training and higher education sectors and within the classifications of the award wages system (Keating 1992).

The development of youth work competencies

In 1989, Lindsay Holmes from the South Australian Youth Sector Training Unit (YSTU) was seconded to the Commonwealth public service to establish a national infrastructure for youth work training. In 1991, the state-based YSTUs federated to form the Australian Federation of Youth Sector Training Councils (AFYSTC), and from 1991 to 1993, as part of the federal government-led training reform process, the youth sector undertook an extended and detailed consultation in order to develop a set of national competency standards for youth work (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995: 301-05).

The initial development of the youth work competencies was carried out by the then National Youth Sector Training Unit (NYSTU) under the auspices of the AFYSTC and the National Community Services and Health Industry Training Advisory Board (CSHITAB). The AFYSTC contracted the NYSTU to coordinate and manage the competency project in association with the Curriculum Development and Standards Advisory Committee (CDSAC) of the Health and Community Services

Industry Training Advisory Board, and the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). The project was initially chaired by Ms Gill Westhorp and assisted by various noteworthy members of the project team, such as former Northern Territory YSTU coordinator Chris Brown, and Rick Flowers, a UTS academic and former consultant to the New South Wales YSTU (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995: 301-05; Community Services & Health Training Australia (CSHTA) 1996: 1-3).

The development of the initial "34 competencies" took place over a number of years and included an exhaustive program of sector-wide consultation. Although the process of gaining national agreement was difficult, a first draft of 34 competencies was released for comment and validation in October 1993 (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995).

Review of the original competencies

In 1996, the incoming federal Liberal/National coalition government wanted to implement further changes to national training policy based on their election platform of the previous year. Under the new Liberal/National industry training policy, a review of the sector's youth work competency standards was undertaken by the new coalition government-appointed Health and Community Services Industry Training Advisory Board (HACSITAB) and without the direct involvement of the youth sector training bodies.

Various revised drafts surfaced sporadically for sector comment and endorsement over the next couple of years. In July and October 1996, and then in October 1997, versions of a significantly reduced set of competencies, nine in all, appeared. In May 1998, the "final" endorsed set of competencies was released to the sector (NYSTU 1993; CSHTA 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1998). This revision process included limited sector-wide consultation, and the youth sector was given no specific opportunity to make explicit to government its concerns regarding its training needs, or the radical rationalisation and reduction of the number of competencies. Broadbent (1998) noted that it was a serious indictment of a board that was mandated with the role of industry consultation and representation.

Review of current competencies

The current Community Services Training Package (CHC02) was first endorsed in 1999 and last reviewed in 2002. It is one of the training packages maintained by the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council (CSHISC), which recently decided to undertake a review of the package, including a review of the youth work training competencies and courses contained within it. The CHC02 phase one scoping report, which was undertaken in 2006 and is now publicly available, describes the process undertaken thus far and the recommendations of the first stage of the review (CSHISC 2007: 8).

Youth work and the vocational training debate

In 1995, on the cusp of the development of the Community Services Training Package, Maunders and Broadbent (1995) outlined the key parameters of good youth work education. This framework was further developed by Watts and Singh (1998) and included the following elements: a professional and informed orientation to youth work; knowledge of politics and youth policy; an integrated knowledge of the youth affairs field; interpersonal and communication skills; administration skills; research skills for obtaining and producing information and advocacy; and sociopolitical education. Similarly, the national youth work consultation undertaken by Broadbent (1997) identified a significant level of youth worker support for a wide-reaching level of training, that included an understanding of the social, economic and political context that workers operate within; research and policy skills; and the need for a professional code of practice, and its inclusion within the education and training process.

The widely held belief that knowledge underpinned with political or philosophical values is crucial for good education and training of youth work professionals has, however, been relegated to something of a backwater in educational theory. It has been left behind in the wake of the federal Liberal/National coalition government's rush (1996 to 2007) to develop a particularly behaviourist, mechanistic and employer-driven approach to vocational training (Anderson 1997; Schofield 2001; Mounier 2001). What this has meant, in effect, is that the door has been opened to industry to radically reconstruct youth worker training in the VET sector. This has seen the provision and content of youth work training change in a number of very distinct ways.

Changes to the provision of training

As Bowie (2004a) has noted, since the rollout of the national training reform agenda, there has been an ever-increasing number of private providers accessing public education monies to train their staff and/or clients in the image of their organisation and, more importantly, their organisational values. Schofield (2001) goes further and suggests that TAFE, in the current contestable and entrepreneurial environment, has been forced to abandon what she terms as the three logics of skill - "technical, behavioural and cognitive" - in favour of narrow, industry-defined skill formations based on competencies. Schofield (2001) refers to it as the social construction of skill, and goes on to make the point that skill now means whatever employers and policymakers want it to mean.

In the case of youth work, what employers and policymakers have wanted is a market approach that allows public education monies to fund a growth in private enterprise training, without the underpinning social policy and research knowledge that has traditionally been a part of curriculum models in youth work training. According to Marginson, "education is now seen as a branch of economic policy..." and "...social policy in education, is mostly understood as labour market policy" (1993).

This move in political and economic philosophy has created a new paradigmatic framework for the provision and development of VET models. In Victoria, this reform movement has radically changed the VET sector, which is now characterised by:

- *a competitive open market for VET*
- *a decreasing number of public providers*
- *an increasing number of private providers*
- *the use of VET as a key economic tool for labour market management*
- *direct influence by industry and business in all aspects of training provision*
- *a reducing recurrently funded element for public TAFE institutes*
- *a growing element of public funds available as a contestable resource*

(Marron 2001).

As a result of these changes, we now have youth work training being delivered by an increasingly diverse range of providers. The provider list, publicly available

from the National Training Information Service (2007), includes sporting, recreation and hobby groups, churches, charities and welfare organisations, and private for-profit training companies. Many of these organisations use youth work training as a form of practice with disengaged and at-risk young people. The values and practices taught in these institutions are often those that are consistent with the training organisation's belief systems, rather than those traditionally associated with youth work. This is not surprising given who is signing off on the assessment criteria (Bowie 2004a).

It is also through these training settings that the traditional "practice tools" of youth work, such as recreation, outdoor adventure activities and the arts, have all found a way to legitimate their roles as standalone theoretical practice frameworks that pose as the solution to the complex issues that young people currently face. For example, the CHC02 review suggests a "new" qualification, from Certificate 1 to Advanced Diploma, in 'Adventure-based youth work and recreation' and a new graduate qualification in 'Adventure therapy for young people' (CSHISC 2007: 34-35).

Historically, good youth work practice would suggest that recreation, outdoor adventure programs and other informal learning "activities", operate as "practice tools" to assist in providing young people with the skills needed to traverse adolescence, build relationships, improve personal development skills and encourage a level of self reflection, resilience and self esteem. Traditionally, youth work has not seen these "tools" as frameworks for practice in and of themselves (Maunders 1990; Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995).

For example, Hulett (1997) asserts that a range of "youth arts activities" are powerful crime prevention "tools" that offer safe and constructive environments for young people. Similarly Broadbent (2000), in her study of seven western region local government authorities, concluded that youth service "activity" programs act as a primary "tool" for engaging young people. The engagement can be through diverse "activities", such as music or arts, which can be used within an outreach program, or a link with the local school. Furthermore, youth workers interviewed by Broadbent described how they used their "practice tools" and activities to engage young people with services relevant to their immediate needs. This practice suggests that many young people engage in services for recreation

and social opportunities before issues are identified. However, importantly, the workers noted that it was the rapport that was built through the use of those "tools" that enabled workers to identify young people's broader issues and needs (Broadbent 2000).

As such, "tools" or "skill sets" such as "recreation or adventure therapy" cannot work in isolation from a holistic youth work approach. The keys to strengths-based, solution-focussed work with young people are consideration of not only the theory, practice and underpinning values of concepts such as empowerment, participation and community development, but also of issues including education, employment, housing and family stability.

Funding and the rationalisation of courses

Another key construct of youth work training, that of standalone course delivery, is also under attack, albeit by necessity from a resource-starved public TAFE sector (Bowie 2004a). The alternative to the private sector delivering youth work training, is public TAFE colleges delivering common competencies to a diverse classroom. Youth work students in these settings sit in the same classroom as students training as disability workers, drug and alcohol workers, juvenile justice workers, and welfare and community development workers. Young people and youth work practice frameworks are not the focus of the training, the practice frameworks presented are likely to be those that focus on working with adults or children or people in forced detention or state care. It is also highly likely that the trainer, armed with a Certificate 4 in Workplace Training, has never worked as a youth worker or in any comparable setting with young people.

The 2007 review of the Community Services package aims to extend that classroom to include the full range of children's services as well as juvenile justice workers and child protection workers. The review suggests the rationalisation of these current standalone courses on the basis of, "limited vocational outcomes" (CSHISC 2007: 49). The Industry Reference Group (IRG) has already been structured to reflect these "proposed" rationalisations (CSHISC 2007: 51). As a result it will now be up to the trainee to interpret their training and apply it to their particular client group. These vocationally combined training settings will contribute to a confusion of youth work values, skills and practices with other vocations.

VET and the de-professionalising of youth work

It is within this climate of large-scale and ongoing change to Australia's postcompulsory education and training system (Keating 1998), that a comprehensive re-evaluation of the notion of professionalism and professional education in the human services has also been taking place (Pennington 1992; Broadbent 1998; Fook, Ryan & Hawkins 2000). It is of no surprise that a re-evaluation of the values underpinning professional human service vocations (such as youth work), and the values underpinning educational pedagogy for the professions, has been taking place amid the introduction of federal and state government-sponsored economic policies that favour a competitive, free-market approach and the downsizing and privatising of the welfare state (Anderson 1997; Bowie 2004a).

The human services and their professions have until fairly recently experienced the luxury of a relatively long period of stability. However, according to both Pennington (1992) and Fook, Ryan and Hawkins (2000), this period is now over. The previous authority and dominance of the professions is now under attack from both governmental and managerial controls influenced strongly by the aforementioned policies of "reform", and from the grass roots concerns of both employers and consumers seeking a greater accountability from the human service professions (Fook, Ryan & Hawkins 2000). Codes of practice and professional associations are seen as no longer enough to unify and sustain the integrity and mission of the professions. Thus, Fook, Ryan and Hawkins (2000) argue that for the professions to survive, they must re-evaluate and rediscover the values that embody and underpin their reason for being. This is of importance to youth work at this time.

It is no surprise, therefore, that students training for a professional career as a youth worker in the community services sector should be some of the first to feel the full effects of these reforms and re-evaluations. It is no surprise because fundamental philosophical, political and economic questions about the nature of education, the relationship between the academy, the public and the private sector, the notion of professionalism and the very essence of what it means to be a youth worker, are at stake (Pennington 1992; Broadbent 1997, 1998; Fook, Ryan & Hawkins 2000; Bowie 2004a).

It has been well over 10 years since the Heath and Community Services Industry Training Advisory Board first introduced national youth work training standards (competencies) and a uniform national training package (NTP) for youth work (CSHTA 1996). At the time of the introduction there were numerous critics of both the standardisation of youth work training and the introduction of a competency-based training (CBT) pedagogy. The arguments against CBT were significant, particularly the behaviourist nature of assessment and lack of underpinning knowledge in the delivery of the NTP (Broadbent 1997, 1998; Schofield 2001; Mounier 2001; Corney 2003; Bowie 2004a), and the endorsement of value-neutral competencies (Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project (CSICMP) 1992a, 1992b: 6-7; CSHTA 1996: 8). It was suggested, at that time, that value-neutral competencies would threaten the integrity of the current theory and practice of youth work, the current higher degree-level education of youth workers and, ultimately, the concept of a youth work profession.

It was suggested by Corney (2003) that the introduction of TAFE-level qualifications in youth work would create a two-tiered class system of "education versus training". A privileged class of people educated in the universities for the professions and a lower class of people trained in the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system to be led by the professions.

It was also argued by Corney (2003) that the Freireian (Freire 1972) and adult education principles found within the educational value frameworks of degree-level youth work could only be applied in a very limited way within an outcomes and CBT approach. For example, it was argued that the adult education principles of self-determination, and the closely aligned community development and professional youth work practice values of empowerment and participation, were heterogenous and context-focused outcomes, which appeared to contradict the rigid, single "outcome" focus of the "value neutral" competency-based framework (Corney 2004b).

Even more alarming than the afore-mentioned concerns for professional youth workers, was the realisation that the NTP/CBT axis was driven by a particular concept of industry that saw employers taking on the role of "curriculum authority". As such, questions were raised regarding who would ultimately benefit from the "de-professionalisation" of youth work via the development and

implementation of National Youth Sector Competency Standards and Training Packages such as CHC02 (Broadbent 1998; Corney 2003).

Employers as curriculum authority

These concerns appear to be as valid now as they were then. The latest review of the national training package (CSHISC 2007) is being driven by the Community Service and Health Industry Skills Council, which describes its primary rationale as, "… helping individual enterprises and broad industry sectors – and their workforces – integrate skills development needs and business goals" (CSHISC 2007), and the Children's and Youth Services Industry Reference Group (CYSIRG), which is weighted heavily in favour of employers.

According to the CHCSISC youth work training package review document, the CYSIRG has 12 employer representatives out of a total of 19 possible representatives. The other seven are delegates from children's organisations; not a single youth affairs peak body is represented. This is on a reference group that is responsible for the review and final endorsement of youth work training across Australia! This raises serious questions about the reliability and integrity of the scoping report and recommendations which may be inherently biased (CSHISC 2007: 72).

For example, it is no wonder that with seven children's work delegates on the CYSIRG that the scoping report recommends, under the heading '6.4.2 Rationalisation of Qualifications', support for the "rationalisation of youth work with child protection and juvenile justice …" (CSHISC 2007: 49). Or, again, given that none of the universities currently teaching degree and higher degree level courses in youth work were consulted in the review process, that the report recommends that "the development of vocational graduate qualifications be explicitly covered in the review …" (CSHISC 2007).

Conclusion

Fifteen years on, there are now more VET-level youth work courses available than university higher degrees. Consequently, there are more youth workers graduating and practising with VET-level qualifications than those from higher education courses across Australia. In 2005 alone, over 2,200 students graduated

with a Certificate IV (CSHISC 2007: 30). This situation, coupled with the increase in both private and generic training provision, has seen a major reshaping of the youth sector and the concept of professional youth work as a vocationally specific, value-driven form of human service work (Broadbent 1998; Maunders 1990; Bowie 2004a; Corney 2004a; CSHISC 2007).

As such, it appears that unless youth workers stand up and vigorously engage in the training and associated debates, either via the state-based youth affairs peak bodies, trade unions or through the development of a national professional association, the risk of losing the vocationally specific identification and training of youth workers as a legitimate human service profession is imminent (Corney & Hoiles 2006; Corney 2006).

References

Anderson, D. (1997). Auditing Labor's training reforms. *Education Links*, 55, Spring.

Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). (1996). *Youth sector national competency standards*. Community Services and Health Training Australia, Sydney, Australia.

Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). (1997). *Guidelines for training package developers*. Australian National Training Authority, Melbourne, Australia.

Bowie, V. (2004a). Youth work: Has it reached its used-by date? *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp. 34-38.

Bowie, V. (2004b). Youth worker training: Teaching and learning from an international perspective, *Journal of Child and Youth Care Work*, 19, pp.192-201.

Broadbent, R. (1997). *National youth work training project: National consultation report*, Curriculum Development and Research Unit, Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia.

Broadbent, R. (1998). National vocational training policy and youth work training. *Youth Studies Australia*, 17(2), pp.11-17.

Broadbent, R. (2000). *Spirit of cooperation youth research project*. Department of Human Services and the Seven Local Government Authorities in the Western Region, Victoria, Australia.

Corney, T. (2003). A study of underpinning values in the curriculum of current Australian degree level youth work courses and the implications for the National Training Reform Agenda. Unpublished thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Corney, T. (2004a). Youth work: The problem of values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp.11-19.

Corney, T. (2004b). Youth work and community development: kissing cousins or comrades in arms? *New Community Quarterly*, 2(3), pp.17-20.

Corney, T. (2006). Youth work in schools – should youth workers also be teachers? *Youth Studies Australia*, 25(3), pp.17-24.

Corney, T. & Hoiles, L. (2006). Why the youth sector in Victoria needs a code of ethical practice. *Yikes: Journal of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria*, 4(10), pp.1-6.

Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council (CSHISC). (2002). *Community services training package*, (CHC02), Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council Ltd., NSW.

Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council (CSHISC). (2007). *CHC02 review phase one scoping report*, Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council Ltd., NSW, January.

Community Services and Health Training Australia (CSHTA). (1996). *Youth sector national competency standards*, National Community Services & Health Industry Training Advisory Board, Victoria, October.

Community Services and Health Training Australia (CSHTA). (1997a). *Youth work national competency standards revised final draft*, Community Services and Health Training Australia, NSW, October.

Community Services and Health Training Australia (CSHTA). (1997b). *Youth sector competency standards*, National Community Services and Health Industry Training Advisory Board, Victoria, December.

Community Services and Health Training Australia (CSHTA). (1998). *Youth sector competency standards*, National Community Services and Health Industry Training Advisory Board, Victoria, May.

Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project. (1992a). *Setting a policy framework for formulating competency standards in the community services industry: Issues*, Discussion paper no.1, Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project, Hawthorn, February.

Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project. (1992b). *Setting a policy framework for formulating competency standards in the community services industry: Issues*, Discussion paper no.2, Community Services Industry Competency Methodology Project, Hawthorn, August.

Fook, J., Ryan, M. & Hawkins, L. (2000). *Professional expertise, practice theory and education for working in uncertainty.* Whiting & Birch, London, UK.

Freire, P. (1972). *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. Penguin, Australia.

Hulett, S. (1997). Program planning and evaluation: Using logic models in arts programs for at-risk youth. *Americans for the Arts Monographs*, 1(6).

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Keating, J. (1998). *Australian training reform – revised edition: Implications for schools*. Curriculum Corporation, Australia.

Keating, P. (1992). *One nation: The statement*. Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, Australia.

LeDuff, G. (1994). *Employment related key competencies and the VET sector*. Department of Employment, Training and Further Education, Canberra, Australia.

Marginson, S. (1993). *Education and public policy in Australia*. Cambridge University Press, Sydney, Australia.

Marginson, S. (2001). Knowledge economy and knowledge policy. *Education for work*, conference proceedings, August.

Marron, A. (2001). Education for work – some views from the bridge. *Education for work*, conference proceedings, August.

Maunders, D. (1990). Youth work as a response to social values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 9(2), pp.42-50.

Maunders, D. & Broadbent, R. (1995). A career in youth work. *Youth Studies Australia*, 14(2), pp.20-26.

Mounier, A. (2001). *The three logics of skills in French literature*. NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training, Australia.

National Community Services & Health Industry Training Advisory Board with the Australian Federation of Youth Sector Training Councils. (1993). *Draft national competency standards for the youth sector, National Youth Sector* Training Unit, October.

National Training Information Service. (2007). viewed 15 August 2007. www.ntis.gov.au

Pennington, D. (1992). How should the professions and the universities respond to the competency standards movement? Address to the Australian Council of Professions.

Schofield, K. (2001). Vocational education & training – lessons learned. *Education for work*. Conference proceedings, August.

Watts, V. & Singh, M. (1998). The professional education of youth workers: A role for teacher education? *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 23(1).

First published in Youth Studies Australia v.26, n.3, pp. 36-43, 2007, and reproduced with permission.

Chapter 8

Why youth workers need to collectively organise

The collective identity of youth workers and their capacity to industrially organise is being eroded by deskilling, via the introduction of 'semi skilled specialisation' in TAFE training. There are also implications for the quality of service delivery, particularly for those young people most at risk. Recent attempts at professionalising the youth sector have focused on 'codes of ethics', and left pay and conditions issues to community sector unions. The history of nursing provides a case example of the benefits of combining professional aspirations with industrial organisation. If the professional and industrial interests of the community services sector are combined, the collective voice of youth workers will be strengthened and the quality of service provision will be enhanced.

Tim Corney, Robyn Broadbent & Lisa Darmanin

There are many factors that contribute to the current erosion of the collective identity of youth workers. To date, the disparate nature of the industry and the competitive nature of government funding to the sector are important factors. Agencies are in competition to gain government funding to deliver services, which discourages ongoing sector-wide collaboration between youth workers. Funding is often short term, which means that developing a continuity of professional practice, networks and outcomes that build collective industrial strength and history in a lasting manner is difficult.

The current government's training agenda, delivered through industry training boards, deconstructs the practice of 'generalist' youth work. The introduction of 'semi-skilled specialisation' in TAFE training leads to 'deskilling' and the subsequent eroding of pay and conditions. In the community services sector, there are approximately 50 qualifications, from work experience and entry level to advanced practice qualifications, endorsed through a framework aligned

with the Australian Qualifications Framework (Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council (CSHISC) 2007). While some argue that these new, 'specialist' (narrower) qualifications have been introduced to recognise the increasing complexity involved in the delivery of quality services, the reality is that these qualifications become a substitute for an undergraduate degree in many instances, and allow employers and government to employ and pay less qualified staff to perform what is recognised as highly complex and skilled youth work. This is essentially deskilling.

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic), in their report 'Who's carrying the can?' (2006), agrees. The report argues strongly that the holistic wellbeing of young people is supported by generalist youth work and not an issues-based response undertaken through the lens of a 'specialist'. What is required is generalist youth work that facilitates an integrated system of support for young people. Such a model provides a sound framework on which to base the provision of other services and ensures timely responses as young people transition from adolescence to adulthood (YACVic 2006).

Deskilling the youth work industry

The definition and practice of 'generalist' youth work is being eroded, via semi-skilled specialisation, and this leads to 'deskilling', segmentation of work and the loss of pay and conditions. The only way that workers can protect the uniqueness of their occupation and enhance their pay and conditions, is by coming together and collectively organising to regain what has been lost. However, the depoliticising of workers largely through the implementation of "value free" competency-based training (Corney 2004; Corney & Broadbent 2007), combined with contestable and competitive tendering, has pitted workers against each other and weakened youth workers' ability to collectively bargain. This sector-wide amnesia regarding the role and history of industrial struggles to protect the rights of workers, has been encouraged by governments and employers keen to decentralise the industry, and agreeing to minimum standards for employment, thereby effectively devaluing higher qualifications and deskilling youth work.

Deskilling and Taylorism

Deskilling or Taylorism is a central concept in labour theory. Braverman's (1974) criticism of modern Taylorist forms of capitalist production was that it

'deskilled' highly skilled workers by dividing their skills into numerous smaller and independent tasks. This division of skills reorganised the way skilled work was undertaken so that less skilled and less well paid workers could do the task. This, he argued, had the effect of taking away a worker's "craftsmanship" and their sense of identity as a worker with a particular and specialised skill. This had the further effect of weakening the broader collective identity of workers with the same identifiable skill or knowledge, and placed that skill or knowledge in the hands of a much smaller number of highly paid managers.

Wood (1982), building on Braverman, describes Taylorism in terms of three principles:

> *... the rendering of the labour process independent of craft, tradition or workers' knowledge ... the separation of conception from executions and the use of the managerial monopoly over knowledge to control the labour process in detail* (76).

Littler (1982) adds three further processes to Wood's definition:

> *1) the process whereby the shopfloor loses the right to design and plan; i.e. separation of planning and doing; 2) the fragmentation of work into meaningless segments; 3) the redistribution of tasks amongst unskilled and semi-skilled labour, associated with labour cheapening* (25).

As such, employers and governments, using the methods of Taylorism, have deskilled the work of university-trained 'generalist' youth workers, by dividing their work among the less well-trained 'specialists'. This has had several so-called 'advantages' for employers, boards of management and governments, in particular the lowering of labour costs, but little or no advantage for generalist university-trained youth workers.

Deskilling has also given management greater control over the workforce as it is easier to monitor one generalist university-trained youth worker, who then monitors the semi-skilled, who then monitor the unskilled workers and so on. As such, segmentation acts against the notion of occupational solidarity in which workers come together to protect their common interests. There is also concern among youth workers about the effect of this division on service delivery, particularly for those young people most at risk (YACVic 2006).

Professionalisation versus proletarianisation

In order to "save" youth work from deskilling and segmentation, many in the youth sector are arguing for collective organisation via the professionalisation of youth work (Bessant 2004a, 2004b; Hoiles & Corney 2006). However, there are those (Quixley & Doostkhah 2007) who view professionalisation as detrimental to the interests of youth workers.

For example, Quixley and Doostkhah (2007), writing on behalf of the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland, see the professionalisation process, and in particular codes of ethics, as unnecessarily regulating and as "conservatising" the free agency of youth workers. This makes sense if youth workers are in fact free agents, defined as self-employed and acting on a fee-for-service basis and not defined as "salaried workers", constrained by and reliant upon government or NGOs to employ them.

As most youth workers are salaried and are subject to direction from their employer, they are to some degree already proletarianised and not 'free agent' professionals at all. Viewing youth workers as 'workers' changes the nature of attempts to organise them under the banner of professionalisation, and breaks down the false demarcations between collective organisation, as either unionism or professionalisation, that continue to be drawn in debates within the current Victorian youth sector (Grogan 2004; Bessant 2004a, 2004b). These polarising debates tend to focus collective organisation on codes of practice and training, and leave the industrial pay and conditions issues to existing community sector unions, rather than combine the notion of professionalism with that of unionism.

Ironically, the only successful and long-lasting attempt at collectively organising youth workers was the Victorian Youth Workers' Association, which to date is the only youth sector organisation to have successfully achieved the twin aims of university-level education and industrial award classification for youth work (Goodwin 1991).

Training versus pay

Youth workers have long sought to lengthen university-based training programs and to raise admission standards in an attempt to bring these requirements

into line with those of the more 'prestigious' and status-laden professions, such as social work or psychology. These goals were largely achieved in the 1980s (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995).

Consequently, the whole question of whether youth work is a profession, or can become one (Bessant 2004a, 2004b), is a distraction from the real issue. The real issue is the degree to which youth workers can resist deskilling and segmentation, maintain some measure of occupational identity within government and NGO bureaucracies, and find enough in common with each other to collectively organise and bargain for increased pay and conditions.

In the past two decades much of the training debate in the youth sector has been followed by intervention from government and employers via industry skills councils and advisory bodies. Their interventions in the form of 'value neutral' competency-based training and National Training Packages (Corney 2004) have dumbed down the youth sector. They have stripped it of a focus on practice standards and underpinning values and knowledge, and removed the impetus for collective action to enhance pay and conditions. If youth workers come to understand this development within the broader political, economic and social policy context, they will be galvanised to see collective action as the only means of gaining recognition, not only in the form of professional status, but also, more importantly, in the form of increased wages and industrial conditions.

The Australian Nursing Federation

The history of the nursing profession in Australia and its collective organisation, The Australian Nursing Federation, provides an important example of the tensions and subsequent collective struggles involved in building a salaried occupation into a profession that has industrial strength.

The establishment of the Victorian Trained Nurses' Association (VTNA) in 1900 marked the start of Victorian nurses' efforts to build a profession. Their initial focus was on registration, training and education. Registration was essential to, first, protect the profession by ensuring an identity that prevented overseas nurses with less training from filling positions, and, second, to provide international recognition that enabled state-trained Victorian nurses to work overseas (Colson 2001).

Interestingly, from the outset, registration was about forming a collective identity in a way that was not unlike that used by some unions who collectively organise members on the basis of their sets of skills and knowledge (which are identified with particular employment). To this end the nurses' professional association made significant contributions to establishing education and training, and progressing nursing from being a subset of "hospital employees" to a separate and professional identity (Colson 2001).

Nevertheless, the dichotomy of professionalism versus unionism began early on and continued through to the 1970s. In her history of nursing, Colson (2001) makes the point that the tension between preserving professional identity and demanding decent wages and conditions emerged as early as the 1930s. By 1934 the VTNA had become the Royal Victorian College of Nursing (RVCN), which reflected its greater involvement with nursing education (Australian Trade Union Archives (ATUA) 2002). It took the influence of the 1960s 'New Left' anti-war and counterculture movements to change the industrial face of nursing and many of its traditional structures.

The sixties radically altered societies of the Western world. In Australia, the baby boomers were coming of age and redefining social movements. University education was fast becoming accessible to the masses, and an expectation of many as the new rite of passage. Professional identity was gaining more importance, as were the commensurate wages and conditions of the new consumer society. Nursing was changing, and nurses were increasingly joining their union, which had previously been nationalised as the Australian Nursing Federation/ Employees Section (ANF/ES) (Colson 2001).

In Victoria, however, it took until October 1975 for the impracticality of having two representative bodies for nurses, the "professional" (RVCN) and the "industrial" (ANF/ES), to force them to become one – the Royal Australian Nurses Federation (RANF), Victorian Branch (ATUA 2002). All other states had already amalgamated their professional and industrial organisations into the RANF. The decision marked the end of an era. Although the RVCN had an outstanding record of achievement, the need for the nursing profession to have a strong united industrial voice, along with professional and educational recognition, was now more evident than ever (Colson 2001).

The lesson that youth workers can learn from the professional and industrial experiences of nurses, is that it takes more than cohabitation of the respective organisations to achieve success in both areas. It is the collective strength that comes from a united approach that enables long term professional and industrial gains to be made. The more a profession is recognised as requiring skills that other occupations don't have, the greater its status and the higher the qualifications of people attracted to it. And, by extension, the better the conditions those practising it demand (Colson 2001).

The nurses' union now insists its professional focus has not only been retained, but expanded. As evidence, it points to its three professional officers; its support for special interest groups; its on-site education and training centre; and the professional advances achieved by embedding such requirements as career structures and nurse–patient ratios in industrial agreements (Colson 2001).

As youth workers pursue collective organisation via the professionalisation agenda, it is timely to consider the lessons learnt from the history of nursing, and the importance of joining the professionalisation cause to that of industrial rights, pay and conditions.

Youth work and the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission

Social and community services workers (including youth workers) in the not-for-profit sector in Queensland have recently been beneficiaries of improved professional recognition. In a traditional 'industrial' approach, the Queensland Services Union ran an equal remuneration case to address historical under-valuation of social and community services work. On 6 May 2009, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) handed down a decision that awarded between 18% and 37% wage increases to workers in these areas (QSU v QCCI and Others [2009] QIRComm 33; 191 QGIG 19, 6 May 2009).

The claim for increased recognition of the work through rates of pay was based on the Equal Remuneration Principle that an award provides "equal remuneration for work of equal and comparable value" (Equal Remuneration Principle (2002) 170 QGIG 15 and State Wage Case (2008) 188 QGIG 16).

The application also achieved pay equity by correcting historical undervaluation, and acknowledged changes in work value for workers who were degree qualified and above. In the decision, Commissioner Fisher stated that a "confluence of factors … when taken as a whole, have contributed to the work being undervalued". Such factors included:

- *undervaluation directly associated with "care" work being gendered*
- *changes in the nature of the work environment in which it is carried out that have not been reflected in the pay rates*
- *lack of bargaining/industrial collectivity,*
- *low government funding of the sector, which effectively sets a lower than adequate price for service delivery*
- *the origins of the community sector, that is as work performed by "well-intentioned women in a voluntary capacity or by those with a vocation"*

(QSU v QCCI and Others [2009] QIRComm 33; 191 QGIG 19, 6 May 2009, section 4: 6).

In many ways, the Fischer decision represents a watershed in the professional recognition of all social and community workers, including youth workers, in the not-for-profit sector. The case has accepted what many youth work professionals already know, that "the work performed is complex and requires the application of high-level skills often described as emotional intelligence" (QSU v QCCI and Others [2009] QIRComm 33; 191 QGIG 19, 6 May 2009, section 4.2.1: 8). Further, youth workers' level of responsibility associated with work is high, given the social, medical or legal consequences that may flow from the advice, assistance, counselling, support and advocacy they provide. This work can only be adequately performed by highly trained and qualified workers. The case recognises this through its discussion regarding appropriate classification levels. Indeed, the case sought guidance from the *Report of the First Pay Equity Inquiry, Worth Valuing* (QIRC 2001). This report stated that qualifications and training are objective means by which to assess skills and knowledge and hence the work value of positions.

Through the *Worth Valuing* report, it was objectively determined that training, qualifications and level of complexity of the work were undervalued, hence the awarding of significant increases in wages. The case clearly establishes that pay and conditions are linked to levels of training and qualifications. Therefore, professional

recognition and identity cannot be considered separately. If youth workers are looking to professionalise in Victoria, all elements need to be brought together.

This is also evidenced in the experience of nurses (Colson 2001). Youth workers' attempts to professionalise should be joined to the industrial efforts of their union in order to achieve better professional and industrial outcomes. There is a history of exclusion of the social and community services sector from industrial regulation. It should be noted that it was only in 1983 that a decision by the High Court (*R v Coldham; ex parte Australian Social Welfare Union* (1983) 153 CLR 297) recognised social and community services as an industry, to enable an industrial Award to be made to regulate terms and conditions for workers. Youth workers and the community services industry have been playing 'industrial recognition catch-up' since the Award's inception. This has been a major contributor to the poor working conditions experienced by workers in the sector (Briggs , Meagher & Healy 2007: 497).

Conclusion

As the community services and allied industries continue to develop as complex, professional and skilled industries, to not join the 'professional' with the 'industrial' is to divide and weaken the collective voice of youth workers. As evidenced by the pay equity case in Queensland, various campaigns by unions in the field to address these industrial issues add to the progression of the professionalisation agenda. To undertake a professionalisation campaign that is separate to, or at odds with, the industrial agenda of unions will only undermine the prospects of increased professional and industrial outcomes, and give ground to those who want to divide the identity and collective strength of youth workers.

References

Australian Trade Union Archives. (2002). *Royal Victorian College of Nursing (1934–1975),* University of Melbourne, viewed 26 August 2009. www.atua.org.au/biogs/ALE1057b.htm

Braverman, H. (1974). *Labor and monopoly capital: The degradation of work in the twentieth century*. Monthly Review Press, New York, US.

Briggs, C., Meagher, G. & Healy K. (2007). Becoming an industry: The struggle of social and community workers for award coverage, 1976–2001. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 49(4), pp.497-521.

Bessant, J. (2004a). "Up periscope": The future for youth work in Australia. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(3), pp.20-25.

Bessant, J. (2004b). The Loch Ness monster and professionalism. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp.26-33.

Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council (CSHISC). (2007). *CHC02 review phase one scoping report*, January.

Colson, I. (2001). *More than just the money: 100 years of the Victorian nurses' union*. Prowling Tiger Press, Northcote, Australia.

Corney, T. (2004). Youth work: The problem of values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp.11-19.

Corney, T. & Broadbent, R. (2007). Youth work training package review: More of the same or radical rationalisation? *Youth Studies Australia*, 26(3), pp.36-43.

Goodwin, V. (1991). Youth worker perception of the term "professional" – a Victorian study. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 18(2), pp.43-63.

Grogan, P. (2004). *That old chestnut: The professionalisation of youth work in Victoria*: *A discussion paper*. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria.

Hoiles, L. & Corney, T. (2006). Why the youth sector in Victoria needs a code of ethical practice. *Yikes: Journal of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria*, 4(10).

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. South Melbourne, Australia: Macmillan.

Littler, C. (1982). *The development of the labour process in capitalist societies: A comparative study of work organisations*. Heinemann Educational, Oxford, UK.

Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC). (2001). *Worth valuing: A report of the pay equity inquiry*, QIRC, QLD, p.152.

Quixley, S. & Doostkhah, S. (2007). *Conservatising youth work? Dangers of a code of ethics*. Youth Affairs Network Of Queensland.

Youth Affairs Council of Victorian (YACVic). (2006). *Who's carrying the can? A report into youth service gaps in Victoria*. YACVIC and VCOSS, Melbourne, Australia.

Wood, S. (1982). *Degradation of work: Skill deskilling and the labour process*. Hutchinson, London, UK.

First published in Youth Studies Australia, v.28, n.3, pp. 41-46, 2009, and reproduced with permission.

Chapter 9

Why the youth sector in Victoria needs a Code of Ethical Practice

Tim Corney & Lauren Hoiles

The youth sector in Victoria has a long history of failed attempts at creating and sustaining both a professional association and a related code of ethical practice for youth work (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995; Grogan 2004). However with the enactment of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*, and the *Working With Children Act 2005*, there is now legislative impetus to look again at the practice of youth work.

The appointment, under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*, of the Child Safety Commissioner, and his public challenges to the youth sector to rethink the issues of safety and protection of both young people and those that work with them (2006), also reopened the debates associated with professional practice and Codes of Ethics for youth work in Victoria. Given these developments it appeared that the time was now right for the youth sector to look again at a Code of Ethical Practice for youth workers.

What is a Code of Ethical Conduct or Practice?

A Code of Ethical Practice (CEP) is a document developed by a body of practitioners to provide an agreed framework, or set of values, for professional practice. A Code of Ethics can also be described as:

> *a set of norms based on the belief systems or values of a group of people who agree to adhere to commonly held philosophical principles*
> (Outten,1991: 8).

At the basic level a Code of Ethical Practice provides a set of statements about what is considered 'best practice', while at its best a Code of Ethical Practice provides an overarching guide for workers to apply ethical principles in a specific practice context (Youth Action and Policy Association (YAPA) 2005). A CEP also provides

workers with a frame of reference in which to develop ethical awareness, create discussion of ethical issues, and implement a good and safe practice for both clients and workers. The Code may be self-regulatory and voluntarily adhered to, or it may be imposed by government or sector based imperatives (YAPA 2005; Child Safety Commissioner 2006; Barwick 2006).

In the UK, the National Youth Agency (NYA) has produced a Statement of Principles that aims to guide the work practice of youth workers and also "serve as a focus for debate and discussion about ethical practice issues" (NYA 2004: 2). The Statement of Principles is not designed to be a rulebook, where youth workers are monitored and 'told what to do', nor is it designed to provide a set of standards that must be rigidly adhered to. Rather it provides a "starting point for outlining the broad principles of ethical conduct" (NYA 2004: 2), and aims to assist in the development of "ethical awareness and encourage reflection as the basis for ethical conduct" (NYA 2004: 2).

Similarly, the Code of Ethics developed by the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA), provides an "ethical foundation" to inform practice. The Code consists of a list of agreed principles that include, among others, topics such as primary client, empowerment, duty of care, and practice boundaries (YACWA, 2003).

In professions other than youth work, a CEP can range from a one-page document of dot-point principles outlining ethical behaviour, thoughts and values (Surrey County Council 2006), to a manual with professional standards that must be adhered to (Barwick 2006). Ultimately, whichever form it takes, a CEP is a document developed *by* the profession, *for* the profession, to assist and guide in the development and implementation of ethical and safe practice for both clients and workers (Barwick 2006).

Safety of clients

First and foremost, the safety of young people is fundamental to the practice of youth work. The *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005: 6* states that, "those who develop and provide services, as well as parents, should give the highest priority to the promotion and protection of a child's safety, health, development, education and wellbeing". Creating a safe environment where young people are

able to actively participate in their community is at the core of youth work (Youth Coalition of the ACT 2003; NYA 2004).

One of the most effective ways a profession or sector can ensure the safety of the people it works with is to implement a Code of Ethical Practice (Child Safety Commissioner 2006). A CEP helps to protect young people from harm by making clear "professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships" (Child Safety Commissioner 2006: 11). This does not mean that creative ways of working with young people will be marginalised, but rather that those creative ways can be developed under a set of principles that ensure the safety and wellbeing of the young person is central to any decisions made. "It is not enough for youth workers to claim that their special relationship with young people is so special that it provides complete justification for their work" (Barwick commenting on Brent 2006: 19).

A Code of Ethical Practice also contributes to an environment of transparency, and enables the sector to ensure people are accountable for their behaviour (Child Safety Commissioner 2006). Again, this is not about the adoption of a big brother mentality, but rather holding up a set of clear and realistic expectations of behaviour that youth workers can utilise to ensure their professional practice is conducive to the safety and wellbeing of the young person (YACWA 2003; Grogan 2004; Child Safety Commissioner 2006).

The relationship between client and youth worker is a professional relationship, and power is invested in youth workers to advocate for young people. This power is given through communities, organisations, government, and the young person themselves, and creates an unequal relationship. A young person can benefit from the professional relationship only if they know that the youth worker will not manipulate or exploit the young person to meet their own agenda (Sercombe 2004a; YAPA 2005).

A CEP is encouraged to be utilised by youth workers so that they can manage the power imbalance in ways that avoid corruption (Sercombe 2004; Child Safety Commissioner 2006). As Sercombe (2004b: 2) states, "power corrupts, and youth workers are by no means immune".

Safety & Protection of Workers

A Code of Ethical Practice (CEP) also contributes to the safety of the worker by providing a clear expectation about ethical behaviour, acceptable and unacceptable relationships and professional boundaries (YACWA 2003; YAPA 2005). Indeed the Child Safety Commissioner (2006: 11) suggests that when professionals "…are clear about expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other…" and with young people. Without a CEP, or a strong set of guiding principles, it can be difficult to ensure that all staff are working together to create a safe environment. If there are no standards upon which to guide good practice it can be difficult to argue against poor practice (Barwick 2006). If such a situation arises that poor practice is observed, a CEP allows the profession, organisation and/or worker to ask someone to explain their behaviour (Child Safety Commissioner 2006). It further provides a standard to inform and educate on good practice.

A Code of Ethical Practice can also provide a standard against which to make ethical decisions in a context where an ethical solution is difficult. Not all decisions can be made at leisure, and decisions in youth work are often required to be made quickly and in situations of considerable stress (YAPA 2005). This can put both the young person and the worker at risk. With a set of guiding principles to work with, making the most ethical decision that ensures the safety of the young person, and that of the youth worker, is made clear. Overall, a CEP can contribute to the safety of the worker by setting clear guidelines of what is acceptable behaviour, work practice and relationships (YACWA 2003; YAPA 2005; Child Safety Commissioner 2006).

To develop professional practice/professional pre-service preparation and in-service training based on a platform of consensus

Many youth work agencies have found it necessary to become agents for government, as changes in funding arrangements from grants to contracts for services occurs. As youth work agencies increasingly rely on government and other funding bodies for their survival, the power of government and funding bodies to impose their own regulations on youth workers is also increasing (Sercombe 2004; Barwick 2006). An important aspect of developing a CEP is that it can provide the opportunity for a group of practitioners to develop and define

their own professional standards, rather than having a government or funding body determine this for them. A CEP also provides a valuable foundation from which to argue against imposed obligations and expectations from government and funding bodies (Sercombe 2004b).

While not dismissing the necessity of a range of approaches within youth work, a CEP can also lend a unified voice to the area of youth work (Bessant 2004). Indeed, youth workers can often be placed on the periphery of discussions with other professionals because of their lack of professional status. This may mean valuable knowledge and expertise is ignored, and subsequently limit the youth worker's ability to effectively advocate for young people. The power of youth workers to advocate as a sector for young people can also be diminished through the presence of diverse practices and a lack of collective professional status (Grogan 2004; Barwick 2006). The power of a profession to argue and advocate for the people it works with should not be underestimated. With a solid foundation of ethics, youth work as a sector can feel more confident to enact change at the societal and governmental levels (Barwick 2004; Bessant 2004).

Furthermore, Bessant (2003: 34) has suggested that:

> *Restoring and building public trust in those working professionally with young people requires the systematic improvement of their intellectual and professional education… Their professional credibility can only be trusted if the education of its members is taken seriously.*

It is therefore of concern to youth work that an agreed set of guidelines, principles and core values be developed to ensure all youth workers are provided with the necessary training to develop and implement an ethical style of practice (Grogan 2004).

A Code of Ethical Practice can provide an agreed standard from which to guide education programs and professional development. By outlining core values and principles a CEP can provide a springboard from which to ensure the youth work sector continues to maintain quality standards in training and education. Indeed, to develop effective training programs the sector must agree on the knowledge, skills and experience required to be an effective and ethical youth worker (Bessant 2004; Grogan 2004). Providing training and education that is

informed by an agreed CEP will allow all workers to continue working in creative and situation-specific ways, but from an agreed set of underpinning values and principles (Sercombe 2004; Barwick 2006).

What areas should a Code of Ethical Practice cover?

A Code of Ethical Practice should cover the core values, professional principles and work practice guidelines of the relevant profession. It is understood that youth work is regulated by a variety of frameworks (including structural, legal, and ethical), in which youth workers are expected to practice. It is recognised that at times these frameworks will overlap or even conflict. A CEP cannot possibly account for or cover all the variations in the frameworks youth workers use (YACWA 2003). Instead a CEP should cover those "ethical foundations on which we perform our practice and interventions with young people" (YACWA 2003: 12). Importantly a CEP should be developed by youth workers for themselves, and should highlight the core values underpinning youth work. These may then inform key principles around topics such as social justice, equity, empowerment, transparency, boundaries, confidentiality, professional development, self awareness, self care, and other underpinning values as decided by the profession or sector (YACWA 2003; NYA 2004; Grogan 2004; YAPA 2005).

Who should facilitate the development of a Code of Ethical Practice?

A Code of Ethical Practice is usually developed by a group of professionals for their profession, to ensure that the values, principles, standards and behaviours outlined in the Code are appropriate to the profession itself (Child Safety Commissioner 2006; Barwick 2006; Australian Psychological Society (APS) 2006). Psychologists, social workers and many other professions working with young people have a Code of Ethical Practice that was developed by professionals for the profession (APS 2006). At the time of writing there was no professional association to facilitate self-regulation of youth workers in Victoria (Grogan 2004). However, an on-going working group was established under the umbrella of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) to facilitate the development of a professional association for youth workers, and forums have been conducted to discuss the issue of professionalism for youth work (Barwick 2006). (Subsequently the Youth Workers' Association was re-established in 2008, Ed.)

Other states in Australia are at varying stages of the same process. Western Australia has already endorsed a Code of Ethics, while the Australian Capital Territory is working towards ratification of one. In New South Wales adoption of the Western Australian Code of Ethics has received considerable support and is under review, while South Australia has formulated a standard policy manual but no Code of Ethics as such. Tasmania and the Northern Territory are both looking at developing youth policy frameworks, while Queensland has had some debate about a Code of Ethics (Sercombe 2004).

If a Code of Ethical Practice is to be introduced in Victoria it is imperative that it is developed *by* youth workers, *for* youth workers. As such this paper argues that the Minister for Youth Affairs and/or the Child Safety Commissioner should encourage peak bodies in the sector, such as YACVic, to facilitate a sector-wide process of consultation, development and implementation of a Code of Ethical Practice for youth workers.

What would a Code of Ethical Practice look like?

There is no standard pro-forma for what a Code of Ethical Practice should look like. A Code of Ethical Practice by necessity is a document which is developed to be specific and responsive to the profession, sector, organisation or group it is being established for (Grogan 2004; Child Safety Commissioner 2006; Barwick 2006). As such a CEP can range from a one-page document of dot-point guidelines, usually titled a Code of Conduct (Rochdale Youth Service 2006; Surrey County Council 2006), to a manual of enforced ethical standards and regulations, usually entitled a Code of Ethics/Ethical Practice (APS Website 2006).

However, there is a difference between a Code of Conduct and a Code of Ethics. Generally a Code of Conduct will be a list of statements of acceptable/unacceptable behaviours derived from core values and aimed at the individual (RYS 2006; SC, 2006). A Code of Ethics, meanwhile, is a more comprehensive document that focuses on the core values and ethical principles that underpin the profession, and is aimed at the profession as a whole. A Code of Ethical Practice meanwhile, is different yet again. A CEP can be viewed as a combination of a Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics containing not only acceptable/unacceptable behaviours, but also detailing core values, ethical principles, and professional boundaries (NYA 2004; Child Safety Commissioner 2006; Barwick 2006). A CEP is aimed at

providing a framework for the profession to be used by individuals in their work practice and the sector as a whole. A CEP can be self-regulatory and voluntarily adhered to, or it may be imposed by government or sector-based imperatives (Grogan 2004; Barwick 2006).

The type of Code developed, how such a Code is regulated or enforced and the length of the document must and should be decided by the sector developing the code (NYA, 2004; YACWA, 2003). To demonstrate the type of CEPs that can be developed, two examples of CEPs will be outlined, one Australian and one international.

Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia - Code of Ethics

The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (2003) has developed a document entitled *Youth Affairs Council of WA: A Code of Ethics for Youth Work in WA*. The Code lists 17 core principles, provides a commentary on each principle, and then gives a case example to demonstrate a practical application of the principle. Principles include primary client, equity, empowerment, duty of care, boundaries and self care. This is a particularly clear way of constructing a Code of Ethics. The YACWA Code of Ethics also includes a prologue and summary providing a rationale for introducing a Code and its possible uses. Currently, the YACWA Code of Ethics is adhered to by youth work agencies on a voluntary basis. As the first state to develop a comprehensive Code of Ethics, YACWA (2003) can provide an example for other states in Australia to also develop a Code.

The National Youth Agency - ethical conduct in youth work

The National Youth Agency (NYA) UK (2004), meanwhile, has developed a document entitled *Ethical Conduct in Youth Work* which provides, and delineates between, ethical and professional principles. The document details each ethical principle and then provides the 'practice' principles associated with the ethical statement. Principles include social justice, respect, rights, boundaries, skills, and competency. The NYA (2004) specifies, however, that it does not provide advice on issues of confidentiality and "detailed guidance" (2) on conduct. The NYA (2004) prefers to view the document at "the level of general principles" (2). The NYA Code has produced the document in comprehensive dot-point form, and also provides a summary of background, purpose, and importance of the Code. The NYA Code provides an international example of a Code.

Conclusion

Overall, a Code of Ethical Practice is developed to ensure three basic factors: the safety of clients, the safety of workers, and the education and training of youth workers; and to provide a set of agreed values for the sector (YACWA 2003; Grogan 2004; NYA 2004; Child Safety Commissioner 2006). A CEP is also designed to develop a frame of reference for workers to develop ethical practice and awareness, as well as providing a centre point for the discussion of ethical issues. What the document looks like will therefore depend on all of these factors and more, including the homogeneity/diversity of the sector, requirements of regulation, and government and peak body support (YAPA 2005; Barwick 2006). Ultimately, it is essential that any Code of Ethical Practice is developed *by* youth workers, *for* youth work.

Editor's Note

Since the time of writing, the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) commissioned Tim Corney to draft a Code of Ethical Practice based in human rights for consultation with the youth sector. In 2007 the post-consultation document titled "Code of Ethical Practice - A first step for the Victorian youth sector" was published by YACVic and launched by the Victorian Government Minister for Youth Affairs and the Victorian Child Safety Commissioner (for more details see Chapter 1). To access the code go to www.yacvic.org.au

References

Australian Psychological Society (APS). (2006). Retrieved September 7, 2006. www.psychology.org.au/

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2006). *Child Protection Australia 2004-05.* Child Welfare Series, 38. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra, Australia.

Barwick, H. (2006). *Youth work today: a review of the issues and challenges: A literature review of youth work in New Zealand, Australia, and the United Kingdom.* Ministry of Youth Development: Te Manatu Whakahiato Taiohi, New Zealand.

Bessant, J. (2004). "Up periscope": The future for youth work in Australia. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(3).

Child Safety Commission. (2006). A guide for creating a child-safe organisation*. Child Safety Commissioner: Promoting the safety and wellbeing of children*. Child Safety Commissioner, Melbourne, Australia.

Grogan, P. (2004). *That old chestnut: The Professionalisation of youth work in Victoria: A discussion paper.* Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria.

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995) *Youth in Australia: Policy, Administration and Politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Outten, G. (1991). Key Concepts in the debates. *Ethics and standards in youth work practice Conference Report*. Youth Sector Training Council of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia.

Rochdale Youth Service. (2006). *Code of Conduct.* Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council Rochdale, UK.

Sercombe, H. (2004). Youth Work: the professionalisation dilemma. *Youth Studies Australia*. 23(4).

Sercombe, H. (2005). Paper presented at the YAPA conference Darling Harbour Sydney 13-15, September 2005.

Surrey County Council. (2006). *Code of Conduct*. Surrey County Council, Surrey, UK.

The National Youth Agency (NYA). (2004). *Ethical conduct in youth work: A statement of values and principles from The National Youth Agency.* The National Youth Agency, Leicester, United Kingdom.

Youth Action and Policy Association NSW. (2005). Draft youth work Code of Ethics (Hunter/Central Coast/Mid-North Coast) Regional Youth Development Officers Network (RYDON). Youth Action and Policy Association. Surrey Hills, NSW. www.yapa.org.au

Youth Coalition of the ACT. (2003). *ACT Code of ethics for youth work*. Youth Coalition of the ACT. www.youthcoalition.net

Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia. (2003). *Code of Ethics: A code of ethics for youth work*. Youth Affairs Council of WA, West Leederville, Australia. www.yacwa.org.au

Legislation

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Working With Children Act 2005

First published in Yikes (Youth Affairs Council of Victoria), v.4, n.10, pp. 1, 4-6, and reproduced with permission.

Chapter 10

Re-establishing a professional association for youth workers in Victoria

Tim Corney & Robyn Broadbent

The need for youth workers to collectively organise, to maintain working conditions and educational standards, and to promote and sustain the identity of youth work as a distinct form of professional human service work, has led to the re-establishment of a professional association in Victoria, Australia.

Youth work in Australia

The professional identity, vocational motivations and organisational outcomes of youth work in Australia has been a contested space for over a hundred years (Ewan 1983; Maunders 1990; Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995). According to the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) (Griffin & Luttrell 2011), youth work, as a form of professional human service work, has been a values-based practice from its earliest inceptions, having been influenced by both faith based and politically motivated organisations since the 19th century. Maunders' (1990) research confirms that youth workers are often working in response to beliefs and values, a process he describes as conforming to Weberian (1968) value rational action. Griffin and Luttrell (2011) suggest that although there is agreement that youth workers are motivated by values, it was not until the late 1960s and early 70s that a general consensus emerged regarding the practice and underpinning values of youth work. It was during this period, they suggest (2011: 14), that "the new youth work method of empowering young people through their participation" became the popular focus of youth work.

The increased funding of youth work by governments from the 1960s onwards saw the rise of full time paid youth workers and the development of university based training courses (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995). This led to the creation of fledgling professional associations primarily to advocate for youth workers' pay and conditions, and the content of training (Goodwin 1990).

These developments coincided with the parallel rise in state government funded Youth Councils, primarily made up of representatives from agencies employing youth workers, and triggered debates between these various bodies regarding definitions of youth work and struggles over the collective identity and representation of youth workers (Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995; Griffin & Luttrell 2011).

In summarising these debates White et al. (1991: 66) suggest that a broad consensus exists that defines professional youth work as being based on the:

> *... age and circumstance of the target population; the 'welfare' context and orientation of youth work practice; and the development of a shared identity via the emergence and consolidation of relevant training, industrial and academic bodies in the youth affairs field.*

With the deregulation of the labour market from the 1990s onwards, Australian governments sought to bring unions, professional associations and employers together through Industry Training Advisory Councils to determine the vocational training needs of industry (Maunders 1999). Since this time there have been a growing number of industry based vocational youth work training courses running in parallel to traditional university based training (Corney 2004; Broadbent & Corney 2007) and an increasing number of practitioners specifically identifying as youth workers. This has led some youth work academics to debate the merits, or otherwise, of youth work identifying itself as a profession, and how to codify and or regulate the practice of youth work in Australia (Sercombe 1997, 2004, Maunders 1999; Grogan 2004; Bowie 2004, Bessant 2004a, 2004b; Corney 2004a; Quixley & Doostkhah 2007; Corney, Broadbent & Darmanin 2007).

A History of Victorian Youth Workers' Associations

Although other Australian states have attempted to establish professional associations for youth workers (most notably Western Australia), it has been Victoria who has had the longest established histories of both formal training and representative bodies for youth workers. Since the middle of last century there have been both formal university based training courses and a number of representative organisations (Maunders 1999). Of the representative bodies the earliest was The Victorian Association of Youth Leaders (VAYL), established as a training and development arm of the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs

in 1945. The VAYL disbanded in the early 1950s. The second attempt was the Institute of Professional Youth Leadership (IPYL), which was inaugurated in 1957. The IPYL included the aim of developing professional standards, however, it also faded away to be replaced by the Youth Workers' Association (YWA) in the 1960s (Goodwin 1990).

The YWA was established in Victoria at an inaugural meeting on the 19th of April 1968; its achievements were significant and included the development of university training and the establishment of industrial conditions. The three year diploma in youth work was established at Coburg State College in 1977; it became the first Australian degree level course of youth work training in 1982. Coburg College merged with Phillip Institute, and later with Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology to form RMIT University in 1992, where the degree continues to be offered (Maunders 1999). The state industrial award for youth workers, long championed by the YWA, was formally recognised in 1978. It covered the salaries and working conditions as well as the qualification of youth workers. However, despite these significant achievements the YWA lost direction. From the 1980s onward governments began to fund specific issue based programs such as youth employment and youth housing. Workers in these programs began to identify and organise around these issues, starting associations for youth housing or employment workers, and moving their membership away from the generic YWA (Goodwin 1990; Maunders 1999; Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995).

The YWA was formally disbanded in 1982. The 1980s saw the emergence of a variety of loose networks beyond the issue based associations, such as the Victorian Workers with Youth and the Youth Development Workers, and also a national network known as The Nation Wide Workers with Youth. However, by the end of the 1980s none of these informal networks had evolved into a formal professional association (Goodwin 1991, Irving, Maunders & Sherington 1995).

The 1990s saw the defunding and disestablishment of the last remaining Victorian youth sector peak body, the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic), by the then conservative state government; however, it was re-established in the late 1990s by the newly elected state Labor government. This led to the re-establishment of a YACVic working group to explore anew the potential merits of professionalising youth work.

The YACVic working group on professionalisation was strongly influenced by one of its members, the then newly appointed Victorian Child Safety Commissioner Bernie Geary (2006). The result was a focus on safe practice in youth work, particularly the safety of young people and workers, and the rights of young people. The recommendations of this group were for a code of ethical practice to be drafted by one of the committee members, Dr Tim Corney (a long time youth worker and youth work academic), and for a period of consultation to be undertaken on this draft by the youth sector. The result was the Victorian Code of Ethical Practice (2007).

The Victorian Code, while drawing on some aspects of the Western Australian Youth Affairs Council Code (YACWA 1997, 2003) - in particular sharing a commitment to the young person as the primary 'consideration' or focus of youth work - differs in other ways. The Western Australian code describes itself as being based primarily on youth work as a 'relationship', and uses a deficit-based medical analogy of the 'healer' to describe youth work, suggesting that it is 'healing the relationship between the young person and the parent (wider) society' (Sercombe 1997: 18-20, 2004, 2007, 2010; YACWA 1997, 2003). The Victorian code, however, has based itself on human rights principles, and, in particular, on the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989). This focus on human rights was strongly influenced by the then Victorian Labor government's legislating of a charter of human rights (2006) for all Victorians, the first such charter in any Australian state. This led to the Victorian Youth Sector Code of Ethical Practice (2007) being launched by the Victorian state government Minister for Youth Affairs and the Victorian state Child Safety Commissioner in 2007. It was hoped that this code would give fresh impetus to the re-establishment of a professional association (Corney & Hoiles 2007).

Lochhead (2001), speaking from a North American context, suggests that the field of youth work moves towards professionalisation when it moves to established codes of ethics and standards of practice that regulate the profession. However, he goes on to say that this is not enough. He suggests that the youth field must also research and develop a knowledge base that outlines its theoretical underpinnings, and it must define a formal education process with minimum competencies. These, he suggests, all lead to the emergence of a coordinated profession. In Victoria, the establishment of the Youth Sector Code of Ethical

Practice (2007) was indeed the catalyst that brought together those who had been working in the academies (establishing training and a body of knowledge), with the graduates of these courses (who were now working in the field), to move the sector towards forming a new Youth Workers' Association.

The re-establishment of the Youth Workers' Association

This re-established Youth Workers' Association (YWA) came into existence at a meeting of the sector in 2008. It was made up primarily of graduate youth workers and was strongly supported by youth work academics from Victoria University, and a number of longstanding senior youth workers. The initial focus of the Association was twofold. First was pay, conditions and supporting current union campaigns; secondly stemming the erosion of the quality and standing of youth work training by private providers. Establishing the identity of youth work as a profession and carving out a distinct vocational space within the human services sector continued to be the themes driving the YWA's development at this time (Corney & Broadbent 2007; Corney, Broadbent & Darmanin 2009).

A key identity debate occurring nationally during this period centred on who could call themselves a 'youth worker' and on what basis (Grogan 2004; Bessant 2004a, 2004b; Sercombe 2007; Griffin & Luttrell 2011). It was argued by some (Broadbent & Corney 2008) that although youth workers may have a similar client group to other professions such as teachers, psychologists, social workers, or religious practitioners, youth work practice and its underpinning theoretical frameworks were very different from these other professions, with specific training, practice tools and a well defined body of knowledge. It was also pointed out that these other professions, in most cases, have their own professional body or industry organisation that excluded youth workers (Corney & Broadbent 2007; Broadbent & Corney 2008; Corney, Broadbent & Darmanin 2009).

Another identity issue was the annexing of the traditional 'practice tools' of youth work by those working within the same space, such as recreation, outdoor adventure and the arts. These recreation-based practitioners (although not qualified as youth workers) were keen to legitimise their roles with young people by offering activity-based solutions to the complex issues that young people faced. Broadbent (2000) countered by arguing that recreational activity-

based programs act primarily as a practice tool for engaging young people, and that youth workers use these practice tools to engage young people not just with the activity but beyond, to the services and community organisations relevant to meeting both their immediate and long term needs. It was noted by Broadbent that while many young people engage in services for recreation and social opportunities before issues are identified, importantly it was the rapport that was built through the use of these tools that enables youth workers to identify young people's broader issues and needs. As such, Broadbent (2000) argued that traditionally youth work had not seen these activities as standalone frameworks or solutions, but rather as enablers of youth engagement, and that this set the identity of youth work apart from others working with young people in the recreation and arts space.

A sector-wide meeting held in August of 2008 led to the forming of the new professional association and the first YWA board being elected at an inaugural AGM in April 2011. Reaching this point of formality in the (re)-establishing of a professional association is the culmination of what Corney, Broadbent and Darmanin (2009) referred to as the the industry being galvanised into action as a response to the threats to its identity and practice.

One of the first tasks of the new Board of the Youth Workers' Association was to review its criteria for membership. In the lead up to establishment of the YWA the initially proposed membership criteria had caused considerable consternation in the sector. This was hardly surprising as the professional association was seeking to sure up the professional identity of youth work by defining its membership eligibility criteria according to a specific vocational qualification (youth work), and to demarcate its level of membership according to level/quality of qualification. The incoming Board made no change to the generally agreed minimum requirement for full membership, requiring a Bachelors Degree in Youth Work, and associate membership as a Diploma. However, in a nod to those in the sector who had many years of experience but no formal qualifications in youth work, the YWA Board established new criteria acknowledging that there could be a number of possible pathways to full membership. This included extensive industry experience and other courses that pre-dated the current youth work degree/diploma courses, and acknowledged the synergies with community development workers, and the importance of community development as a

practice framework of youth work both in Australia and internationally (Corney 2004a, 2004b; NYA 2010).

Meeting the needs of YWA members was deemed to be an important role for the new Association and crucial to attracting members. As such, during the establishment phase an industry-wide survey of potential members was undertaken. A finding of the research was that youth workers felt concerned about the potential threat of litigation, and in particular that their employers may not necessarily support them in any court action brought against them (Churchill 2009). As such, the enabling of affordable public liability and indemnity insurance, to be taken out by graduate youth workers through the Association, became a priority.

YWA Endorsement of Youth Work Training Courses

The YWA board, with the assistance of members, youth work academics and trainers, next moved to develop youth work training endorsement criteria for educational providers. The aim of this was to maintain the standards of the profession, to reflect the principles and practices laid down in the code of practice and to ensure the quality of graduates. Drawing on the youth work training accreditation work of the United Kingdom's National Youth Agency (NYA 2010), the following principles were put to the sector for consideration.

Principles of Good Youth Work Education & Training:

1. Pedagogy that is based on a values clarification and reflective practice model that challenges personal values and separates those from the professional values of a youth work practitioner.
2. An understanding that young people are the primary client of the youth work practitioner.
3. Bibliographies that direct students to required reading that has a focus on important practice values such as: social justice and social action, consciousness raising, empowerment, participation, human rights and advocacy; and is reflective of Australian content.
4. Ethics education based on the Youth Work Code of Ethical Practice.
5. Content reflective of the social, economic and political structures, influences and barriers young people face.

6. Focus on the development of a framework of practice through exposure to a theoretical core of community development, sociology of youth, social structure of adolescent health and youth policy; as well as a minimum of six specific youth work practice or field education placement subjects.
7. An inclusion of a human rights based social justice pedagogy that includes exposure to issues such as: culture, gender, indigenous status and sexuality within its framework of practice.
8. Pedagogy that reflects on the broader social structural systemic influences that impact on young people and youth work practice.
9. Qualifications and experience of staff in the youth work courses will also be considered and it is expected that every course will have staff that are eligible to join the Youth Workers' Association.
10. Encourages reflective practitioners that can work collaboratively in professional settings.
11. No more than 30% of the course is undertaken 'on the job'.

Conclusion

Using the principles outlined above the YWA Board is now embarking on a process of consultation leading to registration and endorsement of Australian youth work courses, in what has previously been a deregulated space for providers. Though largely funded by governments there has been little or no scrutiny of course delivery, lecture content, or on the values and practice frameworks that underpin youth work training programs in both the vocational and higher education arenas. Neither is there regard for the level of youth work qualifications of those that teach in these programs, or their level of fieldwork experience as youth workers. The discrepancies between the dual sectors is also a problem with course content being controlled by universities (in the case of degree courses) and by a national industry based skills council (in the case of the diploma qualification).

The establishment of a professional association creates renewed opportunity for youth workers to re-establish and strengthen their collective identity, to revisit some of the lessons learned from previous professional incarnations, and to take back some control of both the industrial and the training and education processes.

The new Youth Workers' Association enables all workers to share afresh in the construction of the identity and practice of youth work, and to establish quality assurance benchmarks that ensure the best possible outcomes for both young people and youth workers in Victoria.

References

Bessant, J. (2004a). "Up periscope": The future for youth work in Australia. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(3), pp.20-25.

Bessant, J. (2004b). The Loch Ness monster and professionalism. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp. 26-33.

Broadbent, R. (2000). *Spirit of cooperation youth research project*. Department of Human Services and the Seven Local Government Authorities in the Western Region, Victoria, Australia.

Churchill, K. (2009). *What is the role of a professional association for Youth Workers?* Victoria University.

Corney, T., Broadbent, R. & Darmanin, L. (2009). Why youth workers need to collectively organise. *Youth Studies Australia*, 29(3), pp. 41-46.

Corney, T. & Broadbent, R. (2007). Review of the national youth work training package: more of the same or radical rationalisation? *Youth Studies Australia*, 26(3), pp. 36-43.

Corney, T. & Hoiles, L. (2007). Why the youth sector in Victoria, Australia needs a code of ethical practice. *Commonwealth Youth Development Journal*, 5(1), pp.1-10.

Corney, T. (2004a). Youth work: the problem of values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp.11-19.

Corney, T. (2004b). Youth work and community development: kissing cousins or comrades in arms. *New Community Quarterly*, 2(3), pp.17-20.

Emslie, M. (2009). Please sir, I want some more: Securing better pay and conditions for youth workers in Australia. *Youth Studies Australia*, 28(3), pp.32-40.

Ewan, J. (1983). *Youth in Australia: A new deal and a new role, Centre for Youth and Community Studies*. PIT Press, Phillip Institute of Technology, Melbourne, Australia.

Geary, B. (2006). *A Code of Ethics: It's Time*. Address to the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria. The Office of the Child Safety Commissioner, Victoria, Australia.

Goodwin, V. (1991). Youth worker perception of the term professional: a Victorian study. *The Australian Education Researcher*, 18(2), pp.43-63.

Griffin, R. & Lutterell, E. (2011). *Future Focussed, Youth Work in Australia: Reflections and Aspirations*. Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, Sydney, Australia.

Grogan, P. (2004). *That old chestnut: The professionalisation of youth work in Victoria: A discussion paper*. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Hoiles, L. & Corney, T. (2006). Why the youth sector in Victoria needs a code of ethical practice. *Yikes: Journal of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria*, 4(10), pp.1, 4-6.

Irving, T., Maunders, D. & Sherington, G. (1995). *Youth in Australia: Policy, administration and politics*. Macmillan, South Melbourne, Australia.

Lochhead, A. (2001). Reflecting on Professionalisation in Child and Youth Care. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 30(2), pp.73-82.

Maunders, D. (1990). Youth work as a response to social values. *Youth Studies Australia*, 9(2), pp.173-187.

Maunders, D. (1999). Professional Lions and Multi-skilled Kangaroos: Youth work professionalism in South Africa and Australia. *Youth Studies Australia*, 18(1), pp.37-42.

National Youth Agency. (2010). Professional Validation: Guidance and Requirements. NYA, London, UK.

Quixley, S. & Doostkhah, S. (2007). Conservatising youth work? *Dangers of a code of ethics*. Youth Affairs Network of Queensland.

Sercombe, H. (1997). The Youth Work Contract: Professionalism and Ethics. *Youth Studies Australia*, 16(4), pp.17-22.

Sercombe, H. (2004). Youth Work: the Professionalisation Dilemma. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4), pp.20-25.

Sercombe, H. (2007). Embedded Youth Work: ethical questions for youth work professionals. *Youth Studies Australia*, 26(2), pp.11-19.

Sercombe, H. (2010). *Youth Work Ethics*. Sage, London, UK.

United Nations. (1989). *Conventions on the Rights of the Child*. United Nations General Assembly.

Victorian Government. (2006). *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act*.

Weber, M. (1968). *Economy and Society*. University of California Press, Berkeley, US.

Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia. (1997). Sercombe Draft – Code of Practice. YACWA.

Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia. (2003). Fairbridge – Code of Practice. YACWA.

White. R., Omelczuk, S. & Underwood, R. (1991). Defining the nature of youth work. *Youth Studies Australia*, 10(2), pp.7-17.

Editor and Contributors

Editor and Contributor

Dr. Tim Corney, B.A., M.A., PhD., is an Associate Professor at Victoria University, Melbourne Australia. He has worked in the youth and community sector for 30 years as a youth worker, manager of youth services, and an adviser to governments and non-government organisations on youth policy and youth work. He has published widely in the area of youth affairs and has worked with the Commonwealth Youth Programme since the mid 1990s. He is a Director of the Centre for Social Research Melbourne; an Executive Board Member of Youth Development Australia, the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition and the Youth Workers' Association; an Advisory Board Member of the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies; and was for some years an Executive Board Member of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria. He is currently an Editorial Associate of the journals *Youth Studies Australia* and *Commonwealth Youth and Development*.

Contributors

David Maunders, Ph.D. was born in Britain and took his first degree in history at Cambridge University. After professional studies and a short period of secondary teaching, he was appointed to establish a youth and community centre in his home town of Shepparton. He was promoted to Senior Youth and Community Officer and in 1977, accepted an appointment on the staff of the first tertiary youth work course in Australia. He has completed Masters and Doctoral Degrees in the history of education, the latter tracing the development of voluntary youth organisations in colonial and post federation Victoria. He has published in the field of social and educational history. He was Associate Professor of Youth Affairs at RMIT until 2002 and then a Professorial Fellow at Victoria University until his retirement.

Veronica (Dawn) Goodwin, OAM, was Senior Lecturer in Youth Affairs at RMIT University from 1988 to 2004 and a former secondary school principal and member of the Catholic order of the Sisters of Mercy. She was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to young people in 2007.

Robyn Broadbent, Ed.D., has been active in the youth and community sector for over 25 years as a community educator, worker and researcher. The focus of her work is young people, in particular those that experience the most disadvantage. Much of Robyn's work is focused in the Western region of Melbourne, a region known for its diversity and poor educational outcomes. Robyn currently coordinates the Bachelor of Youth Studies at Victoria University where she is also Associate Professor.

Lisa Darmanin is an Assistant Secretary of the Australian Services Union (ASU), Victorian Branch. In 2006 she was seconded to the Victorian Trades Hall Council where she coordinated the Your Rights at Work campaign in Victoria. Lisa is a co-founder of the Victorian Young Unionists Network.

Lauren Hoiles is a community psychologist with a background in designing, researching and implementing community health and wellbeing programs, most recently in Ireland. Lauren has a Masters Degree in Applied Psychology from Victoria University, specialising in health promotion with men.

Special thanks go to **Rebecca Wood** and **Karin du Plessis** for their assistance in formatting, layout and editing of the publication.