

Loynes, Christopher (2007) Social reform, militarism and other historical influences on the practice of outdoor education in youth work. In: Becker, Peter, Braun, Karl-Heinz and Schirp, Jochem, (eds.) Abenteuer, erlebnisse und die pädagogik: kulturkritische und modernisierungstheoretische blicke auf die erlebnispädagogik. BSJ-Jahrbuch . Budrich-Verlag, Leverkusen, Germany, pp. 115-133.

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Chris Loynes

## Social Reform, Militarism and Other Historical Influences on the Practice of Outdoor Education in Youth Work

### **Introduction**

Some of the shifts in modern society are understood to have placed the individual more centrally in the project of building an identity and choosing courses of action in life. This has led to a modern moral panic concerning „problem” youth and the problems of youth. The roots of informal education outdoors are based in a moral panic of the late Victorian era. A concern for a social decline amongst the working classes, in particular a rise in the values of self interest and focussed on young men, coupled with a concern for the fitness of the British army, largely made up of these young men, led to several influential „moral entrepreneurs” developing early forms of outdoor education to tackle these issues. I will suggest that informal education is again drawing on these early roots in outdoor education to respond to modern social issues concerning young people.

I will argue that the meanings and values attached to the organisations involved in these endeavours, state, private and voluntary, and the structure of the activities that were used as the content of their programmes were specific to that Victorian culture in that time and place. However, I will suggest that the organisations and activities have often persisted in some form and are involved in and used as vehicles for personal development today. Sometimes the meanings and values that they hold persist with them despite the cultural changes in the society within which they operate. Sometimes the meanings and values change but the same activities are practised as tradition. These may hold tacit understandings structured in to them that are not necessarily constructive given their current use.

For example LOYNES (2004) describes the adoption of navigating using a map and compass as a central area of knowledge and skill in early youth movements such as the Scouts. These skills were first developed to help soldiers control their location in time and space on enemy terrain. Some of the early youth movements set out to prepare young men for war and these skills would have been directly relevant. However, over time this goal disappeared. Nevertheless the approach to navigating persisted. Good practice remains the control of a person’s location in time and space and a spirit of

self-reliance. A whole justification has been constructed based on matters of safety and educational worth. Yet Loynes claims this is not the only way to navigate. Other approaches are based on different values and provide different outcomes that may be more suited to the educational purposes of some educators. Yet the use of map and compass is adopted uncritically as tradition.

PAYNE (2002) writes in a similar vein about white water kayaking in Australia where the activity is dislocated in space as well as time. He and BROOKES (2002) argue that activities should evolve out of the context within which they are to be practised. These authors are writing in the context of modern Australia and from the perspective of education for sustainability. They describe this culture as suffering from an overbearing British imperialism on a people and landscape for which the practices of that culture are poorly suited. Whilst LOYNESs (2004) supports their assertion that organisations and activities should be chosen with a critical awareness of their roots he does not propose that cultural transfer from other times and other places should always be resisted. Outdoor Education can be understood as a movement seeking critical awareness of its roots whilst seeking to adopt, adapt and create a diverse set of values and practices for a specific modern context.

## **Historical Influences**

It is YOUNG's (1960) view that during the Victorian period a profound change in British Christianity led to a moral revolution. Rogers describes this shift as launching a project to „ ... bring an external moral gaze to, and to foster an internal self-surveillance upon, the many faces of evil” (ROGERS 1997b, 9). As a result he believes that „young people found themselves the target of a spectrum of moral entrepreneurs” (ibid.) both at home, work and in the public sphere. These authors propose that this began a process that has seen the emergence of a moral diversity and the shift of the locus for the development of that morality from the community to the individual. I will argue that outdoor education was engaged in this project of constructing the moral self though perhaps not always in support of the project.

As an example of the tenacity of values and purposes in the field of outdoor education NICOL (2002), in his abstract for a paper describing the growth in outdoor education provision between 1945 and the 1960's, states

„This growth is characterised by diversity where common themes such as ‘fitness for war’, ‘character building’, ‘social education’, ‘recuperative holiday for socially disadvantaged young people’ and ‘progressive education’ emerge as competing and contrasting claims.” (ibid., 29)

HUIZINGA (1970) identifies that this diversity has many roots including conceptual influences such as outdoor recreation and leisure, play, informal and liberal education and concepts of landscape and exploration that pre-date the Victorian moral crusade and have a major bearing upon it. These will not be discussed here. I will begin this discussion at the point where outdoor experiences emerge as an aspect of informal education for young people.

### **The Emergence of Informal Education out of Doors**

According to SMITH (1999) early forms of youth work were started by social reformers in the latter part of the eighteenth century. He describes the projects of various evangelical Christians who were responding to the physical and spiritual poverty they saw around them. Institutions that date back to this time include The Sunday School Movement. In the nineteenth century Smith describes how this work blossomed with institutions such as the YMCA and Barnardo's among others. Quoting Booton, Smith draws on the writings of Sweatman to illustrate the intention at the time:

„Sweatman's statement expresses a central idea, that the social condition of young people (mainly in this case, lads) warranted specific intervention with the aim of a general cultural improvement; that this need was urgent, and sufficiently extensive to require nothing less than a completely new type of social institution.” (ibid., 22)

These early evangelical programmes were joined in the latter part of the nineteenth century by more radical approaches that Jeffs and Smith claim sought to address the social and economic conditions of young people. These people „shared a belief ... that the new economic and social order sponsored and sustained individualism thereby weakening civil society and organic community” (JEFFS/SMITH 2002, 44).

These included Emmeline PETHICK who, in the 1890's introduced country holidays for girls as part of her work with girls and young women from London's West End „where she won the affection of the high-spirited but frustrated girls by teaching them active games” (SMITH 1997a). This could arguably be the first documented use of the outdoors for the purposes of the social education of young people in England. Smith believes PETHICK's (1898) approach to be radical because he sees her work as seeking to influence the social context of the women through political action by herself and her colleagues and by the young women:

„The conditions, not only of the home, but of the factory or workshop had to be taken into account. It became our business to study the industrial question as it affected the girls' employments, the hours, the wages, and the conditions. And we had also to give them a conscious part to take in the battle that is being fought for the workers, and will not be won

until it is loyally fought by them.” (Smith 1997a, 104)

The competing strands of radical and conservative educational approaches met in the work of two leading innovators of informal education for young people, Ernest Thompson Seton and Robert Baden-Powell. Seton, who was English but brought up in the USA, is described by SMITH (2002) as developing the ideas of the Woodcraft Folk in the 1880's. They finally came to fruition with the first experimental camp in 1902. Smith states

„... (Seton) came upon his Indian motif from two directions. First, he was concerned not merely to preserve resources for man's use, the reigning form of conservation, but also to defend the ecological balances of nature in the wild. The American Indian, he believed, had lived in harmony with those balances, whereas the white man destroyed them. Second, in reaction against his father, Seton exalted natural drives; this predisposition, combined with an interest in animal behaviour, led him to embrace Hall's instinct psychology and the idea of boyish savagery. Yet instead of seeing 'savagery' as merely a rung on the ladder to civilization the way Hall did, Seton came to value Indian life as an end in itself, until by 1915 he proposed a Red Lodge for men to learn the spirit of Indian religion. The approach he proposed used camping out and various ceremonies, games and awards. Significantly, Ernest Thompson Seton did not follow the usual path of character builders by ensuing the preaching of conventional morality. Crucially, he made all offices elective and looked strongly to the associational life of the group ...“ (ibid., 5)

Smith claims that Seton was a major influence on Baden-Powell and his development of the Boy Scout Movement (SMITH 1997c). According to Smith Baden-Powell first came to be involved in informal education through the Boys Brigade. However he claims he became a critic of this movement and its emphasis on marching and drill. Baden-Powells' first experimental camp occurred in 1907 on Brownsea Island. This was followed by a lecture tour promoting his ideas expressed in his book „Scouting for Boys“. Smith reports that he expressed a concern about the fitness of young men for war and their general physical and mental condition. He particularly emphasised physical deterioration and moral degeneracy.

By 1908 over 10,000 boys and a number of girls who had formed a parallel movement on a self-organising basis attended the first conference for Boy Scouts.

SMITH (2002) describes how Seton became the chairman of the Boy Scouts of America in 1910 but by 1915 returned to the Woodcraft concept. Smith reports that he did not like the military aspects of Scouting and Scouting did not like the Native American aspects of Woodcraft. The new Woodcraft movement was co-educational and for young people and adults together but with World War One underway Smith claims that militaristic scouting came to dominate.

The first guiding principle of the Woodcraft movement is that it „is essentially for recreation“ (SETON quoted by SMITH 2002). Seton's notion of recreation seems more attached to the classical Latin concept with its strong social education agenda than to the emerging nineteenth century ideas of time

out from responsibilities (GLYPTIS 1991). In addition his notion of the noble savage and a natural, civilising learning to be found in natural settings echoes the ideas of Rousseau and the development of the child as a natural process from savage to civilised being.

Smith comments that Baden-Powell's ideas were strongly influenced by nineteenth century public school values of honour, loyalty and duty and the emphasis on activity and games as worthwhile. Despite these important conservative elements in Baden-Powell's approach Smith claims it would be simplistic to label him in this way. Baden-Powell was not solely concerned with duty. He quotes Baden-Powell (1909) as saying

„Keep before your mind in all your teaching that the whole ulterior motive of this scheme is to form character in the boys - to make them manly, good citizens ... Aim for making each individual into a useful member of society, and the whole will automatically come on to a high standard.” (ibid., 361)

Smith suggests that Baden-Powell's notion of the good citizen involved self-reliance and unselfishness, which he sees as new departures in social education values. Although Smith does not believe Baden-Powell to have been a socialist he identifies some common beliefs between socialism and Baden-Powell mentioning an opposition to the extremes of wealth and a dislike of the necessity of war. Smith points out that another central strand of Scouting is „doing good”. This he understands as a notion of fellowship and mutuality perhaps reflecting the highly visible inequalities of the time.

Smith adds a new theme to the pedagogy of informal education by recognising the associational aspects of Baden-Powell's and Seton's concepts. He understands association as a strong and recurring theme in informal education (see JEFFS/SMITH 1999, 39-46):

For example, the landmark 1919 Report on adult education looked to the educative power of social movements and voluntary associations. They saw the value of 'the imponderable influences which spring from association in study' and the significance of 'the informal educations which come from sharing in a common life' (SMITH, 2000). Similarly, in 1960 the Albemarle Report famously declared that the primary aims of the youth service should be association, training and challenge (MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION, 1956).

Baden-Powell is open to diverse interpretations. His concepts can seem macho, imperialistic, sexist, authoritarian and militaristic. COOK (1999) sees him

„... leading by example and rescuing working class' boys who 'loafed' on street corners and drifted towards 'bad citizenship'. He promoted the public school ideals of 'obedience, cleanliness, temperance and loyalty' by using tracking, trekking and camping, the modified forms of traditional upper class pursuits such as hunting and coursing, to redeem 'hooligans', street urchins and 'wastrels'.” (ibid., 160)

Yet he provides a framework that Smith claims can in principle be self-empowering, socially active, promoting of fellowship and experienced as transformative.

It is in the many and varied interpretations of their ideas and practices that future developments by voluntary organisations in education outdoors can be considered. Some will bear the marks of the imperialistic Baden-Powell or the indigenous Seton. Others will draw on the self-reliant Baden-Powell or the democratic Seton. As Smith has shown they provide a rich source of possibility for both conservative and radical interpretation.

Smith has shown how the ideas of association, nature as teacher and the simple life have been introduced into the pedagogy of citizenship. Also from Smith's analysis, despite the patriarchal aspects of Scouting and Woodcraft and the legacy that this offers, there exists the potential for young people to emerge into the new idea of youth as creators of themselves and actors in their social worlds.

## **Hahn and the Transformative Effect of World War Two**

According to SMITH (1997b) a moral imperative was the central idea of the next influential figure in the development of English informal outdoor education as provided by voluntary organisations. Kurt Hahn had been experimenting in Germany with experiential approaches to education in a private boys school. This included outdoor challenges and service activities as well as physical fitness. Similar experiments were taking place at the same time in several liberally minded English independent schools but it is Hahn outdoor educators remember for his enormous influence. It is also his influence that carried pre-war values, organisations and institutions beyond the Second World War.

Escaping Germany during the rise of the Nazi party he continued his experiments as head teacher at Gordonstoun School in Scotland. His aim was to provide the elite with a moral backbone through the discipline and challenge of his programme. During the thirties he extended his ideas to the rest of society through the Moray Badge Scheme the forerunner of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme now popular throughout the UK and the world and embedded in the provision of many voluntary organisations.

RICHARDS (1990) encapsulates Hahn's conception of education:

„Its purpose was to develop a righteous man who is vigilant and an active citizen, who has a sense of duty to his fellow man and to God.” (ibid., 68)

Richards goes on to claim that Hahn's contribution to education was not in his purpose but in his methods that he believes verge on a philosophy. Active

citizenship, Richards claims, lay at the heart of it all. Hahn, he states,

„believed that every child was born with innate ‚spiritual powers’ as well as an innate faculty that enables him or her to make correct judgements about moral issues” (ibid., 69).

This ability, Hahn claimed, was lost in adolescence because of a diseased society and the impulses of the adolescent. Whilst the former is redolent of a society still taking a collective responsibility for the situation young people find themselves in, the latter is reminiscent of GRIFFIN’s (1997) beliefs about the biological interpretation of youth locating the problem in the individual. It stands out as an optimistic statement in which young people are, for once, not causing the trouble though they are still thought of as in trouble.

Hahn’s perspective on education is reflected in the qualities he used to evaluate students in school reports which Richards lists as

„public spirit, sense of justice, the faculty of precise evidence, the power to do things right in the face of dangers, imagination and the power of organisation”. (RICHARDS 1990, 69)

This can be compared with COOK’s (1999) list of qualities expected by the public schools using outdoor activities at around the same time. She identifies „courage, loyalty, endurance, a sense of honour, self-denial, fair play, public spirit and obedience” (ibid., 158). The differences might be subtle but Richards gives Hahn a sense of a greater respect for the individual’s autonomy than Cook gives to the other public schools. There is more a sense of „doing good” than of „being correct”.

According to RICHARDS (1990), Hahn understood the solution for the disease of society to be only possible through the education of the young. Hahn described this disease with a set of „social declines”. They were:

- „Decline of fitness due to modern methods of locomotion;
- Decline of initiative and enterprise due to the widespread disease of spectatoritis;
- Decline of memory and imagination due to the confused restlessness of modern life;
- Decline of skill and care due to the weakened tradition of craftsmanship;
- Decline of self-discipline due to the ever-present availability of stimulants and tranquilisers;
- Decline of compassion due to the unseemly haste with which modern life is conducted.” (ibid., 69)

Richards comments that, in his view, these six issues would not be out of place amongst the „moral panics” of the eighties. It would be easy to update this to what is sometimes called the „noughties”. A sixties Outward Bound School, as Richards points out, might have prided itself on its participants going home ten pounds heavier. The school of today might have prided itself on the person being ten pounds lighter. However, the concern is the same concern for fitness identified by Hahn.



Richards claims the solution to these six declines, as Hahn saw it, were present in the justifications for all of the programmes that have their origin with him. All these programmes are active today which Richards believes validates their current relevance. The phrase that is most often attributed to Hahn is the notion of „impelling young people into experience”. Richards quotes a letter from Hahn to a commentator on Hahnian approaches, Skidelsky, in which he expands his original statement from which this phrase stems:

„You and I would agree that indoctrination is of the devil and that it is a crime to force anybody into opinions but I, unlike you, consider it culpable neglect not to guide and even plunge the young into experiences which are likely to present opportunities for self discovery. If you spare the young such experiences, in deference to their wishes, you stunt their natural growth of basic human qualities which they will need for their own happiness and for service to their fellow men.” (HAHN quoted in *ibid.*, 73)

It is perhaps worth noting that Skidelsky is American and so is steeped in a culture for which the pursuit of happiness alone is a founding value. It is also worth noting that Hahn’s fear of indoctrination is well founded. The liberal educational values that influenced him as a child in Germany and later England were also at the root of the use of the outdoors and residential camps to indoctrinate the Hitler youth. This commitment to „impelling” and its apparently subtle distinction from compelling, is, in this context, startling. Additionally Skidelsky derives from a cultural meritocracy and not an aristocracy.

The concern during the depression for the moral fibre of men, and working class young men in particular, was heightened further by the possibility of war. COOK (1999) identifies that „fitness for war” was still a major factor in the pre-war legislative acts that were intended to encourage the public and voluntary sectors to increase their provision for recreational, social and physical training for the fourteen to twenty age group. This provision was made a duty by the 1944 Education Act binding upon local education authorities through their schools and youth clubs including the voluntary sector. Whether Hahnian or public school in spirit, Cook identifies the influential figures that constructed these acts as public school in origin and set on perpetuating their ideas of a good system. However, there does seem to be a diversity of views in Cook’s accounts about whether a social elite should continue to be trained as the war time leadership or whether the public school approach should be applied to all. Cook implies that the poor results of the old and public school educated military leadership in the early years of the war discredited the upper classes to a degree but not the system by which their leadership qualities were supposedly developed. It seems, she thinks, that outdoor training was seen as the answer to their needs and not the cause of the problem.

This belief in the methods of outdoor training produced another Hahn legacy. The Aberdovey Sea School in Wales was first established in 1940, as

a direct result of the government concerns for character building (ARNOLD-BROWN 1962). Its purpose was to apply Hahn's ideas about developing moral fibre to the drown proofing of merchant sailors. Too many were losing their lives it was thought through a lack of resilience. A largely outdoor programme was developed by seconded naval officers to toughen sailors and prospective sailors up. Cook notes that the documentation concerning this project is a rare example of girls being included on an equal footing with boys. Both class and gender norms were breaking down in the circumstances of the war.

The Badge Scheme was also proposed as a structure for the uniformed youth services and schools to use as a preparation for military service. This was rejected, Cook believes because the links with uniformed youth movements was a sensitive topic after the success of the Hitler Youth Movement in Germany.

As the war progressed, the pre war public school influences of character building, the rescue of the working classes and fitness for war were joined by other concerns. COOK (1999) reports concern for the overall health of young people, a desire for urban children to experience a better life in the country, a commitment to a service that was not means tested and the amelioration of social problems. Cook comments that, as the fortunes of war turned, so the Education Act was seen in a different light as a means to enable secondary education for all and outdoor education as a training for life with the aim of giving children a sense of well-being. The Camps Act of 1939 came to the forefront, legislating for the establishment of fifty camps, with the aims of providing an „experience of living together and of widening ... horizons”.

The Second World War created a singular moment in English history at which there was a concerted desire for life to be „better”. Cook describes how the advisory paper on The New Secondary Education (1947) attempted to set a very different agenda for outdoor education shifting the emphasis from character building to social purposes such as preventing juvenile delinquency. Living in community, picking up Smith's theme of association, was recommended. Residential experiences, journeys and expeditions are all mentioned as means by which to combat delinquency.

These approaches, however, Cook claims, were subverted by a return to character building and leadership in the mid fifties. This she suggests was under the influence of three men with upper class backgrounds, Hahn, again, Sir John Hunt who was the first director of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, and Jack Longland who founded the first local education authority centre at Whitehall in Derbyshire. The idea of leadership began to replace character building as the definition of the ideal moral person. This change reflects some of the shifts in emphasis from something that is done to the individual to something for which the individual takes responsibility though the shift may be as subtle as the distinction between „compelling” and „im-

elling”.

Smith claims it is the idea, developed by Powell and Hahn, of society through its agents the teaching profession, providing challenges to the growing child in the form of demanding and rigorous physical programmes that provides the heart of the British approach to outdoor education. It became a „moral equivalent to war” rather than a preparation for it.

Cook also acknowledges that the agenda, under its new nametag of leadership, may be familiar but that the intent in many projects was quite different. The war time shift in thinking from educating a leadership elite to the need to develop all young men and even women resurfaced and the new utopian optimism for a better future for all was a strong theme. Men such as Hogan, the director of the first Outward Bound School during the war and now working in further education, set out to provide an outdoor education that broke down barriers of class. He maintained that

„children (who) were involved in new situations ... could be judged on their present merits rather than have their social background or past behaviour prejudice opinions of them” (HOGAN quoted by COOK 1999, 171).

Hahn’s approach matured with the major cultural shifts that took place after the war. His elitist pre-war character building was first seen to be of value to all in pre-war Britain and later gained a new perspective of broadening the horizons of the young in the post war optimism for the future. This was reflected in the development of the Outward Bound approach after the war. The OB programme now so widely replicated and evolved really stems from the second school, Eskdale. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, an OB trustee and mountaineer, persuaded the board to establish the second school in the Lake District mountains and not by the sea (ARNOLD-BROWN 1962). As a result the staff were a mixture of men with a naval background transferred from the Aberdovey Sea School and recruits from the world of mountaineering. Managing the mix of the discipline of the navy and the anarchy of the mountaineers must have been one of the leadership tasks of the century. Tom Price, an early warden with a mountaineering background, nearly turned the job down believing the integration of the ideas of education with those of adventure impossible. He later described outdoor education as ‘simple’ adding „that doesn’t mean to say it’s easy!” (PRICE quoted by LOYNES 1990).

Although Cook focuses on class as a significant factor in the evolution of outdoor education in the first half of the century it is perhaps a more complex story. The philanthropic efforts of late Victorians, as Smith points out, were not all patriarchal or militaristic. The romance and idealism of Seaton’s ideas persisted quietly as the Woodcraft Folk through all this time. Similarly the anarchic yet upper class mountaineers had a significant impact on post war provision alongside their more establishment and patriarchal peers. I would suggest that moulding the young was increasingly losing ground to an empowerment of young people to make their own moral and life choices

throughout society.

What seems a unifying theme, perhaps with the exception of Seaton, is that young people were seen, as ROGERS (1997a) suggests they have always been, unfit, idle and at risk of moral decline and delinquency. What he believes remains disputed is whether this is an innate quality of being young, a failing in parenting and teaching or the consequence of declines in society for which the young have an insufficient moral defence. During the twentieth century, in Rogers' view, leisure time increasingly became the site where the morals of the young, or lack of them, were expressed or developed. The politics of whose morals were the right ones both within as well as between generations became, he claims, increasingly contested.

The class based, militaristic and patriarchal backgrounds of some of the pre-war moral reformers led them to create rigorous, disciplined and ordered programmes aimed at addressing „problems” as understood by sections of society such as moral decline or fitness for war. Yet I believe that within this framework there emerged an increasing emphasis present in the thinking of all the influential people described, of the right, indeed the importance, of the individual making his and increasingly her own meaning of the experiences these programmes provided. It was the transformative practices of people like Hogan and many other unrecorded youth leaders that constantly attempted to resolve this dilemma of the agency of the individual within the social structures of society and the formal structures of the programmes in many and varied ways. I think this trend gained new support from post war influences of a different kind of philanthropist. This, in its turn led to new issues of power and purpose and a new individualism arose to threaten those who believed in the value of community and attachment (JEFFS/SMITH 2002).

## **Post War Trends**

Philanthropy financed the early post war additions to outdoor provision. DYBECK (1996) describes how Francis Scott, a self made man and wealthy from the growth of the insurance industry, bought an estate in the Lake District called Brathay Hall. Its remit was to provide courses to expand the horizons of young people at work in the urban areas. Brathay provides an influential example of the post-war voluntary youth organisation. The month long programmes were heavily influenced by the Outward Bound concept but, from the beginning, the creative arts and drama were also essential elements, sited as it was in the romantic movement's heartland of the south Lakes. Scott is described by Dybeck as an entrepreneur and autocratic. He epitomised the new post war self, independent, successful and philanthropic with a special interest in young people, the key to the future.

DYBECK (ibid., 23) quotes Scott's aim as the „opening (of) young people's minds to the possibilities of living adventurously in the world of physical activity as well as in the world of the spirit". This aspiration chimes with Hahn's „spiritual powers" of self-realisation through moral equivalents to war. Indeed Scott acknowledges his debt to Outward Bound philosophies. However, Dybeck refers to an early warden who thought the only thing the two organisations had in common was the length of the programme, a month in those days. Scott's sense of agency is more liberal than Hahn's duty bound version.

EVERARD (1993) describes Brathay's influence on the field of what is now called Development Training as „the pedagogical leader of the pack". Early rhetoric about Brathay quoted by Dybeck refers to releasing hidden potential, the valuing of communal life, a sense of personal significance, building self confidence, fitness and an aesthetic appreciation. These objectives stand out for their personal nature compared with the pre-war values quoted above with their strong duty bound social context. Nor do they contain the elements of „doing good" in society. Rather they speak of „being somebody", another significant step towards outdoor education in this sector being primarily attached to the agency of the individual. This is not an unsurprising shift coming from a self-made businessman. It is this „new money" and business leaders that influenced a number of national projects in the latter half of the century.

However, it was not just new projects that fashioned post war outdoor education. Despite Cook's fears the 1947 recommendation for journeys and expeditions was not lost, far from it. In many ways the youth expedition field epitomises the struggles and transformations that occurred post war. Pre-war examples of youth expeditions were public school heroic and imperialist remnants of the explorers and adventurers of the British Empire (MACFARLANE 2003). OGILVIE and KEIGHLEY (1987) comment that the influences on the practice of the late 1960's were: „the traditional forms of various traditional sports ... introduced in the traditional way and followed in their traditional wilderness settings". Ogilvie and Keighley claim that activities and programmes that trace their roots back before the war were sometimes adopted without any great thought to the value of these forms of practice to their new post war context. This is a similar point to that made by Loynes in his comments on navigating referred to in the introduction above.

Despite this the tradition of the expedition, an almost uniquely British idea, was transformed within the voluntary youth sector. Attempts were made to attach new meanings and values to old ways. These efforts were often problematic in that they could be steeped in the structures of outmoded practice (ALLISON 2000). However, alongside those carrying the flag across the gulf of the Second World War, were new enterprises that were constructed differently and intentionally to reflect new values for new times.

John Hunt, steeped in those pre-war nationalistic mountaineering values, and fresh from climbing Everest for Great Britain in 1953, a success announced on the coronation day of Queen Elizabeth the second, was another man passionate about young people as the future. He thought expeditions, and especially mountaineering ones, would be good for young people. He had the Hogan like zeal for making such experiences available to all. Recognising that this might involve skills and knowledge he did not possess he was put in touch with a youth worker, Dick Allcock, used to working outdoors and who had similar ideas (ALLCOCK 2002; CRANFIELD 2002). Both were working at national level on the promotion of the newly formed, Hahn inspired project of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Just as Tom Price was struggling to combine adventure with education in Eskdale, Dick Allcock set out to combine expeditions with youth work in Greenland. Both were benefiting from the supposed anarchy of mountaineers.

Allcock was transforming a science and adventure based project with the youth workers faith in young people. However, instead of simply making young people's development the central purpose and science and adventure a vehicle, he set out to achieve good science, high adventure and personal development. The young recruits are reported by Allcock to have come from all social backgrounds and were mixed sex. The second and all subsequent expeditions also included community service and young participants from the host country. Expeditions, already in part transformed from imperialist leftovers by scientists and adventurers, were now adapted for the widening of the cultural horizons of young people. Although imperialist tendencies still pervaded some of these projects many of those run by the voluntary youth sector took their definition from this early collaboration.

## **The New Individualism and Outdoor and Informal Education**

Jeffs and Smith see three trends in society at the centre of a new challenge to young people and youth work, globalisation, the risk society and individualisation. They highlight Beck's idea of „rootless new cosmopolitans” and Bauman's notion of fragmentation leading „to matters relating to meaning, identity and ethics being removed from the public domain and recast as the responsibility of the individual” (JEFFS/SMITH 2002, 53). Within this context they believe that groups and youth sub-cultures are breaking down. They draw on Bennett's views of the group as „no longer the central focus for the individual but rather one of a series of foci or sites within which the individual can live out a selected, temporal role or identity ...“ (ibid., 54). As a result they think that youth workers no longer find groups but must create

them.

The Youth Service, both public and voluntary, increasingly targeted what were variously called marginalised, delinquent, excluded or disaffected young people post sixteen. This was partly due to a continuing reformist agenda amongst what were often Christian based organisations. However, it was also led by the increasing amounts of funding available from the government and from charities for projects willing to work with these individuals. In the 1970's Intermediate Treatment programmes were devised to address delinquent and criminal behaviour amongst young people under sixteen (HUNT 1989). Run by Social Services and voluntary organisations residential outdoor courses became highly popular with this sector. This was partly due to the influence of Sir John Hunt (CRANFIELD 2002) who campaigned for disadvantaged young people from his seat in the House of Lords.

In the late 1970's and 1980's Margaret Thatcher shifted the „moral panic” from delinquency to unemployment. The Youth Opportunity Programme and then the Youth Training Scheme provided a compulsory alternative and the latter included compulsory outdoor, residential courses with the aim of personal and social development. Again, voluntary organisations were able to support the provision for these programmes (HUNT 1989). Towards the end of this period main stream education had begun to catch up with the growing demand for post sixteen provision. This, coupled with rising employment, led to a downturn in funding for these kinds of schemes.

These approaches to young people increasingly constructed the individual young person as the location for any action that would address these problems. However, the structural boundaries around the young person had narrowed considerably as programmes were tasked to deliver good citizens in education or employment. National competency frameworks such as „key skills” were developed in order to provide both a curriculum and a basis for auditing the outcomes of these programmes (see for example HUSKINS 1996).

In the early nineties a number of factors conspired to challenge the provision of outdoor education for young people across all sectors (ALLISON 2003). Funding constraints, competition for the informal education market and safety issues all contributed.

A curriculum for informal education in the Youth Service was emerging, driven by government policy makers and advocated by those seeking to sustain funding streams for an increasingly under funded Youth Service. It focussed on personal and social development, capability and competence (HUNT 1989). The definition shifted from process to outcome as funders became increasingly interested in auditing the benefit gained from their investments. Outdoor and adventurous activities became a popular means by which to achieve these outcomes.

These changes were not without their critics. LOYNES (1996) com-

mented from an outdoor education perspective on the commodification of outdoor education and, in a later paper (LOYNES 2002), discussed the pervading influence of algorithmic approaches to outdoor education provision aimed at delivering predetermined outcomes with pre-set programmes. Jeffs and Smith attacked the trends in informal education:

„These trends provide informal educators with a number of challenges. Fostering democratic processes involves questioning common sense views. Ideas about the naturalness of markets, the right to private gain, and the inevitability of hierarchical structures are woven into daily life. In conversation informal educators have to keep asking, for example, what right do ‘managers have to manage’. Experts to decide what is best for others, and employers to control work, training and education? There is a lot of pressure on informal educators to ‘behave’ themselves, to be ‘responsible’. More and more funding for their work is short term and from unaccountable bodies such as lottery boards and health trusts. There is pressure – seen and unseen – to tone down questioning and to quieten those they work with. Many reading this will be deeply unhappy with this state of affairs.” (JEFFS/SMITH 1999, 38-39)

Some approaches maintained a pedagogic freedom while much of outdoor and informal education was entrained in the construction of the good citizen and in addressing social problems.

Surprisingly, according to JEFFS and SMITH (2002), despite the growing concern for the break down in associative life, government policy re-branded

„...youth work as a form of individualised case-management, and youth workers as specialists blessed with skills or personalities uniquely fitting them to control, monitor, distract, ‘develop’ and oversee ‘troublesome’ young people” (JEFFS/SMITH 1999, 55).

This, they believe, has reached a crisis for youth work in the statutory sector with the establishment of „Connexions” and the young person as client, especially the problematic young person, typically a male. It is a practice of surveillance and control, case management rather than education, and individualised rather than group ways of working that withdraws resource from the substantial majority of young people and is counter to the central tenets of youth work as Jeffs and Smith describe it. It could also have the effect of drawing outdoor interventions away from an informal educational approach to a more formal one.

These trends had an impact on the voluntary as well as the statutory sector. By the end of the nineties outdoor education was again being promulgated as one of several strategies for providing a handrail post sixteen (BROWN/HUMBERSTONE 2003). This new provision, initially piloted in 2000 as the Summer Activities Initiative and later called the Summer Activities Programme (THOM 2003), has put more government funding into outdoor education than ever before. Yet again, the voluntary sector, as part of consortia, has been able to contribute to this provision. The idea behind funding being given to consortia was to encourage innovative approaches from



the interaction of agencies that did not normally collaborate. A complimentary pilot programme part funded and co-ordinated by Connexions is targeting „youth crime” at an earlier age (CGR RESEARCH LTD 2003).

Within these schemes „projects” such as outdoor residential experiences still created groups though the curriculum and leadership of the courses as described by BROWN („...ideally enabling young people to have some role or choice in the design ...” (2002, 27)) or KIRBY („...the activities ... were used to try and teach people about themselves, and teach them about working with others ...” (2002, 36)) takes this work even further towards the formal education end of the formal/informal continuum. Despite the apparent shifts towards „control, monitoring, distraction, ‘development’ and overseeing” feared by Jeffs and Smith, FESTEJ (2002) shows how informal education practice remains critical to success in these programmes as understood by the young people even if it is hidden in the interstices between the activity programme, the curriculum and the overt outcomes that justify funding.

## **Conclusion**

The authors cited above claim that the values and practices of informal education have their roots in the social reformers of late Victorian Britain. These reformers were, they believe, motivated in various ways to tackle the perceived problem of young working class people. Concerns were believed to range from a moral panic about their values, concern for their working and home lives and a concern for the fitness of young men who might be recruited into the military.

These commentators believe that the early reformers had a clear position. They think they were acting on behalf of society to bring about cultural improvement. The authors claim the reformers were countering what was thought to be an emerging individualism from which civil society was seen as under threat. However, it is believed that as well as differences between the various projects in what the moral concerns were and how they might be improved there were also differences in how the relationship between the young person and society was understood. Some analyses suggest that the key difference of relevance to the later practice of informal education was the way in which some reformers understood the task as helping young people to do good whilst others sort to make them become correct.

My interpretation suggests that many of these values, beliefs and practices of the past have persisted into the modern versions of these Victorian voluntary organisations. Some of these, it is suggested, have been transformed by changes in social and economic changes between the wars whilst others have not. In either case it is thought these changes have largely been

uncritical.

It is considered that after the Second World War further changes transformed the values and practices of informal education. A post war vision to broaden horizons it is thought saw a shift away from doing good or being correct on behalf of others to one of realising potential on behalf of the self. It would seem individualism was no longer understood as a threat. In response to these trends character building became leadership. A resurgence of nationalism was also thought to have had a major influence.

Later still in the eighties it is claimed that moral panics concerning young people resumed. This it is believed led to a narrowing of the informal education curriculum by an increasingly dominant state influence. This it is said led to a focus on employability and correct behaviour. The critics of current approaches to youth work claim that the core values and practices of informal education have been challenged and a sense of surveillance has crept in, a trend that was able to build on and transform the dormant Victorian values underpinning many outdoor education practices.

Outdoor education became one of several informal education strategies aimed at problematic youth. It is the only strategy mentioned specifically in European policy documents (as a solution to young male aggression) (IARD 2001). In this document the problems of young people are listed as unemployment, violence, disability, gender and race and it is claimed that they lead to social exclusion. Outdoor education has been variously constructed as liberation, diversion and suppression. Whilst young people are currently understood as exercising more agency in a longer and more complex transition to adulthood than ever before in recent times. Policy makers are expressing concern and making interventions in to the „problem” and „problems” of young people as they have always done.

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