RADICAL YOUTH WORK: CREATING A POLITICS OF MUTUAL LIBERATION FOR YOUTHS AND ADULTS. PART II.

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ABSTRACT: In this follow up to "Radical youthwork: Creating a politics of mutual liberation for youth and adults" (Child and Youth Care Work [19], 2004), this article highlights the relationship between capitalism as an economic system and capitalism as a system of social control for youth and adults. It proposes that capitalism and forms of youth work based within capitalist power relations operate on what is defined as a logic of addiction. The paper traces a history of youth work within both modernist and postmodernist forms of global capital and then delineates critical aspects of capitalism in relation to youth work. A proposal is made for a definition of liberatory youth work and a literature review is engaged to compare current progressive youth work against this definition. The paper closes with a proposal based in the writings on antifascist living by Foucault for an "animated radical youth work."

KEY WORDS: radical youth work; post-modern global capitalism; civic skills; intergenerational collaboration.

We write this article as an extension of the ideas proposed in a series of writings about "Radical youth work: Creating a politics of mutual liberation for youth and adults" (Skott-Myhre, 2004). We also write it, however, as an extension of our work together and separately as youth workers and academics. Each of us holds a different relation to the work in terms of age, experience, gender and academic position. Michelle is a student who is beginning her career as a youth worker; whereas Hans is a professor with over a quarter century of front line youth work experience. Together, we operate as a certain kind of political project that combines different elements of our subject positions towards a mutual liberatory project. It is our intention to propose that such common purpose and collaboration might be extended across youth work more generally.

We will argue below that such work is intended to challenge the ways in which youth and adults become "other". In the paper by Skott-Myhre, cited above, he proposed that when a position of "other" is created, the ability to connect between youth and adults becomes difficult. The concept of the "other" is laden with preconceived notions and fear of the

unknown. A society with "others" is one that has barriers influencing our ability to meet on a productive and honest level. Skott-Myhre has argued that adolescents have come to occupy a space of otherness within our society through the production and reinforcement of dominant discourses of fear, idleness, and political and democratic marginalization (see also, Giroux, 2003; Males, 1998; Kurth Schai, 1988). Consequently, when youth workers begin to see youth as "other", they may come to believe that it is their responsibility to control the people they set out to serve (see also, Flowers, 1998; Checkoway, 2003). Elsewhere, Skott-Myhre (2005) has argued that such a system of "care", based on "otherness" becomes a project designed to digest those on the outskirts, convincing both the youth and themselves of the benefits of buying into the dominant social system.

This paper highlights the relationship between capitalism as an economic system and a system of social control, and proposes that capitalism and the kind of youth work based within its regimes operate on what we will define below as a particular and specific type of logic. Within this logic of capitalism there are certain ideologies that have significant implications for youth work. One example of such logic is what Marx would refer to as exchange value (Skott-Myhre, 2005). Within the logic of exchange value, youth workers can come to expect something in exchange from the youth with whom they work. This relation of exchange is central to capitalist logic (Marx, 1993, pp. 881-882) and has the capacity to produce our relationships with youth as a system of exchange built on the transfer of goods, services, or personal satisfaction. Such logic can seriously impede our ability, as youth workers, to give ourselves freely without expectation or stipulation. In this sense, actual human relationships can be seriously compromised under programming that operates under the logic and regimes of capitalist production. In fact, under such logic, the very success of the programs designed to provide youth work might well become attributed to the success of the worker, as due right of profit, rather than through the mutual collaborative effort between youth and adults or the activities of the youth themselves.

Another example of the logic of exchange is the production and distribution of standards of normalcy (Foucault, 1975; Tait, 2000) as a system of rewards. Through the distribution of normative dominant standards and the regulation of dress, speech, ideology and the body, youth work can become a system designed to reproduce and facilitate goals that sustain the status quo. Youth who successfully and seamlessly enter the system are rewarded with privilege as a method of furthering and dividing a category of people which, when united, could make substantial social change.

However, there is an alternative form of work being done with youth that centers on the premise of intergenerational collaboration that might be described as located on the edge. This kind of work, which we have called radical youth work, could have the capacity to challenge the field and the world, constructing new realms of new knowledge and change. In this paper we will offer both theoretical and empirical support for the assertions made towards such a change.

In the first section, we will offer a theory of youth work within the expanding regimes of global capitalism. Following our own work (Skott-Myhre, 2004, 2005; Skott-Myhre, H.A., SkottMyhre J.D., Skott-Myhre K.S.G., & Harris 2004) as well as the work of Giroux (2003), McLaren (1996), Flowers, (1998), and Checkoway (2003), we will propose that the logic of global capitalism has immense influence and implication for youth-adult relations as they are engaged within the field of youth work. We do not mean to say, however, that this logic is total and that other kinds of work are not being done. In fact, we will go on to propose an alternate model for youth work, and then, through a selected literature review, trace alternative programming that attempts to challenge the logic of global capital. We will compare these programs against the model of what we are calling "radical youth work" and offer a critique. Finally, we will conclude with a nod to Michel Foucault in theorizing a non-fascist mode of youth work that might offer alternative frameworks for a radical youth work yet to come.

YOUTH WORK WITHIN EMPIRE

As the colonial period, characterized by the power of the European nation state, comes to an end, there is a new type of more extensive and pervasive control being extended by the forces of global capital through the process of globalization that Hardt and Negri (2000) call "Empire". In this mode of capitalist production, there is what Negri (1996, p.152) has called total subsumption within capital. That is to say that all types of production become subject to domination and control by capitalist interests. This has immense implication for the field of youth work because it means that there is no outside alternative to capitalism. The youth and adults engaged in all forms of youth work are, by definition, engaged within a world fully under exploitation by capital.

For example, in the US (arguably the nation most ideologically committed to the goals and aspirations of global capital), two of the primary goals of youth-based programming, the acquisition of employment and education, have been significantly impacted by the regimes of global capital. Because of the shift away from nationally based corporate structures and towards extended global networks of production, distribution, and control, the types and availability of living-wage employment has been significantly decreased, while the middle management employment options available previously to college graduates have similarly become significantly fewer. What this means is that, while the job options youth workers can obtain for youth within the US have been reduced, and while the budgets for colleges and universities that have traditionally served the middle or management class have been savagely reduced, tuition has been markedly increased (Giroux, 2005).

We would argue that this is a direct effect of the fact that the new corporate structures no longer require a large and expensive managerial class and, as a result, no longer require an extensive and available college

and university system to produce such a class. Obviously, this has a direct impact on the field of youth work and its role in vocation and education. If one is interested in challenging this system through what we are calling here "radical youth work", then it is imperative that we understand how this system of global capitalism functions and the ways in which it might be effectively challenged.

While a full explication of how capital operates is beyond the scope of this discussion[1], we would like to mark one of its central characteristics that has direct bearing on the political capacity and will of youth-adult collaboration. This characteristic can be simply delineated as addiction. We would argue that capitalism is a system of addiction that operates on the same logic as other systems of addiction. That is to say that capital always offers more than it can deliver but keeps its users believing that just around the corner is the paradise promised.

Capital cannot keep its promises of a full and complete life because, like other systems of addiction, capital is a simulation rather than an actuality. In other words, capital attempts to mask its actual effects by using concepts such as democracy, rights, freedom, and community without any real connection to the lived experience of those concepts in people's lives. For example, within youth work, there is a general consensus that work with young people ought to prepare them to be good citizens. We generally mean by this that they will join the dominant culture with a minimum of disruption. To that end we attempt, in many programs, to teach them discipline and respect for the authorities (adults) who are working with them.

However, this is more complicated than it may appear. If we are attempting simultaneously to prepare our young people for democratic citizenship, in which they exercise their rights as human beings, and at the same time show them that submission to authority, over which they have no democratic input, is the way to be successful, we are operating in direct contradiction to our own intentions. More importantly, we are building an addiction to certain forms of dominance by confusing submission to authority with respect. In this regard, it is important to note that one might best define respect as a relational quality found between equals, whereas submission is always between unequal levels of power. The promise of a respectful relationship between youth and adults cannot be built on a platform of submission. To use the term respect when one really means submission is to divorce the actual lived experience of submission through a simulation of respect. It is precisely this sort of confusion that produces the logic of addiction. The logic of addiction always entails denial because it cannot deliver the actual goods. Respect cannot be achieved through submission and yet we push discipline and subjugation to others as the path to mutual respect between youth and adults within our programming.

We would argue that it is within this logic of addiction that burn out becomes almost inevitable. The separation from the actual lived experience of youth-adult relations into the simulated relation of denial exemplified in the pseudo-respect/actual submission relationship leaves no material

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[1] For a more complete discussion see Skott-Myhre (2005)

human relation available to the parties involved. Their relationship becomes one defined by William Burroughs (1959, p. xxviii) as "junkie logic". Such logic might well be described as a logic of insatiable need. The need of the addict, which can never be fully met, is premised in a deep and profound sense of lack. The logic of the junkie always functions through a lived experience of lacking something. In the world of drug addiction or alcoholism, that something is a chemical substance. In the world of complete subsumption within capitalist relations, Marx (1993, pp. 92-94) argues that human beings become structurally alienated from one another by a combination of power and exchange relations. This radical separation from the "other" produces a constant sense of "lack" and an ongoing sense of anxiety. This kind of lack produces an emptiness in the center of human relations within regimes of capitalist sovereignty. Nothing that capital can produce can ever balance this "lack" and so it proposes, instead, to offer protection from the pain of such radical alienation through the acquisition of privilege, power, and material goods.

To acquire and sustain this kind of protection, however, one must adopt the logic of the addict. This requires that one follows what Burroughs (1959) has outlined as junkie logic. The first rule of addiction according to Burroughs is: "Never give anything away for nothing" (p. xviii). We can see this in operation in much of our program logic at many levels. Whenever we require that youths give something of themselves emotionally, physically, psychologically, or symbolically, we are placing our relationships into a cost/benefit paradigm. We are engaging them within the logic of capital in its most basic form as a system designed to produce a profit. Within the logic of addiction we are assuring ourselves that we will make an emotional or psychological profit out of the relationship with young people by promoting a logic that suggests it is normal for them to give us something for our service. Such an exchange places us immediately into the realm of power relations.

In a similar vein, Burroughs states that, within junkie logic, "one should never give more than you must give (always catch the buyer hungry and always make him wait)" (p.xxviii). How much of our programming is based on delayed gratification? How long must youth wait for services such as decent housing, fair education, medical treatment, the basic right to be heard?

Finally, junkie logic requires that one should "always take everything back if you possibly can". This is the logic that we use to protect ourselves from the lack of actual human contact between the youth and ourselves. We begin to view our work as needing to reward us for what we are doing. Youth owe us respect, honesty, trust, emotional catharsis, progress within our program, and success in their endeavors. Such things no longer belong to them. By junkie logic, these things now belong to us and we have a right to them. This is the heart of colonial logic as well. It is the idea that subjugated people owe the colonizer their allegiance, appreciation, loyalty, resources, and bodies. It is also the logic of the capitalists who

believe they have the right to profit off the labor, intelligence, resources and creativity of others.

If this is the logic of colonial youth work, then what is the alternative proposal of radical youth work? To answer this question, we contend that the field must envision an alternative logic, a logic that decolonizes youth work and produces it as a firmly liberatory activity. Such logic would directly contravene the logic of addiction and exchange that characterizes youth- adult relations built within the confines and disciplinarities of late stage capitalism. Such logic might be called a logic of desire.

In examining the logic of need in its relation to capital, we have redefined it outside of its conventional usage in order to see how it functions in the realm of lack and addiction as traced by Burroughs. Similarly, we will now examine desire as a concept as explicated in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987). In doing this, we propose, following Deleuze and Guattari, that a desire that is contrary to the logic of need as addiction is not premised on a lack but on surplus. Such desire is not for what one needs but rather for what has not yet been. Desire, as a central premise, engages all of the possibility of youth-adult relations that has not yet been. In our current work together with youth, this would entail all non-alienated relations outside of exchange or, put differently, all possibilities of actual voluntary human contact free of coercion or submission. While such relations do occur periodically within the world of youth work, we would argue that there are far more possibilities for such relations than are extant in our current situation.

To explore such desires requires an obverse logic to that of addiction. Whereas the addict is constantly seeking to obtain that which he does not have, the logic of desire requires a radical clearing of space in order to become aware of that which has not happened yet. This means that the logic of desire produces its effects through extension or giving itself away.

In youth work, this is the moment of absolute risk where we give freely of ourselves and our resources without expectation of return or exchange. Such a moment is always radical within the confines of capital because it contravenes the primary expectation that youth have of adults, which is that the relationship is always one of trading some portion of their autonomy for the goods, services or emotional support and connection necessary to support their lives. Corresponding to this, radical youth work then becomes incapable of taking anything back. The work becomes sheer expenditure. There is no safety, of course, in such an action, no protection for the worker. Relations with youth must be formed within the absolute parameters of actual human collision, with all of the pain entailed. However, as Skott-Myhre has noted elsewhere (2005), this kind of pain cannot be avoided in the work of liberation without dire consequences. One must engage painfully and accept its transformative destructions of our safety as privileged overseers of subjugated youth. In this, we have to confront our fear that we actually share much in common with the youth we "serve". We must engage the fact that youth workers and youth have more risks and, therefore, more pain in common than we are often willing to admit.

Such an acceptance of commonalities focuses our liberatory intensions and produces a certain kind of multitude of humans separated from their colonial status. Such a separation amplifies the productions of multiple possibilities of new identities, new economic forms, new alliances, and new distributions of force and power across generational lines. In this respect, such activity produces an amplification of difference through recognition of common interests. It is a bit like focusing light through a prism in freeing the possibility of many hues out of what would appear to be a single color (white).

As a result of this production and reproduction of infinite difference freed from the duality of youth-adult identity, while anchored to the material reality of shared risk and pain, there is the production of ongoing surplus. Within radical youth work as a logic of desire, need is replaced with a desire for what has not been rather than an attempt to replicate the safety and comfort of an imagined nostalgic past of nuclear families, safe childhoods, hetero-normative relations, or stable relations of dominance. The question remains: How might colonial youth work enter into such a set of relations?

THE LITERATURE

In order to answer this question, we engaged a representative reading of the literature on youth adult collaboration. This sample is not designed to be a comprehensive reading of the literature in the area, but rather to provide a representative selection of the work, of the issues involved, and some of the possibilities being developed specific to our interest in radical youth work. There are pockets of researchers who recognize the dire need to reconceptualize youth work and services. Rick Flowers and Barry Checkoway are two prominent researchers committed to changing the ways adults think of youth, whether they take the role of teacher, researcher, youth worker, or parent. Flowers (1998) and Checkoway (2003) suggest that the popular concept of youth empowerment is often promoted as the goal of doing work with, or for, youth. However, they suggest that this means little more than engaging youth in projects that ultimately serve the system. Flowers and Checkoway advocate for a type of youth work that focuses on teaching youth critical, analytical thinking skills, on education on oppression and the opportunity to change their surroundings, and on issues youth deem relevant for their own liberation. Ultimately, the multiple forms of oppression that face youth (in the registers of unemployment, lack of affordable housing, poor education systems, and police control) also face adults. Therefore, the need for intergenerational collaboration is great.

We agree with Flowers and Checkoway on the profound need for intergenerational collaboration. However, in our own review of the literature, we found very little of this collaboration that was designed to mutually benefit both youth and adults. In our review, we were concerned with issues of youth-adult collaboration as a central defining characteristic of radical youth work. To examine such collaboration we compared the

descriptions of work being done or proposed against our own definition of radical youth work. Based on our theory development (in this article and Skott-Myhre, 2004), we define radical youth work as those projects that engage youth and adults in common political projects to mutual benefit. Using this description, we reviewed recent literature in the field of youth work that engaged issues of youth-adult collaboration as program components. In our analysis, we grouped the data into four themes: teaching youth civic skills; understanding empowerment; collaborations for economic justice; and promising concepts for the future. In our review, we found a very limited literature that deploys radical youth work, as we have defined it, as an actual praxis. However, we did find several types of youth work that are involved in engaging youth as political actors on their own behalf, or changing the perception of youth so that adults begin to see them as an integral part of the community, as opposed to a liability or problem.

TEACHING YOUTH CIVIC SKILLS

There is an evolving literature that is focused on youth developing civic competencies through: teaching them critical thinking and analytical skills for democratic action, utilizing consciousness raising and inspiration, teaching political theory, and providing comprehensive education on voting.

In our review, we found both theoretical and practice-based literature that was interested in engaging youth citizens. One example is that of the East Side Institute (ESI) in New York City (Feldman & Silverman, 2003). The East Side Institute defines youth work as providing services that engage youth as citizens. They define citizenship as being characterized by the right to participate and the responsibility to serve. The proposed model encourages youth to "perform" different versions of themselves to acceptably and successfully negotiate the rules of the existing social structure (Feldman & Silverman, 2003, Youth development and mental health practice section, para. 7). However, in our reading, this particular performative expectation of the self reinforces ideas of exchange. The youth must use their self-development to prepare for entry into the market and then use their marketability to leverage respect from the adults in their lives. In this, there is no mention of actual revolt or challenging the rules. Citizenship, in this sense, appears to be related to the creation of successful adult citizens that work well in a neo-liberal democratic framework. In this regard, it appears to us that one of the goals of youth as citizens in this model is silently defined as being employed. In addition, one of the main tenets of this project is to encourage youth to connect to the larger economic social system, the result of which, in our reading, thereby transfers the struggle of the individual towards a faceless driving force that is capital.

Another aspect of civic engagement that we examined is in the area of what might be called active citizenship or accessible direct democracy. In their definition of youth work as being centrally concerned with youth becoming civically involved, Youness, Bales, Christmas-Best, Diversi, McLaughlin, and Silbereisen (2002) define civic competency as under-

standing how the government works, learning participatory skills, and permitting individuals to "meet, discuss and collaborate to promote their interests" within a democratic framework (p. 123). Similarly, Finn and Checkoway (1998) place the growth of civic participatory skills in youth as a fundamental goal of revolutionary youth work. They also hold that it is important for youth to comprehend the influential factors of cultural politics (the limiting nature of stereotypes found in racial, class based, and other categorical discourses being transformed into individuals with agency) in the process of social change. Youth, then, should be taught the critical, analytical thought processes that truly lead to being an active citizen (p. 343).

Youth Jams (Youth Jams, 2004) and Youth Force (Checkoway, 2003) are two examples of praxis that offer a concrete example of this type of civic consciousness and agency. At Youth Jams, youth join together in a community-based context for consciousness raising and seeking the inspiration necessary to make social change. Youth Force (an organization in the Bronx for youth aged 8 to 24, with an intergenerational Board of Directors) has developed a 10-week program called Boot Camp[2] . This 10-week course focuses on fighting oppression, planning campaigns, and mobilizing the community. The goal of the program is to foster civic activism. Another endeavor of Youth Force is called Street University. This program holds workshops in political theory, critical analysis of economic theory, comprehensive education on voting (parties, candidates, platforms, ridings, funding), and other skills preparing youth for social change.

Internationally, Roger Hart (1992) has published his work through UNICEF concerning increasing children's participation as a fundamental democratic right, defining true citizenship, extrapolated from the Convention on the Rights of the Child. He defines participation as sharing in the decisions that affect one's life. Hart considers this material participation in the actual conditions of a youth's life to be a critical building block of democratic consciousness and practice. Hart notes that along with rights come responsibilities, which, he argues, can be learned in collaboration with adults. His contention is that adult experience will facilitate the development of a sense of responsibility on the part of young people (p. 31).

EMPOWERING INDIVIDUAL YOUTH

A second theme we identified in our reading was a literature that was interested in utilizing youth-adult collaboration to "empower" the individual by having them plan and execute projects within their community. This literature focuses on helping youth develop a sense of agency, recognizing social contexts, knowing, analyzing and applying political and economic ideology in their everyday life, and seizing power over responsibility. Critical to this effort was defining a certain model of the individual as a method of "empowerment". ESI (mentioned above) identifies their work as being what they have called social therapy (Feldman & Silverman, 2003). The goal of social therapy is to have the individual come to understand himself simultaneously in the moment and in a more transient state

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[2] We would note the contradiction in this interesting military reference which for us calls forth images of faceless bodies conforming to one power rather than any democratic impetus.

of becoming. This creative becoming self, it is proposed, will enable young people to perform different and multiple selves and free themselves from stereotypical self conceptions. In the ESI model, the self is a creator, giver, and builder (Youth development and mental health section, para. 10). While we are very sympathetic with this model of the self as absolute creative force and would even argue it as a necessity for what we are calling radical youth work, it seemed to us, in our reading, that the self proposed by ESI is inherently driven by capital. As we noted above, the basis of ESI's definition of these performances is designed to assist youth in developing a self that can successfully negotiate the established rules of the existing economic social system for maximum (economic) gain. We would argue that empowerment is utilized here to teach youth to recreate themselves as what might be called recycled beings constructed out of an existing pool of conventional role sets. Put differently, youth are encouraged to mold themselves into what conventionally successful people look, act and think like. Imagining a self beyond this is not mentioned.

In critiquing "empowerment" models, Flowers (1998) points out that youth work is designed to "empower" the individual by having them plan and execute projects within their community. Flowers criticizes this by stating that youth exist in a context with little freedom of choice, made tolerable by having a little responsibility granted to them. Inherently, then, this construction of youth includes a lack of power. He argues further that a more comprehensive understanding of empowerment would include: helping youth develop a sense of agency through believing their actions can positively change their environment; knowing, analyzing, and applying political and economic ideology in their everyday life; and understanding the various forms of responsibility and power and their space of negotiation within those ideas (p. 4). Checkoway et al. (2003) similarly define youth empowerment as active role-taking in community planning, implementation and education, a commitment to the power struggle of youth attaining a political voice and a consistent belief that power resides in all of us to change our environment. This power is amplified through collaboration, be it with other youth or intergenerationally (p. 304-305).

A tangible manifestation of such empowerment can be found in the annual World Youth Jams conferences. This conference is for youth aged 15 to 30 from around the globe who make advocacy and political change their passion. These youth are described as "dedicating their lives for a thriving, just, peaceful world" (Youth Jams, 2004). These conferences are a space for advocates to feel safe, accepted and validated in their efforts to change the world, as well as for providing an opportunity to build a sense of international solidarity.

In his work on "empowerment" models, Hart (1992) sees empowerment as consulting young people in research done with them and reaching out to them where they are in life. He suggests a praxis for young people who are illiterate in which youth workers provide services by engaging in such activities as designing interactive graphics, allowing young people unlimited

access to their personal files and, if they are unable to read, reading to them. He suggests that effective work with street children might include providing them with the tools to create a map of their environment so that the collaborator might understand more fully their lived experience and the resources they can draw upon. He argues that empowerment in the educational sphere is currently limited due to the fact that teaching manufactured political concepts as opposed to the skills needed to change the government is preferred. Such teaching, he suggests, maintains the existing social order. Political self-determination is the ultimate goal of empowerment and reforming schools towards democratic participation is primary to such a project (p. 43).[3]

COLLABORATION FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Engaging youth and adults in community-based activities, such as obtaining funding for school equipment, youth housing etc., was another theme we found in our research. Two concrete examples of this kind of work are the Indianola Parent Student Group (Southern Echo, 2004) and Youth Force (mentioned above). The Indianola Parent Student Group (IPSG), inspired by their work with Southern Echo (who we will look at below), lobbied for funds and an updated science curriculum in an all-Black Middle School. It was noted that the nearby, mostly White school, had ample resources in this respect. The advocacy by the IPSG revealed that the school board had extra money from the leasing of the land to plantation owners, which this group redirected to the building of science labs and new textbooks. In another example of this kind of effort, Youth Force tackled several economic issues within their community, including lobbying housing officials for the development of housing for older youth in the foster care system and youth immediately following incarceration (Checkoway, 2003).

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE:
INTERGENERATIONAL COLLABORATION

Finn and Checkoway (1998) have put forth the idea that the community is the fundamental unit of analysis for social change (p. 342). The type of community envisioned by these authors as conducive for social revolution is one in which adults and youth join together as allies with shared responsibilities and mutual respect. Along this line, we found several projects working towards this kind of vision for community work for youth and adult collaboration.

Southern Echo (Southern Echo, 2004), located in the state of Mississippi in the USA, has developed a framework for intergenerational collaboration that recognizes the strong tendency of adults to resort to elements of control and authority over youth. The group is confident youth and adults coming together for political and social change, as seen in the mutual development and exchange of skills, knowledge and passion,

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[3] For further amplification on radical education see Henry Giroux (2003), Peter McLaren (1996).

has many benefits. This organization assists other grassroots agencies in the area to develop training programs for youth on the fundamentals of community organizing and public policy. Substantial benefits for communities have resulted from the hard work and dedication of these intergenerational partnerships, including halting the construction of an all-White public school in a district comprised mainly of Black citizens in Tunica, Mississippi. In addition, the group took on a high school in Drew, Mississippi that was denying selected students their transcripts and class ranking, necessary information for SATs, as well as college and employment applications.

Another example that highlights adult youth collaboration on the international front is the work done with Brazilian street children and street educators (adult volunteers who often were street children themselves) (Hart, 1992). The street educators facilitate change by working with small groups of children, discussing issues that the young people identify themselves, and developing activities and creating a code of survival defined explicitly by the young people themselves. Through this organization of oppressed peoples came the 1986 National Street Children's Congress, which spawned media and political attention to the competencies of young people in social change (p. 31).

Garthwaite and Tucker (2003) discuss the benefits of a tool developed specifically for adult-youth collaboration on a community level. This tool kit, *Building Communities,* frames collaboration in terms of the gifts people have to offer to one another including experience, passion for change, and relationships. In a step-by-step model, this kit walks community leaders through activities designed to facilitate the process of building and attaining community development through adults and youth meeting as partners in change. As of August 2003, over 500 copies of the Tool Kit had been distributed across America and at five sites internationally[4].

At a 4H conference held in Wisconsin in 1992, youth adult collaboration was a central focus (Zeldin, Camino, Calvert, & Ivey, 2002). Although the conference framed youth participation as requiring work and effort (as the conference leaders did not see leadership in youth developing naturally), the conference did struggle with how to promote genuine youth-adult collaboration more effectively (p. 13). The conference proposed that positive adult-youth collaborations are premised on contributors maintaining an open mind and a willingness to make mistakes with one another. To continue improvement in these types of relationships, one must make efforts to explore sharing power between youth and adults and have a clear understanding of goals and leadership. Making note of meeting times to complement youth schedules, including youth on the agenda in order to provide a definite space for their contribution, directing questions specifically at youth, and informing youth about opportunities for participation are four strategies offered. This publication is intended for 4H Extension workers to encourage them to engage with youth on terms of collaboration[5].

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[4] Contact: (301) 961-2837

[5] See also the groundbreaking work of the National Network for Youth in the area of youth participation on boards and as active members of an advocacy organization (http://www.nn4youth.org/).

CRITIQUE AND CONCERNS

Flowers (1998) challenges popular notions of youth work as being responsive to the needs of youth. He contends that existing youth work practices only "extend immediate expressions of need" (p. 1). Field work done with youth workers indicates that their work actually serves the interests of those such as parents, schools, law enforcement agencies, and business who seek control over deviant youth. His research with youth workers indicates that the work is directed primarily towards helping youth reach the mainstream and teaching them the skill sets needed to successful participate in, as opposed to the skill sets necessary to successfully change, society. Flowers (1998a) argues strongly that this must change immediately (How do youth workers theorize, para. 15).

Finn and Checkoway (1998) describe the current state of youth work as a top down adult-run structure that places emphasis on the delivery of services and the control of youth (p. 343). These authors call for a shift from conceptualizing youth as the problem to viewing youth as a resource. In this model, active participation by youth is expected in dealing with the issues that concern them, but youth do not owe subordinance based on age. Instead, each member of the community action team composed of youth and adults is respected equally for what they bring forth to the movement (p. 343).

It is our contention that the literature we have reviewed here speaks to the immense benefits of such collaboration. Groups such as Southern Echo in Mississippi who fight for equality, Youth Force in the Bronx who lobby for economic justice in one of the poorest neighborhoods in America, and the work of World Youth Jams provide a space for young advocates to connect with each other and re-ignite their political projects. These projects demonstrate the context in which further development is needed[6].

However, it is important to note that these projects are not without their critics and problems. A study done with organizations funded by the W.K. Kellogg philanthropist group points to interesting contrasts with the experience of Southern Echo, an organization funded, in part, through Kellogg. The respondents, who represented many groups who have benefited from the $100 million in grants since 1988, "quickly identified youth-adult working relationships as ineffective" (Ho, date unknown). Participants spoke candidly about having youth on advisory boards in order to be politically correct, with little consideration for the value of their contributions. Respondents recognized the need to move beyond empty goals of leadership development towards the balance of power in our society but felt hopeless at the thought of actualizing these dreams. The discrepancy between this study and the ground reports from groups such as Southern Echo and Youth Force points to the need to address the felt helplessness through the connection of those who have experienced very real success

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[6] It is important to note that both researchers and advocates point to the media as a detrimental force for adults and youth forming the meaningful relationships that can lead to joint community change. Media perpetuates discourses of youth as idle members of society interested only in fuelling a consumerism movement or as primarily concerned with peer culture. Taking steps to recognize the influence of these constructions of youth will facilitate imagining a world outside of them.

stories in the project to those who have lost confidence in the ideological underpinnings of the program.

Roger Hart (1992) characterizes the practice (criticized in the Kellogg report) of engaging young people without serious or actual participation as encompassing manipulation, decoration and tokenism. Tokenism is the apparent voice given to young people without providing real choice in the subject matter itself and/or allowing little opportunity for youths to form their own opinion. The most comprehensive form of participation envisioned by Hart (1992) is a project that is initiated by young persons and that engages shared decision making with adults. Our own project argues that the system must change to provide spaces in which actual youth-adult collaboration could become a reality through the production of mutual projects that allow children and youth to have and to exercise their agency and, ultimately, to engage in meaningful relationships with adults that promote shared dreams and limitless possibilities.

TOWARDS AN ANIMATED RADICAL YOUTH WORK

In his preface to Anti-Oedipus (in Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, pp. xiii-xiv), Michel Foucault outlines what he describes as a guide to anti-fascist living. In closing, we would like to take several of his points and explicate them within the framework of a guide to radical youth work.

If we follow Foucault, the primary step in building youth-adult relations is a radical repudiation of the negative. One could define the negative here as anything that operates through principles of law, limit, or lack. As an anti-fascist or radical practice, youth work would become premised not on law or institutional rules but rather on the basis of establishing bonds of relationship and mutual interest. This would mean abandoning methods of institutional control such as program rules as a method to achieve harmonious relations between youths and adults. It would mean that adults would need to negotiate their relations with youth on the basis of situations and personal interchange. Concretely, this would mean that when there is a conflict between youth and adults over music, language, resources or culture, it would need to be negotiated on an equal footing without recourse to adult privilege or institutional authority. Similarly, an anti-fascist or radical youth work that withdrew its allegiance from limit would abandon any cynicism about the possibilities of youth-adult collaboration and would operate firmly within the exploration of things not yet seen, thought, or accomplished. In such work, the focus would not be on ideas that produce limits such as diagnostic categories, developmental restrictions, age-biased potentials or common sense. Further, an anti-fascist/radical youth work would abandon any notion of need or lack. Youth would no longer be seen in terms of their deficits or incapacities, and youth-adult relations would be premised on the inherent surplus found in productive collisions of difference.

In stepping away from an allegiance to the negative, Foucault proposes that we instead prefer what is positive and multiple. Such a move would

require not simply an acceptance of the resiliency and resource inherent in all of us, youth and adult, but also a celebration of our infinitely multiple ways of being. In concrete terms, this would mean not simply an acceptance but a joyful amplification of all kinds of music, style, body modification, sexualities, spiritualities, language forms, etc. Such youth work would remove the prohibitions on all of these modes of expression by youth in schools, community groups, shelters and residential programs. This would fall in line with Foucault's preference for difference over uniformity. Instead of disciplining youth bodies to fit into the needs of capitalist enterprise (global and local), radical youth work would amplify desire in order to break the bonds of such discipline and free the creative force of the body in all its infinite variations and practices. After all, to paraphrase the philosopher Spinoza, "No one knows what the body can do."

In this, we would then engage with what Foucault talks about as "flows over unities". We would no longer perceive the people around us as stuck in problems or frozen in developmental time but rather as constantly in the movement that produces themselves. Instead of youth work that focuses on enclosing and containing the movement of youth through community, as we currently practice in our homes, schools, residential settings, hospitals, jails, and work places, radical work would release young people into community with adults. This would simultaneously engage the adults in the work of re-entering community with young people.[7] To some degree, this is what is happening in the best street outreach work. It is also why such work is so dangerous to traditional agency discipline.

In terms of organizational structure, we would suggest deploying Foucault's notion of preference for mobile arrangements over systems. The force of such a shift can be seen in the organization of the street demonstrations against the World Trade Organization and the World Bank. The organization of these events is comprised largely of leaderless mobile arrangements constructed by internet connections and cell phone communication. The system of global capital also uses a highly mobile arrangement of goods, services, and sites of production that flow across the globe at a dizzying speed. The organizations that serve young people, on the other hand, are still using hierarchical models of management and production that are firmly rooted in models of hierarchy and organizational structures of management more pertinent to factories and commercial operations than to associations of human beings attempting to mutually liberate themselves.

In a similar sense, Foucault advises us to consider the possibility that production be not sedentary but nomadic. Before engaging this idea, one must ask what youth work does produce. We are suggesting that what radical youth work produces is the process, practices, and means of mutual liberation for youth and adults. Such production can never be limited to the confines of one site but, in order to succeed, must move across multiple sites, mutating and growing. Its site of production is the face of humanity

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[7] For an excellent example of this model at work see Scheper-Hughes and Lovell's introduction to the work of Franco Basaglia, Psychiatry Inside Out.

on a global level. It is a project of producing a multitudinous force at an infinitude of sites between, within and across human beings.

Additionally, Foucault advises that "one does not have to be sad to be militant." Radical youth work is a joyful practice. It is the explosion of the desires of all of us together. It is the insistence that the material conditions of our lives and relationships can, in fact, yield joy. In spite of the pain of struggle and the hardships of existence, mutual collaboration yields its own set of rewards and an amplification of life force unavailable within any of us alone. To isolate ourselves from each other by virtue of age, as we do in our constructions of what is youth and what is adult, is a tragedy of lost potential. It is the lost potential of "othering"; the production and sustenance of sadness based in the hopelessness of barriers that deny us the ability to meet, in the fullness of life force, on a productive and honest level. To share our common risks and overcome them is a certain kind of joy. In this lies the hidden force of absolute direct democracy or the assertion of the desires of the multitude through lived practice rather than representational proxy.

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