'CADJAN – KIDUHU'
Global Perspectives on Youth Work

Edited by

Brian Belton

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Printed on acid-free paper

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FOREWORD

When Brian first asked me to write a foreword to this book, I was slightly apprehensive – had I become so removed from youth work practice to be able to do the book justice? It didn't take long to connect back into the breadth of issues and challenges that I have faced and experienced over the years as a volunteer, part-time youth worker, full-time youth worker; youth work trainer, youth officer and service director.

I worked with Brian many years ago in Islington and had the professional privilege to be his youth officer. My overriding memory of Brian was a worker who thought deeply about his work and 'challenged' those around him in relation to what they were looking for and how he could facilitate it. It was a period where 'personal empowerment' of young people was being strongly espoused, but only the most skilled staff could make real. Brian challenged the young people in his project and his approach and thoughts about the work challenged me also and made me a better officer, thinking through far more about what we were trying to achieve and why.

And so to this book; Brian has brought together a set of writings which maintain this approach, connecting with the reader and provoking thought, reflection and challenge, whilst celebrating the contribution of great youth work and youth workers.

The book draws experiences from across the world and is a book for our times. These experiences will resonate with readers describing not just the 'youth work journey' but, critically, the cultural context of the work in different areas. Understanding better the position of young people in different cultural contexts and traditions is essential to delivering services today – the world is a much smaller place with mobility rarely experienced before. Services across the UK are working with a great diversity of cultures, languages and traditions and how we develop services that are young people-focused, understanding both history and current context, is at the heart of what our youth services should be about.

Nearly 30 years ago, I was a specialist youth officer for recruitment and training of black and ethnic minority workers for the ILEA and I can recall my initial well-meaning, but somewhat naïve, approaches to engaging different communities about their perceptions of youth work and how we could encourage young people to consider this as a legitimate career and achieve a 'more representative workforce'. I soon realised both the importance and limitations of working through 'community leaders' and recognised how direct engagement with young people was key to supporting their aspirations. Although good progress was made, the approach would founder today. This book illustrates a variety of political and historical contexts and experiences faced by youth workers and young people and helps to challenge thinking and assumptions, requiring more inclusive approaches and challenging the mainstream to change and adapt. Therefore, the concept of a 'representative workforce' needs refining. Yes, we need a more diverse workforce but the idea that the workforce can accurately reflect the experiences of its

population is not sustainable as a fixed goal. The diversity and mobility of the population requires a diverse workforce able to work effectively and empathetically with any young people that 'walk through or are outside the door'. Our workers need to represent a diversity of learning and experience rather than a formulaic representation as in previous times – this is now the day job.

The book explores and describes the heart of youth work practice – the nature of relationships and engagement between youth worker and young people and how these develop in the wider social and political context. Youth workers have high community profile but little status in our education hierarchies – all status is hard earned, based on the quality of their relationships and evidence of the difference they make.

So to the evidence, this is described in relation to demonstrating the need for funding but it is not just about that. Our most skilled youth workers have a strong instinct and insight on what makes a difference but they can no longer afford to assert this without evidence – we are in an acutely difficult time financially and need to get wise to the most efficient ways of recording impact. Reference is made to statistics and 'the numbers game'. Statistics don't provide answers but they do help to ask questions. We need to combine the qualitative with the quantitative and use this to help make balanced judgements about our work and decisions about priorities and resources. It is just as much about how youth workers decide to use their time as how decisions are made by funders. It is neither a science nor an art but a combination of the two.

This book describes and emphasises the importance of work being directly led by young people. Successfully engaging young people in co-production – planning and delivering services – should be our first reference point when funding youth work, thus breaking traditional funding arrangements, where adult-led organisations that had funding for many years have 'hung on for dear life' and are now seeing the world pass them by.

Helping young people to find a voice and engage in the democratic decision-making processes is explored here and these are essential challenges to youth workers and decision makers. Even the most effective of engagement systems has to reflect on whether young people are being 'incorporated' in adult decision-making. Providing the 'facts and figures'; the evidence which points in a clear direction – the 'Wednesbury Reasonable' principle that local authorities have to demonstrate when decisions are challenged – can be constructed in ways which make it difficult for young people to disagree with the adult conclusions. Although consensus is no bad thing, sometimes some 'less logical' youthful rebellion is needed – it may be less comfortable but provides an edge to decision making – '*We don't care about the logic, your statutory duties; the financial implications; the conflicting priorities – we just want good youth provision*'.

This book explores the role of youth worker in 'supporting learning' and the attempts to support its legitimacy by describing it as 'informal education'. But what is the link between what youth workers do and 'formal education'? Youth workers aren't on the same 'firm ground' as teachers who have the school or classroom with clear institutional structures and norms; a hierarchy of support; a

national curriculum; subject expertise etc. But that firm ground can also limit and stifle so the great teachers work within those structures and bring to the classroom those key characteristics inherent in the best youth work: reflection; discernment; trust; and relationships that enthuse and challenge young people to think laterally, grow intellectually and emotionally. To do this, they need to take risks – things that youth workers have to do to survive any day. So it is as much understanding how 'formal educators' can learn from the so-called 'informal educators' and how young people have learning opportunities from both. Reference is made to youth workers leaving the profession and moving on to becoming teachers or social workers. Whilst regrettable in some ways, it's a reflection of the economic realities of pursuing a full-time career in a profession under severe pressure financially. But whichever course youth workers take, the qualities they take with them can only enhance their chosen direction.

This book describes the changing demands on youth workers in times of austerity – are they becoming more 'agents of the state' or, indeed, have they always been? This is tricky ground – youth workers do not have the luxury of statutory structures and funding. They have to show resilience and flexibility to move with the 'prevailing political priorities' with the knowledge that these change and shift, whilst holding onto the underlying nature of their relationships with young people. This is particularly important as youth work resources are steered more towards targeted youth work. As eloquently described in a number of contexts in the book, we need to shift our thinking about youth workers from working with young people who are 'the problem' with deficits, to working with young people who are 'the future' with potential – that is the investment required.

So, what is this skill that youth workers bring – is it just a survival tactic or more a *'conscious pragmatism'* that combines their analysis of the social and political context, their core values and making a practical difference in real life situations? The book sets out a huge diversity of work described as youth work but, critically, the underlying characteristics of 'what holds it together'. Brian provides some very practical definitions and describes those core values in the context of political and economic reality.

This is what Brian brought to his youth work practice – not just 'academic navel gazing' ending up in corners of contradiction and unable to move; rather a 'heads-up, eyes open' reflective, cerebral and practical understanding of the work, thus enabling young people and those around him to think and choose different paths with confidence.

I recommend this book to challenge you to do the same.

Thanos Morphitis O.B.E.
Director of Strategy and Commissioning for Islington Children's Services

BRIAN BELTON

INTRODUCTION

'Cadjan' is a Sinhala word, which refers to palm leaves matted or plaited together to form a thatch or roof of many small dwellings and other buildings in Sri Lanka. This is where 'Nest', the charity that will benefit from the royalties of this book, is located (please see details below). 'Kiduhu' is the Tamil equivalent. This title for our book was chosen because it exemplifies the nature of the pages that follow. Writers, practitioners and scholars from all over the planet, have put together their ideas, perspectives and hopes for and about work with young people, either in their context or from their context. From this weaving together of relatively heterogeneous elements, the hope is that you, the reader, will get the impression of something of the homogenous whole that youth work might be understood to be. We, like youth work, are no one thing, but collectively, perhaps like youth work internationally, we have a common purpose that connects and joins us. We hope you will identify and perhaps become part of this on or after reading what we have offered.

CORE RELATION

The point of this book is not to show or say what youth work is. Given the range of voices, approaches, views and functions of the contributors how could we claim that youth work might be one, or any single, consistent or constant something over or between contexts, throughout time? In places we do try to give a general idea of the mutable shape and motivation of practice. For instance, in the first chapter I do offer a 'place to stand' (for now, for a moment), but the hope is that this will be developed and altered rather than adhered to in any regimented way; such ossification of youth work would be a contradiction in terms and practice – ours is an evolutionary project – if youth work is anything, unfailingly it is a 'growth business'. Although it is understandable, if one is confined to any one context, to believe it is or has definitively been this or that fundamentally or primarily. Part of the rationale that has bloomed out of the joint creation of this book is to present different practice and theoretical milieus. This might go some way to promoting the understanding that to lock down youth work in notional stasis, or bolt it into a 'carceral archipelago' of a conventional or acceptable trajectory would be the antithesis of practice, which would effectively destroy it as youth work. For all this, not a few writers have effectively touted to achieve just this, or perhaps identified (put a flag in) what they see (or want to be) the 'core' of youth work practice.

But youth work isn't an apple. A global and historical perspective of youth work clearly shows it to be a relentlessly developing range of responses to a persistently moving, growing and shifting range of phenomena, issues and directions presented by and to societies and the young people of and in those societies. Here we present a set of responses in the face of and from within that shifting field that can generically be called 'youth work; we do this in this time, from many places and a diversity of identity, but we all identify what we have presented and ourselves professionally and/or academically with what we agree to be youth work.

This said, looking for or trying to cobble together a central theory or fulcrum of practice is a draw; there is security in being able to say 'that is this' – but security is not the goal – curiosity, discovery and learning are chancy pursuits, that's what makes them exciting. The hope for security is an anathema in this adventure. However, there is the illusion of status in being 'at the core'; one can identify oneself as an 'expert', part of an elite or priesthood of sorts, inhabiting the 'inner sanctum' of professional knowledge. One can see this as being attractive to the insecure; the first task of any group that craves protection is to set up a cabal, cult or clique; a freemasonry of 'fellows'. But the cult or closed shop the expert inhabits is a contradiction in terms of intellectual activity and logically also with regard to inclusionary practice.

Some years ago I was speaking at a YMCA conference, part of which was devoted to 'identifying the core' of the movement. I think I upset a few colleagues by pointing out that the identification of an 'included' group (those who are at or in tune with the core) excludes others (if everyone is at the core there is no core of course). I'm not sure how a Christian or an 'association', or any supposedly open or inclusionary faith, discipline or organisation can rationally go about erecting barriers that effectively create a peripheral population or marginal groups (the 'excluded'). One popular response was variations on 'We'll lose all the Christian's'. Well, God moves in mysterious (unexpected) ways (which doesn't feel very secure does it; what'll she do next? God knows!)

When I was a boy my grandmother told me that when she was a girl, as a Gypsy, she and her family were not allowed in the Church when it was full; they were the ones that had to stand outside to listen to the sermons etc. One day, it was pouring with rain and she was soaking. She told me she asked God, 'Why don't they let us in the Church?' She said God replied to her, saying, 'Don't worry about it; they won't let me in either'.

The search for central principles, set in stone, to create a 'community of practice' is redolent of the above. The moment one sets the parameters of a community a distinct group of the included are recognised, but at the same time this identifies those excluded from (not of) that community. The higher the walls, the less permeable the boundaries of any given community, the more difficult it is for people or knowledge of others or the world to get in or out. This is why the more impermeable a community is (the more 'specialist' it becomes) the more it turns into the locale of prejudice and discrimination ('we' are like this, so we are 'in', they are like 'that' so they are 'out'). I would hope we might think of youth work, its development and practice, more in the vein of an idealised incarnation of

the Islamic concept of 'Ummah'; encompassing the potential of the inclusion of all.

ACCIDENTAL INTERNATIONAL PRACTITIONER

What I have found, as an accidental international practitioner, is what makes youth work exciting and dynamic is that belongs to nobody because it belongs to everybody. Youth work is not what one person says it is, youth work is what all youth workers do. I love this about youth work; it is defiant in the face of categorisation – it makes fools of the academically pompous and those who believe in their own power over the shape and direction of general practice. You might not agree with this, this time next year I might not agree with it, but in the words of Eldridge Cleaver, former Head of the International Section of the Black Panther Party, 'Too much agreement kills the chat'.

It is in the spirit of the above ideas that this book is presented. It was thought important that the editorial hand should pass lightly over the contributions. This allows free play to individual styles in order that particular ideas and descriptions of situations are put over as much as possible (given that most of the material has been written in a second language). We have attempted to bring together a mix of responses from academic enquiry, to musing on the nature of practice and overviews of the development and delivery of youth work; theory, rhetoric, explanation and polemic (amongst other considerations) inhabit the streets and alleyways of this work, as does joy, scepticism and curiosity. Think Brueghel's 'Children's Games' and/or the 'Conviviality' of Illich; his 'eutrapelia' ('graceful playfulness').

While there has been a subtle attempt to suggest order, the reader looking for continuity of structure might be forearmed in the knowledge that there has been an attempt not to impose a particular regime of presentation. However, while this might, reading individual chapters, appear to be much the same in terms of content, taking the book as a whole one might come to a quite different conclusion. One of the things youth workers find out pretty swiftly at the start of their careers is that people are inherently pattern makers; be there no form, we find an order. This might be understood as the 'ground floor' of 'world making'.

CHAPTERS

The book has been divided into three sections; Theory, Organisation and Practice. This division is not definitive, as many of chapters overlap in terms of focus and ideas. However, we have chosen to gather the chapters under these headings for the casual use and convenience of the reader.

The section on 'Theory' tends to be made up of material expressing (in the main) outlooks and ideas about practice, consideration of current understanding and delivery but also the potential for development and adaptation of the same.

The material clustered under the heading 'Organisation' concentrates on how work is organised in various national and regional environments, its contextual character and direction. However, as you will see from the opening chapter of this

part of the book, to write about context can and does evoke aspects of response similar to those made in the first part of the book.

The final part of the book, 'Practice' leans toward a focus to the experience of face-to-face work. This provides something of a collective voice from the point of delivery of practice, although once more, the reader will gather this is not a total or ridged demarcation. Many, perhaps all of us, would agree that such an ambition, to divorce practice from the development of theory and the context of delivery, is not possible in an intellectual sense or perhaps desirable from any perspective; implementation of practice in the development of theory.

THEORY

In *Professionalising Youth Work: A Global Perspective – Criteria for Professional Youth Work; Its Principles and Values* Brian Belton provides an overview and development of more than five years work in conjunction of the Commonwealth Youth Programme in the South East Asian context. The task was to define youth work as a professional practice.

The chapter is the product and advancement of debate, deliberation and research in Malaysia, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Most of the conclusions presented by Brian were also informed by responses from the Maldives, India and Pakistan, incorporating views from across youth work and related sectors, calling on hundreds of professionals, volunteers, academics, NGO representatives, state officials and other stake holders. The collaboration resulted in policy developments across the region, and the start of a professional association in Sri Lanka.

Professionalism here is not characterised by salary, personal status or employment. The aim of this collaborative enterprise was to raise the consciousness of the skills, attitudes and knowledge needed to provide best practice, in order to establish youth work standards requisite to particular contexts and to some extent across contexts. Professionalism, in terms of this chapter might be thought of as an ethical and moral imperative, protective of young people, but also a means to raise, maintain and continually improve delivery of services.

The original findings, first framed in 2012, have been reviewed and built on via subsequent experience, new information and the continued sharing of perspectives. Language has thus been adapted; trajectory modified and content reviewed and elaborated on to provide a starting place for thinking about the nature and purpose of youth work over a global horizon. The ambition is not to say 'this is all things to all people' but to offer something to all people, to use, adapt, build on, deploy or reject. It is our starting place, a base camp from which a journey might start.

Hip Hop is Dead! Youth work in a state of decline? This is the question Curtis Worrell addresses, highlighting the comparisons between the development and direction of youth work and hip-hop culture. Deploying revealing metaphor, phraseology and descriptive simile, Curtis sets out a position that helps expand on and illuminate the character of a unique youth movement/culture. However, in the process of making his analysis he provides a critical perspective of the past, future

and current youth work, all the time allowing his own practice and client experience to guide and temper his position.

The chapter exposes how the history of youth work is often viewed through a 'rose-tinted magnifying glass', that sometimes feels like a sort of reverse crystal ball, looking back to a days when the state was (supposedly) some sort of benign supplier of 'good things' for young people for the sake of it (ostensibly being concerned with embedding a largely unelaborated social, group and individual morality). It goes on to provide a reorientation of this illusion, facilitating the reader's understanding that youth work is not, and has hardly been, since its inception as a national, non-secular service, with codified practice and qualification, undertaken for its own sake or for detached ethical reasons, allied to a cross societal and cultural shared idea of the 'common good'.

Implicating an aspect of popular culture, which is also for Curtis an abiding interest and a passion (as it is for many youth workers and young people) the work offers both a personal and a social interpretation, so heightening potential and actual insight.

Dana Fusco looks at *The Social Architecture of Youth Work Practice*, articulating the relational space for transformative work with young people, a space that good practitioners seem to know well, more by intuitive action than word. The model builds from the everyday lived experiences of youth workers, and others who work with young people, as well as from intellectual discourses in youth work and youth studies, and its cousin fields around the world. In this chapter, the author asks: *What is the space that youth work practice occupies? How is it created and why? Finally, what are the challenges to creating this social architecture today and what can be done so that transformative spaces with and by young people remain possible?*

Hans Skott-Myhre, *Building a New Common: Youth Work and the Question of Transitional Institutions of Care*, argues that the youth work is a field of endeavour founded on care. The question of how to care, who receives care, how to deliver care, and what is care, however, is neither simple nor uncontested. For many, if not most of us, caring and care are synonymous. However, caring about someone and caring for him or her are not necessarily directly related. Both the affective relation of caring for someone and the practices associated with that sense of caring are both quite complicated.

In youth work, both the feeling of caring and the practices associated with and generated by such feelings are often conceived of as acts and affects centered within and between individuals. That is to say that I, as an individual feel a sense of caring within myself for another individual and, on the basis of those feelings, interact with the other in a caring manner.

Brian Belton in *Compassion and the 'Colonial Mentality'* states that:

> The worst thing about youth facilities is that they are 'youth' facilities. As a youth, the last place I or anyone I knew wanted to go was a place designed for 'youth'.

He goes on to ask how much room there is to make what there is for youth what youth want, arguing that it is not surprising that as a society, with the colonisation era being historically a comparatively recent period, wherein most of our institutions (education, health, law etc) were formed, the echo of the culture of colonisation and its controlling ethos continues to resonate; we are quite used to other people setting our social agenda. Within this atmosphere over recent years there has been an on-going discussion across what are broadly referred to as the 'caring professions' about the place of compassion in practice, but at what point does compassion become a form of patronisation; is there something colonial about the ambition to 'share suffering' (the meaning of the word 'compassion')?

In this chapter Brian echoes the position of Richard Sennett (2003) questioning what he sees as degrading forms of compassion that effectively undermine respect for those in need. He argues that mutual respect can create connections across the potential segregations of inequality that are made more profound by effectively seeing some people as relatively pitiful, reliant on the bountiful compassion of those of us who imagine ourselves to be deep wells of this unconditional sentiment.

ORGANISATION

Leadership Training for Youth: A Response to Youth Rebellion? by Harini Amarasuriya examines youth involvement and state responses to three armed insurrections and looks at the way in which the involvement of youth in these uprisings shaped state-led youth development and youth work initiatives.

Hanrini argues that the conceptualisation of 'youth problems' has facilitated an approach to working with young people that locates the source of these 'difficulties' in the personalities and characters of young people, while dismissing and ignoring many of the structural problems of contemporary Sri Lankan society.

For Hanrini this approach glosses over the many structural inequalities in Sri Lankan society, which have affected the life chances and aspirations of youth, while emphasising individual vulnerabilities (it is a perspective that blindly assumes deficit). The reader might question how much the 'rehabilitation' of troublesome youth in Sri Lanka mirrors western responses to young people in terms of ambitions to train, initiate change and educate (for instance, how much might the ethos and purpose of the three week long 'Leadership Attitude and Positive Thinking Development Training' in Sri Lanka resemble the likes of the National Citizenship Service (NCS) in the English context?).

This chapter exemplifies how youth work and forms of so called 'non-formal' education can made to serve the purposes of indoctrination and control. It demonstrates how youth work can be used in attempts to pacify and disempower young people by way of deficit models, responding to understandable reactions and behaviour as if it were unreasoned. In the process this deflects attention away from social issues, defining social unrest as the consequence of a psychological malaise, so effectively justifying programmes of 'treatment' for youth, rather than addressing the social causes of rebellion and collective anguish in the face of state injustice.

In *Current Issues in Youth Work Training in the Major English-Speaking Countries,* Jennifer Brooker puts forward the idea that in essence contemporary youth work today is the same the world over; we work with young people, sometimes during very difficult times in their lives, helping them to become the best versions of who they are. Providing guidance and support in the form of activities, challenges and/or opportunities, in both formal and informal settings, youth workers work within the space where young people find themselves, whether through design or circumstance.

Historically social intervention with young people outside the school context was either educationally or fitness focused. It was provided by well-meaning, untrained individuals or Christian-based organisations such as the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Brigades from the first half of the Nineteenth Century onwards. Formal pre-service training for youth workers began during the Second World War in the United Kingdom and Australia in response to world events. However it was initiated by two very different sectors of the community, education in the United Kingdom and sport and recreation in Australia. In Canada and the United States youth work began within the social welfare system after World War Two, based on a Therapeutic Care model, similar, yet different, to that of Europe at the time.

Today youth work has morphed considerably from the work with young people of almost two hundred years ago. The targeted approach is built around two predominant frameworks in operation globally: positive youth development and therapeutic care. The only consistency to be found in training is its primary focus – training workers to work with young people.

Training and current global frameworks for youth work are not universal and as a result youth workers, who perhaps ought to be able to travel the world to work in their chosen field wherever they find themselves, are usually not recognised as such unless they are in their homeland of training.

This chapter will compare pre-service training for youth workers in various national contexts, looking at the similarities and differences. Jen also considers the impact of this situation on practitioners.

In *Youth Policies in the Nordic Countries*, Helena Helve presents the 'Nordic model', comparing and contrasting the youth policies of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and three areas with home rule; the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands.

Although there are differences in culture, politics and language, the Nordic countries have many ties based on common history. Close to a quarter of a century after the fall of the Soviet Union (1991) the Nordic countries have also built up close connections to Baltic countries Latvia, Lithuania and especially Estonia.

Nordic Youth cooperation is discussed, including Nordic youth policy and youth research organisations. Helena argues that the Nordic youth policy cooperation in future should create the conditions that are able to reflect the differences and similarities in the development of Nordic countries and strengthen and connect youth across the Nordic borders, promoting cross-national cooperation in education, employment, social entrepreneurship and political participation.

The Development and Implementation of Youth Policy in Malta, by Miriam Teuma tells how up until the 1990s, there was no youth policy in Malta although there were education policies, health policies and other related policies that impacted on and influenced the lives of young people.

Prior to the development of distinct youth policy in the 1990s youth work in Malta was almost exclusively the province of the Catholic Church and its voluntary organisations, such as the Society of Christian Doctrine, Catholic Action and the Salesians, together with the British presence, which included organisations such as the Malta Scout Association. However, this tended to be at once paternalistic and directional. It was to a large extent premised on what was deemed 'character forming' in light of Christian morals and mores.

In this chapter Miriam provides an insight into the development of a youth service, the will and organisation that has provided a service contextualised by a modern state in the context of the European Union.

Emina Bužinkić's *Brief on Youth in Contemporary Croatian Society* makes the point that sociologically and politically speaking, Croatian youth have a history of being caught up in political, social and economic crisis, conflict and transitions that need to be understood and considered in terms of the supply and delivery of youth work. The legacy of this experience is deep social trauma and insecurity. This is presents challenges to young people and has a range of effects on the quality of everyday life. Croatian society since its independence has been obliged to deal with huge social differences, economic instability and lack of opportunities and prospects for young people. Emina looks at the development and potential future of youth work from this background.

PRACTICE

Indra Kerha, referring directly to her practice experience, presents a critical deconstruction of some of the assumptions, practice ethics and aims that hold back our work in terms its professional profile and purpose. In *Demanding Lives, Difficult Paths* she confronts the clumsy dichotomies inherent in the contradictory tasks practice at times presents us with. Subtly questioning deficit/colonial models of practice, Indra challenges the over-reliance of reflection as the 'royal road' to developing our response to the challenges and joys of our work. This will of course not win everybody over, particularly those stuck in the groove of the reflection mantras that ring around our work. However her enquiry and spirit of disputation stays true to the best traditions of the best of youth work as well as the professional commitment to scrutinise practice.

Turning the tables in the 'change' debate, Indra looks at our own need to change (respond) to the various and changing needs of your clients. She leads the reader to question, whether in the last analysis it is a moot point how much anyone can change the position or predisposition of another person; sometimes professionals succeed in getting people to look as if they have changed, but as Indra indicates, there is no way of knowing if what we perceived to be change is in fact an

alteration in personal trajectory, an act, or a figment of our own imagination secured by our need to see what we wish to see.

Indra helps the reader to understand that it is likely that the only change we can be close to being sure of, or might be in control of, are the changes we make in our own approach, attitudes and responses. This is probably as true for our clients as it is for ourselves. But perhaps it is only our egos that allow us to believe that the root of change in others lies in our activity.

Pilgrim. Barnaul, Russia is a short reflection on the nature and impact of practice on both youth workers and young people. Sofya Gileva reflects on how informal learning, through creative activity, small group work, and the provision of testing situations can ignite debate and discussion, that can amount to life enhancing/changing experiences. She relates to how the sharing feelings and the values of things of importance can be a means to understanding of the self and others.

The German YMCA in Tension between Institutionalisation and Movement, written by Günter Lücking reflects on how the traditions of a particular realm of youth work can underpin but also retard development of practice and delivery. He ponders how we can draw on past practice and meld the best of this with the wants and needs of contemporary youth to provide appropriate and fulfilling services.

Anna Mirga writes about *Youth Engagement in the Gitano Associative movement in Catalonia and Emerging "Youthscapes"*. According to Anna, ethnic mobilisation is a process in which groups organise around aspects of ethnic identity for collective reasons. This differs from political mobilisation in that it invokes elements of ethnic identity, but shares much the same processes which become vehicles conveying representation and collective action.

For Anna, the organisations of civil society (especially as NGOs) have taken much of the initiative for the ethnic mobilisation of Roma/Gitano communities. This means of effecting Roma rights can be seen as failure of political integration of Roma/Gitano representatives in formal politics but can also be understood through the deliberative democracy discourse and the means for strengthening of democratic functioning of the State.

The political representation through NGOs rather than through mainstream politics, as a form of civic participation, has become common not only among the Gitano population but the wider Spanish society. The role of young people has been significant and as such they have been recognised as a major force in social movements.

Following these considerations this chapter looks at how these developments might translate into the reality of the Gitano ethnic mobilisation, and more specifically questions the role of Gitano young people in the ethnic mobilisation.

NEST SRI LANKA

As stated above, any proceeds from this book will be donated to Nest, Sri Lanka. In 1984 Sally Hulugalle started Nest with a friend, Kamini de Soysa.

Nest works to strengthen families and individuals to cope when a crisis occurs so that their kith and kin may remain in their home and not be abandoned to institutionalisation. The organisation also trains Health Workers to live and work within the community. This work started after Sally and Kamini visited the long stay unit of the mental hospital Mulleriyawa where they found over a thousand women virtually incarcerated for life, and subject to enormous suffering.

The Aims and Objectives of Nest

– To promote happiness (in families, individuals and the environment).
– To lift the yoke of labelling, institutionalisation and stigmatisation.
– To promote understanding in the areas of mental health and wellbeing.
– To promote justice and freedom.
– To help women, children, families and individuals to cope within their communities.
– To encourage development in public services and the environment.

Nest relies on public, individual and programme funding/donations to do the work of the organisation. It is non-profit making and does not charge for its services.

Nest promotes the wellbeing of those who are marginalised for reasons such as being considered mentally ill or infected with the HIV virus. Nest uncompromisingly supports and champions the rights of those who are victimised, including women and children and others vulnerable to abuse or exploitation.

Training

Community Health Workers take part in an on-going training programme at the Gladys School of Community Health Work and Development, which is situated adjacent to Kåre House (Gampaha District). All trainees receive free accommodation, transport and food on duty. Trainees are posted to different parts of Sri Lanka where Nest works.

The Nest Community Health Centre

The Ududumbara (Kandy district) and Kåre House Centres are run in such a way that families and individuals can stay overnight for specialist clinics and appointments. Community members can drop in at any time. Education for Health is promoted through information and discussions; Workshops on Mental Health and HIV and AIDS issues; Awareness Programmes; Library; classes on basic livelihood skills and Computers; Home and Organic Gardening; First Aid; Language and Cookery classes are available. Nest Centres are like any other house on the road and Community Health Workers live and work from them. They travel by foot, motorcycle, trishaw and public Bus. A playgroup for children under five years of age is provided.

Promotion of Well Being

Nest gives priority to the promotion of mental wellbeing and one of the principal means of achieving it is by its facilitation of the return of those institutionalised to their homes and communities, and working to minimise the stigma attached to such illnesses.

Another feature special to Nest is that it does not go to a community with a plan already drawn up. Nest approaches the community with an open mind and has a framework inspired by its mission statement within which it will operate;

– To enable individuals to establish necessary community links in order to access services and support.
– To strengthen local services in order to strengthen communities' coping systems.
– To influence national and local policy in order to ensure that communities are provided with effective and respectful services.

The Gladys School of Community Health Work and Development was born of a desire to extend the frontiers of community work and development, including the much neglected aspect of improving mental wellbeing.

You can find out more about (and make a further donation to) Nest on http://www.nestsrilanka.org/

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Harini Amarasuriya is currently a senior lecturer at the Department of Social Studies, Open University of Sri Lanka. She completed her PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Edinburgh. Her dissertation work explored the nexus between the state, development policy and practice within the bureaucracy in Sri Lanka. She is active in the development sector as a researcher and practitioner and worked for several years as a child protection and psychosocial practitioner prior to joining the Open University, Sri Lanka.

Harini's research interests include children and youth issues, globalisation and development, micro-politics and the state. Her recent publications include: *NGOs, The State and 'Cultural Values: Imagining the Global in Sri Lanka*, (2012) with Jonathan Spencer, *Early Marriage and Statutory Rape in Selected Districts in Sri Lanka*, (2012) with Savitri Goonesekere, *Discrimination and Social Exclusion of Youth in Sri Lanka*, 2010 and *Why Aren't We Empowered Uet? Assumptions and Silences Surrounding Women, Gender and Development in Sri Lanka* (2010) with Asha Abeysekera.

Brian Belton PhD comes from an East London Gypsy family and entered youth work in the early 1970s docklands area where he was born and brought up. While working in youth work related situations around the world, including Israel, the Falkland Islands, Germany, the USA, Thailand, Hong Kong, Zambia, South Africa, China and Canada, Brian's interest in identity and ethnicity flourished and today he is an activist and researcher of Roma issues in Europe and an internationally recognised authority on Gypsy Ethnicity, having written widely on that subject, delivering papers most recently in the USA, Austria, Greece, Sweden and Slovenia as well as around the UK. In 2013 he started a three-year research programme focusing on the social exclusion of Roma with partners in Spain, Germany and Turkey.

Currently, a Senior Lecture at the YMCA George Williams College, traditionally one of the biggest trainers of youth and community workers in the UK, Brian has just completed involvement with developing professional practice in youth work across South Asia (working in situ in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Malaysia). He recently organised and delivered youth work training in Iceland, which drew participants from 15 European countries (speaking 13 different languages). At the time of writing he is involved in developing partnerships developing detached and outreach youth work with practitioners in Holland, Romania, England and Malta.

Having written close to 80 books and numerous articles and learned papers, spoken regularly at conferences, on radio and TV, throughout the UK and beyond, Brian is a recognised and respected academic and writer in the field of professional youth and community work and informal education.