25 years of CONCEPT Journal: 1990 to 2015

Editor's foreword

The Concept journal is 25 years old this year. Below is an electronic copy of the first ever issue, originally produced in the autumn of 1990. We are publishing it to mark the 25th anniversary, but also as a preview of things to come. We are currently in the process of digitizing every issue of Concept that was published in hard copy and, over time, we want to make these available in an archive via our website.

It is interesting on reading the first edition to see how things have changed, for example in terms of the format of the journal and the specific focus of the policy context. However there is also a remarkable continuity in the themes of interest then and now. Contributors are keen to share practice, problematise the role of the state and policy makers, and emphasise the need to link theory and practice.

We hope that readers will find this first edition useful and not just an historical curiosity. Over time we aim to provide a searchable back catalogue of all previous Concepts and so provide a valuable resource for all those who have an interest and involvement in our field.
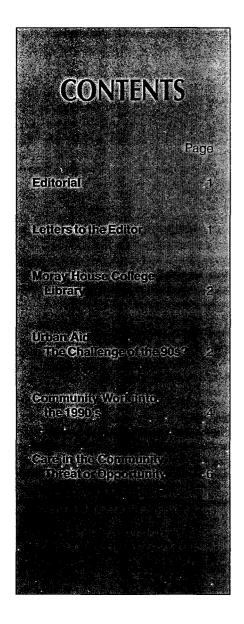
Stuart Moir

MORAY HOUSE

Concep t

The Journal of Contemporary Community Education Practice Theory

CONCEPT

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

This is the first issue of 'Concept', a journal which should be appearing once each college term.

We hope to follow each journal with an open seminar where workers can discuss current issues.

What we hope 'Concept' will do is stimulate debate within the field of Community Education – in relation to both the 'how' and 'why' of the job. In light of the multitude of policy shifts which dramatically affect our work -from housing to community care to young people – we need to review our underlying philosophies and reassure ourselves that what we are practising *is* community education and not merely civic administration.

We hope you will contribute to these debates, through 'Concept' and elsewhere. Any article will be very welcome, providing it complies with some very basic guidelines:-

– theory should be linked to practice
– practice should be linked to some idea of 'why'
– content should be anti-discriminatory

Articles based around good practice and those based on 'lessons learned' and mistakes made would be equally welcome.

If we are to develop our theoretical and practice base, we need to be prepared to be open about our work: its strengths and weaknesses. We hope the debate will be dynamic in the real sense, driven by real issues and concerns.

We hope you find it useful and look forward to hearing from you.

Mae Shaw
Moray House College

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mae.

Development of Community Education journal for Scotland

I am writing to express my support and enthusiasm for the project which you have the foresight and initiative to develop in conjunction with other colleges and fieldwork staff.

As you know, I recently left a lecturing post in Northern College to take up a post as Principal Officer (Community Development) with Fife Regional Council. However, during my time as a lecturer I became concerned at the relative lack of up to date recording of, and debate about, fieldwork practice and how this had been developing in relation to the significant consensus and legislative changes emerging in recent history.

The development of the journal would meet a number of objectives in my view. Firstly it would encourage fieldwork staff to think about the philosophical base for their work and how this translates into practice. It could also encourage staff to examine their work in relation to the fiscal and legislative processes and pressures which have emerged in recent years. In addition, the journal has the potential to stimulate debate in a meaningful and practice orientated way, which has up until now been confined to small groups operating their own networks.

The journal also has significant potential both as a teaching· aid within the colleges and a staff development vehicle for practicing community workers.

The extensive range of community work practice in Scotland is worthy of debate and examination. In a climate where all expenditure is scrutinised, community workers may eventually be expected to justify their work and offer a clear rationale for undertaking their work. In such an environment I am enthusiastic about any mechanism which has the potential to encourage and equip staff to defend their work from a practical and philosophical base. It is my view that the development of the journal has the potential to act as a mechanism for this, and as such I sincerely hope that staff from a variety of agencies and working in a range of settings will use the journal to its full potential. I am confident that the flow of contributions will grow significantly in the months to come.

Yours sincerely,

John McDonald
Principal Officer (Community Development) Fife Regional Council

People Involved in the Production of this Issue

Mae Shaw	Moray House College
Ian Cook	Craigroyston Community High School
John Player	Tenant & Worker Information Network
Jim Crowther	Moray House College (seconded from ABE Unit)
Jane Jones	Granton Community Health Project
Liz Elkind	Moray House College
Rowena Arshad	Multicultural Education Centre
Bill Hill	East/Midlothian Community Education
Murray Forgie	Pillon Community Education Team
Ros Sutherland	Firrhill Community Education Team
Stan Reaves	Adult Learning Project
Alan Bell	Moray House College
Malcolm Parnell	East Calder Community Education Team
Mike Tait	Fieldwork Teacher, Edinburgh Council of Social Service
John McDonald	Strathclyde Social Work Department (formerly Nothern College)
Maria Gray	Pilton Community Education Team

Dear Mae,

On behalf of "Clydeside Network" of community workers may I offer warm congratulations on the publication of a new outlet for discussion and debate on community work, its concerns and related areas.

As you know, the major aim of "Clydeside Network" is to share ideas, information and to generally support the practice of community work in the West of Scotland.

We therefore recognise the first issue of CONCEPT as a welcome and important contribution to the task of promoting and stimulating debate across the wide range of practical and theoretical issues which face us in 1990.

Best wishes for a long and contentious future.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Warwick
Membership Secretary
Clydeside Network

MORAY HOUSE COLLEGE LIBRARY

Why not take advantage of the Library at Moray House (as an external borrower) to keep up-to-date with the new developments in the field of community education?

Have you explored the periodicals library at Moray House? There is an increasing number of journals relevant to community education (for reference only).

For more information, please contact the Librarian, quoting this journal, at Moray House College, tel. 031-556 8455.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

If there's something related to Community Education you wish to advertise, send it to Mae Shaw at Moray House (Community Education).

Do you want to contribute to the debate? In the new year there will be a seminar in Moray House to discuss Community Education into the '90s.

Look out for further details.

URBAN AID – THE CHALLENGE OF THE 90s?

With Community Education workers in certain areas of Lothian Region spending an ever increasing proportion of their time developing, supporting and assessing urban aid projects, perhaps now is an opportune moment to stand back and reflect on the ever growing urban programme and ask what is it all about? It is hoped that this article will also be of interest to those Community Education workers operating in 'non-designated' areas, who often feel that access to Urban Aid funding would be a major advantage, perhaps without fully considering some of the disadvantages.

Lack of Clear Thinking
In 1982 Fred Edwards, the Director of Socjal Work in Strathclyde Region, publicly stated that he did not want community workers to become "urban aid clerks". Eight years on in Lothian Region is that fast becoming the reality, particularly in those areas with the greatest "deprivation" (as defined by Scottish Office statistics)? If this is indeed the case, is it the planned result of clear policies at a political, regional or departmental level, or is it happening by default, because of the Jack of any clear thinking on the use, development and implications of the urban programme.

Politicians in Regional Councils, both collectively and as individual members, have over the last few years turned increasingly to the use of urba_n aid to fund small scale local projects. In Lothian Region alone there are almost 60 projects now funded totally by urban aid and the urban programme development has seen an annual rate of growth of 29% in 1988/89 and 19% in 1990/91. While the opportunity to grab a few extra resources is understandable when put in the context of a decade of enforced reductions in local authority expenditure, and while concepts such as local responses to local problems and local control are very laudable sentiments, what actually is the reality in those communities where urban aid projects have mushroomed and what effect is their proliferation having on the community education teams which serve them?

Dearth of Policy Documents
Apart from an instruction to maximise urban aid and written guidelines on how to go about it, there is a dearth of policy documents at a political, regional and departmental level which set out a strategy for the use of urban aid. In addition **there has been no serious attempt to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of urban aid projects, no support structure created for urban aid projects (both workers and management committees} and no discussion on what will happen to all those employed in urban aid funded projects at the end of their respective seven year periods.**

Within the Education Department, and Community Education in particular, there is a high expectation that local workers will get involved to varying degrees and in varying, often conflicting roles in urban aid projects with no account taken of the extra workload created and work left undone. More importantly no attempt has been made to explain how urban aid either fits into or complements the various educational policies and strategies being pursued by community education teams. Indeed the recent Regional Management Plan for Community Education, while a comprehensive and informed document, makes no mention of urban aid whatsoever.

Encouraging Local People
Tile Regional management plan describes Community Development as a "process of support and intervention underpinned by educational goals". In a community which is "disadvantaged", "deprived" or "suffering from multiple deprivation" (as described by local and central government) the intervention should presumably be to address, in some way at least, the issues which contribute to the community being labelled as "deprived" – bad housing, unemployment, poverty, ill-health, etc. Thus the Community Education intervention would encourage local people to look more closely at the nature of their situation, their environment, etc. and explore possible ways of influencing or improving that situation.

Collective Response
In order to make a contribution, albeit a small contribution, the community education worker must develop a clear analysis of the nature and cause of the problems and issues faced by the community in which they operate. For instance, how should community education respond to the issue of dampness in housing. If the analysis is an acceptance of the once official explanation that working class people, and particularly

working class women, were unable to "use their houses properly". then a logical community education response would be to run classes on how to live in a council house properly, without causing dampness. An alternative analysis would be that dampness results from a combination of poorly designed and badly built housing, and a level of poverty which denies people the income to heat their homes effectively. Thus the educational goals could arguably be to encourage a collective response and the development of a clearer understanding of the issue, which involved looking at who makes the decisions, on what basis, how can they be influenced, etc.

The latter approach assumes that local people are more likely to form opinions on the origin and nature of problems by being involved themselves in taking action and attempting to address these problems. Thus a relevant' community. education response should assist local people into effective community organisations, to access these groups to information and useful contacts, to assist them to develop individual and collective skills, and offer support in any action they take. Most importantly, at various stages the community worker must assist both individuals and groups to reflect on what they have learned and how they have developed through their experiences of being involved.

Successful community development involves the worker achieving credibility and being viewed by the community group as having integrity. This occurs, at least partly, by a clear definition of the role of the worker emerging during the process. This essential element can be significantly undermined by a blurring of the worker's role with the addition of extra, often contradictory roles. The introduction of urban aid into the process often results in the worker being perceived as the 'resource-getter', the liaison with the department and even the project assessor. Asking a worker to perform contradictory roles can easily undermine the community development process.

Local Solutions
The urban programme is a national 'response' to deprivation, which also makes assumptions about the nature, cause and solutions of that deprivation. These obviously reflect the views and policies of Central Government and the political complexion of the Scottish

Office. In order to ensure these views are accepted, the Scottish Office sets out clear conditions and guidelines which ensure that funding is granted on their terms. Failure to jump through the Scottish Office hoops correctly, means no cash! The Scottish Office stresses value for money (NB the use of volunteers) enterprise and innovation; it sees the factors which lead to deprivation having small scale local solutions rather than national or international solutions with major resource implications.

What then is the educational impact of urban aid and what message does it emit to these communities suffering the worst disadvanage? – that the answer to the bad. housing, poverty and unemployment is two or three urban aid projects? Maybe not, but it does, both overtly and covertly, impose a definition of the nature of that deprivation.

Any defence of the urban programme would stress qualities such as a local response to local problems, and the local management of local projects. I would suggest that reality seldon:i matches the rhetoric, and in any case real local control has to be a bit more than the commanding heights of two or three urban aid projects.

The push from the centre to 'maximise urban aid' has led to a frantic annual exercise to dream up new projects, more often by local professionals, service departments and agencies than local people themselves. This is followed by local consultation, which again on closer inspection more often centres on local agencies than community groups.

Once approved the community benefits from the services, but seldom the better paid jobs. In Pillon for example 10 out of 11 urban .aid projects employ professionals from outwith the area. This is totally counter-productive to any efforts of community education workers to increase the confidence of local people and demistify the 'professions'.

There then follows attempts to cobble together a local management committee, usually by people with no community development experience, which is often achieved at the expense of existing community groups and sometimes results in good local activists becoming over-committed. The projects then commence operation with no support available from either the inevitable small group of workers or more importantly the local people sucked into the management committee who suddenly realise that what was initially an offer to help has transpired into responsibility for a

£300,000 project and hurled them into areas such as employers liability, industrial relations, etc. There is also a question mark over how effectively local management committees set up in this way actually 'manage' professionals and the project.

Undermine the Educational Goals
Perhaps the major and most worrying consequence of the urban programme however is the impact on local community groups and the resulting over commitment and occasionally "burn out" of local activists, effectively achieving social control in those communities most in the need of a clear community response, and undermining any community work attempts to develop strong, articulate independent and informed community activists and community groups.

While I would accept that where urban aid is a relevant response to a genuine local need, as articulated by local people, and uncompromised in the process of application, it can have a relevant place in community development.. The continuation of the current policy to 'maximise at all costs'. at its present unabated rate of growth, will totally undermine the educational goals of community development, and more importantly, undermine the opportunity for those communities to begin to determine their own future with solutions which are not imposed upon them.

Urban aid, therefore, presents a challenge to politicians, policy makers and community work practitioners alike. Continued use and promotion of the urban programme must not only be based on a comprehensive review of the successes, failures and implications of the urban programme to date, but a policy must be developed which demonstrates the compatibility of any urban aid strategy with other Regional policies and objectives. develops an appropriate support structure and tackles some of the longer term implications of the nature of the funding. For community workers working in designated areas of deprivation, the task would seem to be to ensure that any urban aid work results from a genuine community response and is compatible with the over-riding educational aims of community development. In addition, workers must ensure that they are not caught in contradictory roles in dealing with urban aid.

Ian Cook
Senior Community Education Worker
Craigroyston Community High School

COMMUNITY WORK INTO THE 1990's

As we move into the 1990s we need to consider the context in which community work is situated, the conditions which have produced it and the implications for practice.

In this article, we hope to relate the emergence of contemporary community development to the present political and social context, and to look at how we, as community education workers, can continue to develop a practice which is based on genuine empowerment and not on unwitting collusion.

As the history of community work has shown [1], community work can be used as a tool of repression, as easily as it can to liberate and empower: Paul Corrigan identified the now familiar symbols of modern capitalist society as the tank and the community worker[2]. The consequent argument ran, that in our increasingly complex society it is not possible to coerce people to compliance in the same way as was possible last century. Put crudely, a much more effective way is to convince people to co-operate in their own oppression. Gramsci[3] provided an invaluable means of analysing the state in relation to this: "The state attempts to provide a moral and ethical leadership by organising the consent of the masses. It involves more than just coercion and repression, but, critically, education and leadership resulting in **hegemony.** The state in this sense is not a machine, but a system of social relations". In other words, the dominant values of those in power are presented and are partially accepted as truths, for example, men are superior to women; the free market is the best way of allocating resources, etc. These "truths" pervade all aspects of society.[1] In order to connect contemporary community development with the role of the British State, it would perhaps be appropriate to examine the historical backdrop.

The Background

In the long term, it must be recognised that the roots of community development stretch back to its use as a stabilising force in the Colonies as they moved towards independence, thus reducing Britain's position as "head prefect" of the world, and struggling to find a new role as "second fiddle" to the emerging dominance of the USA

It is commonly accepted however that contemporary community work in the United Kingdom is essentially a product of the last twenty years. "1968, as the climax of a period of substantial political and social upheaval, seems to have left a lasting inheritance in the continuing search on the one hand, for new forms of social and political expression and, on the other, for new forms of social and political control".[4] Community development, with its Colonial legacy and "borrowing" from parallel developments in North America, was introduced in Britain in 1968 in the form of the Community Development Projects (CDPs)[5]

The significance of the Home Office sponsored CDP lay in the fact that "for the first time, the state (in the form of a government ministry of law and order) was attempting to use community development as an instrument of social control".[6]

Threat to Stability

The need for evermore effective forms of social control, it could be argued, arose out of the crisis of Britain's long-term decline and the consequent threat to stability brought about by a number of factors, some of which can be identified as:
- the affront of continuing poverty in the "affluent" society
- the prospect of race riots in the streets of Britain (excacerbated by Powell's "rivers of blood" speech).
- possibilities of open insurrection, as evidenced in Paris, North America, Northern Ireland.
- de-industrialisation and redevelopment of city centres, which saw the permanent "evacuation" of whole communities to new and alienating peripheral estates.

All of these factors, some of which were also experienced at a global level, resulted in a volatility which had in some way to be managed towards maintaining the status quo.

CDPs, set up in some of the poorest areas of Britain, were established with a twofold function:-
(a) to reduce the apathy which was seen to block people's access to the system, thereby creating deprivation. This was to be countered by self-help.
(b) to research into the problems locally and make recommendations which would influence the formulation of social policy.

What in fact emerged amongst the CDP workers was a concern about their own potential collusion in social control experiments by the state. and an urgency to construct an analysis to take account of what they saw as the structural problems inherent in the system, which resulted in poverty:-

Put more simply, their conclusion was poverty was not caused by the people but by "the system".

What this analysis did was to challenge the "pluralist" view of community work, and to locate the community worker, in common with all public service workers. as both **in** (paid by) and **against** the state. The CDPs made probably the most singularly significant contribution to the discussion of community work as an activity which had an ambiguous interaction with the state, and to go some way towards determining a practice related to a theoretical perspective.

The practice which logically ensued from their analysis, the CDP workers argued, should:
- explicitly acknowledge the political nature of its work
- acknowledge the conflict of interest within the community and society
- not assume a professional neutrality on the part of the worker

The concomittant aims of such a practice were broadly seen as strengthening working class organisation within the community in parallel, and wherever possible in alliance with, the actions of trade unions in the workplace.

Whilst the CDP analysis offered the most coherent view of the position of community work within the state, to date, many were left experiencing a gap between the analysis and their day to day practice.[6]

Resisted by Management

The real problem for community workers was that, having analysed the root of local neighbourhood problems to be with the national, economic and political structures, there was no parallel development of practice to enable people to actually get at those structures. For example, Trade Unions may have powerful sanctions by withdrawing their labour, but community groups had no sanctions which would equal the economic consequence of striking.

Added to this, many workers were employed to work in specific areas, and found the idea of linking on issues across neighbourhood boundaries not only practically difficult, but resisted by management.

If alliances between community groups on a city-wide basis were problematic, linking between community groups and Trade Unions seemed well-nigh impossible.

It could be argued. in any case. that the understanding of class represented by the CDPs (white. industrial and male) created added difficulties for alliance-building, excluding, as it did, many of the people most community workers were in contact with on a day-to-day basis.

There were therefore problems with the notion of community work outlined by the CDP and others in the 1970s. It left many community ·workers despondent about their practice, and ignored much of the diversity of forms that action and organisation took within the community – for many the CDP message was experienced as "forget community work because it does nothing to address the major causes of social problems". [7]

The State's Response to CDPs

The state's response to the findings of the CDPs was firstly to ignore them and finally to close them down-(the last one in 1976). As the state's response to insurrectionist events in the late sixties made their chance of happening again unlikely, so the CDPs alerted the state, on the one hand, to the dangers of unrestricted community development, and, on the other hand, to the potential of it as a way of regulating social activity.

Ironically, the lessons learned by the Home Office increased the confidence of central government. **Indeed, in the vacuum left after the CDP, it would appear that government became far more "professional and less hesitant in its approach" to community workers and community groups, as seen by the formation at national level of organisations like the Community Projects Foundation and at a local level by the preponderance of "liaison co-ordinators" and the like, to work at neighbourhood level.[8]**

The 1980s

Community work has been fundamentally affected by the shift in the political climate of the 1980s. Paul Waddington draws a direct link between "the advance in direct state involvement and a significant waning of community action nationally".

As he predicted at the start of the eighties, the relationship of the state to community work represented "a shift from pragmatic, ad-hoc responses to the adoption of community work as an urban buffering or mediation function and now increasingly to the formal incorporation of community work as a necessary instrument of contemporary urban management"[9]. The state has found that it needs us!

This is reflected locally in increased intervention on the part of both management and Councillors in defining and setting priorities in community education.

"Repressive Tolerance"

This shift can be seen in the increasingly sophisticated usage of tools for "repressive tolerance" in the form of grants and token participation which, in many instances. has diffused the militancy of many groups. [10] With the preponderance of local forums. advisory commit-.tees, representative councils and liaison groups, are local people being tied up in knots?

Local people have increasingly .been put on the defensive by a plethora of central government legislation aimed at undermining collective solutions whilst espousing participation, choice and empowerment. Further, local government stripped of its authority, has been increasingly unable to act as a buffer against the central state.

In the late eighties and into the nineties. local authorities have become reluctant capillaries for central government. The open conflict between central and local government in the early 1980s has been replaced by trench warfare, with labour authorities looking to creative accountancy rather than political solutions. **The alliances and common interests between local authority and community, manifest to some extent up to the early eighties, are less obvious as we enter the 1990s.**

Before the first serious round of public expenditure cuts in the mid seventies. community workers and community groups attacked the welfare state. After that, they defended it![11]

The Future?

Since the mid 1970s, the ascendant and radical force of British life has been the ideas of the new right and Thatcherism. The values of the welfare state have been questioned; the dominance of economic interests asserted, the ability of the state to supress resistance dramatically strengthened, and the formal right of citizenship weakened. The emphasis of governmental action has been on the individual and "self interest" and. through policies like subsidised home ownership and share sales, these ideas have entered the popular consciousness and helped return the Thatcher government to power three times.

This reorientation of state expenditure into privatisation has direct consequences for community work, because community work in all its forms is "essentially linked to the political process and to the dynamics of political change" [12].

For example, **more and more organisations are being drawn into partnerships with business to rejuvinate depressed areas, to run temporary job schemes for the unemployed, to providing the "community" of the government's "care in the community", and to promoting self-help as part of the enterprise culture.**

If community work is about social change, where are the opportunities?
Certainly the political climate of the early 1990s is not easy terrain for a community work practice aimed at fundamental shifts in the distribution of power; when poverty is presented (and partially accepted) as an individual problem whose solution lies in general economic prosperity and personal determination and enterprise. "Inequality is no longer a problem, but a positive reflection of the reward given to success".[13]

Shifting Popular Consensus

It has been said that the most radical achievement of this government has been its success in shifting popular consensus. The acceptance of dominant values as "truths" has met with considerable success. The language and values of the marketplace – "choice". "freedom". "empowerment". etc.. have come to dominate the whole of society and it could be argued this has been achieved by capitalising (sic) on people's frustrated aspirations. Nevertheless. although the shift of consensus has had partial success. it may be that we are beginning to see ruptures in that consensus; an obvious example being the Poll Tax.

It has been argued that real social change requires the simultaneous development of an alternative, conscious-

CARE IN THE COMMUNITY – THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY?

Ever since Community work began to generate its own theory, practitioners have been interested . to work out the relative merits of forms of work. Inevitably, forms and styles of work have been categorised in certain ways and, although there have been different presentations, there has emerged a basic range of practice characterised by Alan Barr's continuum of Community Care – Community Development – Community Action. While that presentation is over-simplistic and generalises in some of the components he describes, he does reflect a mood of the time; that Community work is more or less about maintaining the status quo (or at least not challenging) or striving for social and political change. Without entering that debate here. the point to note is that certain forms of work took on the mantle of progressive, challenging and radical while others stood for conservative, controlling approaches and that Community Care was consistently at the conservative end.

If we look at the recent interest in care in the community, since Griffiths, we can examine, in that context, the response of community work to this field of activity.

The idea of Care in the Community is one which is now generally recognised as ideologically out of step with the Government which introduces it yet economically very much in step. There is no doubt that a primary motivation in drafting the legislation on Community Care was the prospect of reducing or at least stabilising the budget for particularly the residential care costs of those very vulnerable people in our society.

Inadequate Finance
Assumptions about the motivation behind that shift in social policy ought to make those committed to progressive social change highly suspicious. And yet we have to recognise, also, the broad measure of support (with some reservations) which has emerged from almost all corners of the social and health services sector: from carers, from service user organisations, trades unions, voluntary, statutory and private sectors and from campaigning organisations alike. There have, of course, been criticisms of the legislation, of the consultation processes and especially of the timetable set (and unilaterally re-set) by the Government, of the lack of "ring-fencing" of the budget, of the inadequate attention paid to particular groups including the needs of black and ethnic minority communities. And there has, above all, been great concern that there may be inadequate finance available to pursue the changes in service design and delivery.

To look at these changes from a community work perspective, it would be important to look at the connections between some of the specifics of care in the community and the (assumed) interest of Community Work.

Change in Language
The first point that has some impact, believe, is the change in language that has occurred in the last ten years or so (and perhaps before that). There is no doubt that terms like "moderate" and "militant" have found their way into everyday language in a way that would have been unusual some years ago. For example, there has been an attempt to discredit the idea of socialism in a way reminiscent of the McCarthyist era by. linking the very word to heavy negative indices. In a slightly different way, but with the same intentions, there has been a gradual shift in the meaning of certain words, concepts or ideas so that the "language of liberation" if we like has become, surreptitiously, the language of oppressive hegemony. "Freedom". "Justice", "Fairness", "Equality", "Family". "State", "Responsibility", "Power". "Radical". and many others have taken on different nuances, have crept into the language of the radical right (sic) and have managed, successfully, to put much of left or liberation politics on the defensive. "Power" means that which trades unions have too much of, "Responsibility" is that which you have if you don't accept state benefit; "State" is the antithesis of choice and quality; "Freedom" is the right to cross a picket line of striking workers.

Without developing that argument too far here, there have been similar shifts in the language describing services, particularly social services. Concepts which seemed to be peculiar to Casecon in the early 70s or to "Radical Social Work" (like choice, high quality, respect and dignity, involvement, participation and consultation) now appear or have their parallels in the legislation on community care and in the guidelines for implementation of the legislation produced by Government and its departments. While it would be naive to believe that those forces have "won the argument" we must seriously consider what options there are for forces of social change, including community work.

Awareness Through Resistance
There are a number of debates which need to take place within the ranks of community work in relation to the development of community care. The first and most basic, is whether community work is principally and essentially about conscientization of working class people and whether the intended message is simply that the activities of oppressive forces are not in the interests of the majority of people and so should be resisted. Or is community work about improving the material lot of people and, if so, which people are the primary beneficiaries? Clearly, the world is more complex than that and the recipients .of community work attention and intervention are most often more sophisticated in their own beginning analysis of issues and events. Cockburn's view of the contradictions inherent in the process of State reproduction should inform us at least in our weighting of consciousness-raising against material outcomes.

Another debate which is around is whether, in Alinsky's terms. the "empty seat" should be filled by virtue of its emptiness alone. For some time, there has been a scepticism in community work of the "empty seat" and the danger of co-option in the process of control or at least dissipating the process of opposition and awareness through resistance. The feeling I have is that there has been that scepticism almost regardless of the specifics of the group, community or collection of individuals who are affected or being considered. This item is very important when we consider that the legislation on Care in the Community (and other recent social services. Health and Education social policy) has raised the profile of involvement and participation with an emphasis not seen since Seebohm.

Collective Aspect
This debate must also carry with it an inherent criticism of the practice of "radical" community work which has, in some aspects, been discriminatory in practice if not intent in the way that it determined its focus from an essentially white, male, non-disabled and traditional labour movement perspective. As the Labour movement comes to recognise its own discriminatory approach, community work has the opportunity to review and re-develop some of the boundaries of its own work.

While feminist community work has been leading in the field of raising

awareness of the needs of one devalued group, and while some community work has begun very recently to think about the special position of black people, there has been not a great deal addressed directly towards the other groups of people who most depend on social services. It is true that there has been a growth in the organisations representing some of the users of social services, most of which appears to have happened without the benefit of community work (as undertaken by community workers). As consumer involvement has achieved a new-found respectability in social services, self-advocacy groups, patients councils and "survivors" groups have begun to grow, many of them more informed by the ideas and writings of R.D. Laing, Wolf Wolfensberger, Brandon and Peters and Waterman than by Bennington, Mayo or Craig. **For those who have never before been invited to fill any seat the novelty of even formal and public respect can be more important than the potential outcome of filling the seat.** And ther 1. collective aspect to that respect a,. ,ecognition for groups who have been consistently devalued by mainstream society and "clientised" by social services. If community work can recognise that, if it can move from what are undoubtedly disablist and discriminatory prejudices in its ranks and in much of its theory (community work conventional wisdom as much as written theory) about groups who are most likely to immediately benefit from community work intervention then there will be a significant community work contribution to make. The distinction between community and social work being more about the groups of persons targeted rather than technique or approach adopted needs to shift. There should be a recognition that social services exist to restrict as well as to protect or safeguard people's rights and **the approaches and techniques of community work can be equally applied to parents over a child protection review, to ex-offenders under probation orders, to people with disabilities experiencing our own version of apartheid and to children in care as to council tenants under threat of exorbitant rent rises or council workers whose jobs are being scrapped by contracting out of services.**

Re-training of Certain Groups
It may be, though, that the level of partisanship which characterises much of community work would not be so easily applied. Even with what we can recognise as one of the more progressive strands of radical community work – feminist community work- there has been a contributing to the devaluing of certain groups. For example, in debates around community care for elders or disabled people or for people with mental health problems, the discussion has often been around the additional burden carried by women carers and the transfer of responsibility to women in the community by the shrinking state provision. It was not easy to hear discussion of the tension between the rights, needs and aspirations of two groups of people – women carers and those requiring care and support (many of whom are also women). I believe there existed a form of ethnocentrism which saw as "other":- dependent elders, disabled people and others with high levels of dependency.

The Care in the community legislation gives us a chance to construct models of community work which are appropriate not only to working class communities holistically but to discrete groups in a way that has begun with women's issues and issues of special importance to the black communities, recognising that community work approaches to groups such as elders and disabled people will need to be affected by gender and ethnic perspectives IN ADDITION to emerging new approaches.

For example, we need to discuss what happens to our knee-jerk response to the dichotomy of directive versus non-directive work when we work with a group that is actively conditioned by services to treat suggestions as orders? Not only do we need to refine and redefine skill areas but we need to build in additional safeguards to the processes of developing autonomy and control so that these can be assured structurally rather than depend simply on professional judgement about when to create more distance or "hand over" power and responsibility (usually in micro rather than macro ways).

Quality of Service
We need to decide (and recognise that our approach will be influenced by the decision) whether State provision is in fact in the interests of people who depend on social services. Most of the recent campaigns on social services and the threats to them which have drawn community work attention at least in part were focused on the effects on the service providers in terms of job security and conditions of service. When service users were mentioned (which was often) they tended to be used in a way which supported the argument for the status quo (e.g. "no cuts") rather than seriously examining the quality of service REQUIRED by people who depended on them, even though much of the research which could inform that argument was already available.

To go further, it may well be that the campaigns around even the needs of carers have been insufficiently influenced by research findings. Recent research sponsored by Rowntree (x) has indicated that paid caring (as opposed to caring solely within the family) is not an ill-paid last resort but a positive choice made in the light of other priorities and the relative satisfactions of caring compared with other jobs. That is not to say that personal social services caring is an easy or undemanding job but that there is perhaps more connection between the interests of carers and cared for than those of us outside those relationships imagine.

The other dilemma for community work deliberations in the care in the community debate is around the place of informal social networks (family, friends, neighbours) in social care situation.

"Soft" Community Work
When we have considered care in the community issues, it is common for those informal social networks to be seen as cheap, unfair and inadequate alternatives to "proper" state provision. Most of us will have read, at some time, Tonnies, Durkheim and Weber and will know, intellectually, the ideas of gemeinschafVgesellschaft and anomie and the consequences of a breakdown in society of those social networks. What we have failed to take into account is the importance to devalued groups of those same elements and we have often, by our concentration on state specialist provision, contributed to a further breakdown of what potential existed to maintain and develop informal networks as studies by Seed, Wilmott and others have shown. It is manifestly unfair to lay the blame at the door of community work alone. But what is clear is that where work was going on in this area, it would not have been seen as the more progressive of community work approaches. It would have been distanced by labelling it either social work or "soft" community work – community organisation, self-help or community care. **The fact that informal social networks could be extended simply by actively including**

people with more dependency, that feelings of self-worth couldchange by association has passed us by. Of course, there has always been a recognition that these social network shifts were by-products of community work intervention but, I suspect, they were seen as not quite respectable for radical community work since they were to do with "people change" rather than change in the system.

The advent of Care in the Community and the radical change that it brings with it provides not only a cause for concern and action at the prospect of further erosion of essential services for people but a major challenge to grasp the opportunities for improvement in life situations of the people who most urgently need them. For community work, there is an additional opportunity. The opportunity to use the "contradictions" inherent in the hegemonic process to rethink the effort and energy that goes into crafting the ideology and implementation of practice.

Ideas Sharing
There are parallels in some ideological frameworks, too. For example, the writings of Friere urge a process of ideas sharing rather than domination, oppression and persuasion reminiscent of the "Search" conference approach developed by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations which is a model for much of social services when bringing together different groups in consultation exercise. The "code of conduct":
– be committed to exploring issues identified by other participants as important, even if they are not important to you
– recognise and respect other people's opinions and refrain from trying to win them over to another point of view
– attend all sessions in order not to disrupt the process
is as important as the process which is in 5 stages:
– scan the environment: what does the present look like
– how does the future look?
– how would we like the future to look?
– what are the opportunities and constraints on achieving the. future we want?
– what can we do to move forward?

That last list will be familiar to many community workers albeit using different language. It should remind us that the attention of community work and the skills involved are as useable with groups who are identified as the beneficiaries (or otherwise) of changes in community care policy. There are oppor-

!unities. When traditional social service systems and Government departments talk in Griffiths-speak of consumer choice, of quality of services, of empowerment then community work has a workload.

We need to take stock of our secure notions of the focus and methodology of community work and to shake up our comfortable beliefs in the end-products of what Gulbenkian called "desirable social change." It may be that we are at the start of a period where terms like "customer", "brokerage", "quality", "choice", "competition" and "market forces" become as commonplace and interchangeable with our historical ideas about "right" and "fairness". The process of hegemony need not be one-way, owned and controlled entirely by the forces of control and oppression but it is an arena where the agents of change need to engage.

There is something intensely liberating about the idea that people who have been consistently devalued, denied choice, denied individuality, denied quality and effectiveness of services and sometimes even denied their own humanity – that those people might choose to take their custom elsewhere.

Mike Tait
Fieldwork Teacher
Edinburgh Council of Social Service

Community Work into the 1990s.

ness away from private individual solutions to those within a collective context; from male and white dominated values; from the liberal tradition of middle class dominated values[14]. If this is the case, we need to vet our own practice and work in a way which develops opportunities where alternative values can be raised; to be proactive rather than reactive.

* Do we seek organisational power-sharing above power consolidation in groups we work with or have we pragmatically abandoned direct democracy in favour of l(;)ader control?

* Are we seduced into localism and isolation at the expense of collective action?

* Are we in danger of reducing community education to technicalities – how to apply for grants, run fundraising events etc. Are we involved in developing skills,

knowledge and expertise at the expense of awareness-raising; has our main focus become training rather than education?

Community workers need to overcome the self-censorship of a narrow vision of community education which has been induced by state imperatives and low morale. The context of community work is one of constraints and opportunities. We are all too familiar with the constraints; perhaps we need to properly recognise the opportunities. Community workers could be seen to be well placed to expose and utilise the contradictions inherent in working "in and against the state", and to maximise our relative autonomy to enable and assist the cementing of alliances between a range of progressive groups towards achieving social change.

Mae Shaw
Lecturer in Community Education
Moray House College

John Player
Community Worker,
Tenant & Worker Information Network
Edinburgh Council of Social Service

References:
1. For further examination of "colonial" community development read "Community Work and the State": Gary Craig – Community Development Journal, January 1989.
2. Paul Corrigan, "Community Work and Political Struggle: The Possibilities of Working on the Contradictions" – The Sociology of Community Action – ed. Leonard 1975.
3. Gramsci: Prison Notebooks.
4. Peter Baldock: Community Work into the Eighties.
5. For an analysis of CDP's: Martin Loney, "Community against Government".
6. Gary Craig, "Community Work and the State" – Community Development Journal, 1989.
6a. As developed in "There's too many Florence Nightingales and not enough Robin Hoods" – Patrick Taylor – Association of Community Workers, Talking Point 1990.
7. Paul Henderson: "Community Work in the Eighties".
8. Hugh Fraser – "Community Work in Northern Ireland" – Community Development Journal, 1979.
9. Paul Waddington - "Community Work in the Eighties".
10. Hugh Fraser – Op cit.
11. Paul Waddington - Op cit.
12. Marjorie Mayo – Op cit.
13. Patrick Taylor – Op cit.
14. Jane Thomson – "Adult Education and the Disadvantaged", Adult Education for a Change ed. Jane L. Thompson.