

PEDAGOGY AND POLITICS OF WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

For further information please contact cpe@uts.edu.au

The Centre for Popular Education convenes various courses, forums and conferences related to the pedagogy and politics of teaching and youth work. Please refer to the relevant web page sections.

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Granville Schools Collaboration Project

Commenced mid 1999

This is an interagency project that explores collaborative approaches to improving the outcomes from schooling for low SES students. The participating schools are located in the Granville District. The CPE is working closely with a number of partner organisations, including the NSW Department of Education and the Priority Schools Funding Program (formerly the Disadvantaged Schools Program). We are attempting to mobilise, coordinate and align the efforts of teachers, parents, district personnel, community workers, academics and a range of other educators around two core concerns:

- How do we more effectively engage and improve learning outcomes for disadvantaged students in the middle years?
- How can a collaborative approach to this question support all stakeholders to more effectively engage students in learning?

Whilst the partners involved are accustomed to cooperating, we are less accustomed to collaborating. It is our hope that this collaboration will strengthen and renew our efforts to redress the entrenched lower levels of achievement and participation at school of students from low SES backgrounds. A more detailed description of the concerns underpinning this project can be found in the keynote address given by Dr Debra Hayes at the 2000 Education and Social Action Conference (<http://138.25.75.110/personal/dhayes/keynote00.html>).

Partnerships between school teachers and youth workers

We are currently exploring the possibility of preparing a long term research effort and seeking external funding.

Who is engaged in helping young people learn? School teachers and parents play a centrally important role. But for many young people so do: youth workers, health workers, TAFE and VET teachers, sports coaches, community leaders, and others. While there is a growing amount of partnership activity between schools and community groups this forum is based on a belief that much more can be achieved. One particular challenge is to enable out-of-school educators to work with school teachers, rather than alongside them.

Take, for example, the challenge of engaging with young people at risk. Youth workers draw on a rich body of research and quite distinct pedagogical forms and traditions. School teachers often draw on separate bodies of research and have forms and traditions of pedagogy quite different to youth workers. Would there be value in supporting teachers and youth workers to learn about and critically discuss their respective pedagogical values and practices? Will this result in better learning outcomes for young people?

Reconciliation Kit for Young Australians

Client: Scouts Australia and Girl Guides Australia

Completed in 1998

Staff: Rick Flowers, Griff Foley, Anita Heiss, Cathy Craigie, Celia Moon, Nita Kambouris, Tony Morris

The purpose of this paper is to assist the planning of an Aboriginal reconciliation program for the Girl Guides and The Scout Association of Australia. The paper reports on preliminary reviews of past and current activities within the Scout and Girl Guides movements that are directly relevant to Aboriginal reconciliation. It should be noted that continuing efforts will be made to gather further information about past and current Scout and Girl Guides activities as this will assist the planning of the reconciliation program. The paper also briefly describes the scope and nature of educational materials and activities relevant to Aboriginal reconciliation that have been developed by other organisations and people.

The paper then describes and discusses the views of some Scout and Girl Guide leaders about what form and content the Aboriginal reconciliation program should have. This is followed by a proposed outline of the type of activities and materials that should be developed.

2 REVIEW OF PAST AND CURRENT GIRL GUIDES AND SCOUT ACTIVITIES FOR ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION

To review past and current activities we are drawing on three sources of information. We are:

- locating and compiling activities designed to help members learn about indigenous Australians published in Scout and Girl Guide materials (see appendix 1)
- 2. interviewing adult leaders engaged in, or considering doing, educational work about indigenous Australians
- 3. locating Scout and Girl Guide groups with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander leaders and young people.

Current published activities

What do the activities in current published Scout and Girl Guide materials help young people learn about indigenous Australians? A range of activities is included in appendix one. There is a strong focus on encouraging Scout and Girl Guide members to learn about the way Aboriginal people lived before European settlement. For example, the Australian Heritage Challenge badge for Scouts asks members to investigate:

- “the traditional way of life of an Aboriginal group including the food they ate, the manner in which it was prepared, their family relationships
- the corroboree and its meaning
- their legends and the significance of legends to Aboriginal people.”

To what extent does knowledge and understanding of pre-European lifestyles contribute to Aboriginal reconciliation? What view of Aboriginal culture is conveyed by focusing on exotic and traditional practices, as opposed to

contemporary lifestyle features? The Australian Family Interest Badge for Girl Guides asks members to “compile a list of foods gathered by Aborigines when they lived in their tribal state, and know how they gathered them.” Is there a message implied by referring to the past as a “tribal state”? What is implied by the absence of mention of the present? What understanding of Aboriginal culture is conveyed by having visual images of spear holding Aboriginal people in loin clothes as in the Book of Cub Scout Challenges (p. 47)? If there were images of Aboriginal people working as magistrates, university lecturers, and taxi drivers what understanding of Aboriginal culture would be learnt? A Citizenship Scout Award at Adventurer level asks members to devise and run a game or activity based on “the natural way of life of the Australian Aborigine.” Is there an implication that Aboriginal people who pursue modern occupations do not lead a “natural way of life”? What is the natural way of life for a European or Asian Australian? Is there an implication that Aboriginal people who have learnt to survive in modern Australian society no longer have a distinct Aboriginal culture?

It is the absence of important aspects of Aboriginal culture and history from the existing range of published materials that is most striking. The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation suggests there are eight key issues to be addressed to help realise its vision of “a united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for all.” The fourth key issue named by the Council is “a sense for all Australians of a shared ownership of their history.” Should, and how can, Scout and Girl Guide leaders help young people learn about the history of European settlement, the negotiations and conflicts between settlers and indigenous Australians, the movement of Aboriginal people from their lands, and the ongoing negotiations about native title? The third key issue named by the Council is a “recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is a valued part of Australian heritage.” What constitutes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture? Should, and how can, Scout and Girl Guide leaders help young people learn that like all cultures, Aboriginal culture is dynamic, changing and adaptive to modern day Australia? What balance should there be between learning about contributions from the past (boomerangs, place names, etc) and the present (Yothu Yindi, landcare etc)?

The fifth key issue named by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation is “a greater awareness of the causes that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from achieving fair and proper standards in health, housing, employment and education.” One published activity which does seek to help young people investigate what the causes might be is the Cultural Social Awareness Certificate for Girl Guide Rangers. This Certificate suggests members might “set up a debate, discussion group, role play or case study with members of your unit (and others) which looks into - racism, prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping and come up with some positive suggestions for overcoming them.”

What one Scout leader is doing for Aboriginal reconciliation

One Scout Cub leader from Western Sydney described a program he had devised to help his pack members learn about Aboriginal culture and history. The program consists of 5 one hour sessions and a weekend camp in Megalong Valley. Each session has a short lecture delivered by a guest speaker or himself. He has also designed short question and answer activities. Part of his program involves Cubs recounting Aboriginal legends he reads to them. The content is built around gaining knowledge of the Bandjalung people of the Far North Coast of NSW. The Cub leader said “they learn about tribalism. I give the kids tribal language instruction and teach them about tribal totems.” The Scout Cub leader stated his gratitude to an Aboriginal chaplain working in the local area for assisting with the development of the program.

Which Scouts and Girl Guides are working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

A question for this project is to what extent does direct work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute to Aboriginal reconciliation. This is discussed briefly in the final section of this paper. At this stage an assumption has been made that those leaders who do work with groups with some, or all, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members will have first hand knowledge and understanding of how Scouts and Girl Guides can contribute to Aboriginal reconciliation. This assumption has, however, not been tested. Is it worth

pursuing this survey? Would it be useful to write to and ring a sample of the leaders and contacts noted below? It would seem a safe assumption that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who have worked with mixed groups have had considerable experience in helping young people learn about Aboriginal reconciliation.

3 REVIEW OF EDUCATION MATERIALS DEVELOPED BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS FOR ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION

There is a depth of educational materials about Aboriginal history, cultures, philosophies, politics and other related areas. The materials can be grouped in the following categories.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytellers, artists and educational consultants
- 2. Aboriginal studies curricula for secondary school students with text based and audiovisual teaching materials
- 3. Aboriginal studies curricula for university students with text based and audiovisual teaching materials
- 4. Scholarly books and journals
- 5. Radio and television programs
- 6. Aboriginal studies for non-award adult education courses
- 7. Short courses for cross cultural awareness about indigenous Australians
- 8. The kit developed by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation
- 9. Children's literature about Aboriginal folklore, history and stories.

This list of categories is not exhaustive. What it indicates is that there is plenty of 'content' to draw upon. The above types of materials are readily available. The types of educational materials that are less readily available are those materials especially designed for "out-of-school" education with young people. It is these type of materials that are of more immediate interest to this project. We are still pursuing lines of enquiry with both the YMCA and YWCA which report of local initiatives in Aboriginal reconciliation. Streetwise Comics have produced illustrated materials in a range of areas that relate to Aboriginal reconciliation.

It does appear that this project will then be filling a gap in the types of educational materials currently available. The bulk of the current materials outlined above are more

suitable for classroom and private study than for learning in the ‘community.’ This project is well placed to draw on the rich traditions of ‘out-of-school’ (or informal) education in the scouting and guiding movements to develop resources to help young people learn about Aboriginal reconciliation.

4 WHAT DO GIRL GUIDE AND SCOUT LEADERS NEED?

Whose views should be valued, or most valued, when deciding on the form and content of the Aboriginal reconciliation program for the Girl Guides and Scouts? Are there a marked range of different views? Can one generalise about particular views held by non-Aboriginal leaders, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, and by Aboriginal educators in the community? At this stage of the project these questions are being left open while further consultations are conducted, especially with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders. But the questions are posed here at the outset of this section to raise a possibly central planning issue.

Should a guiding principle of the new Aboriginal reconciliation program be that whenever possible Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people should be involved at the local level in planning activities? Should leaders be encouraged and advised how to work with Aboriginal people in devising reconciliation activities? If this were a guiding principle what non-Aboriginal leaders say *they* need in the reconciliation program becomes less important.

Views of some non-Aboriginal Scout and Girl Guide leaders/advisers

Jan Smith is the Development Officer of the Northern Territory Girl Guides Association. She outlined her views about both content and form.

She suggests that the content of the program should be focused on helping young people learn about:

- the Dreamtime
- food gathering and camp cooking

- traditional Aboriginal dances
- stories and experiences of childhood for Aboriginal people
- traditional Aboriginal crafts (eg. mixing paint colours, basket weaving)
- wildlife observation
- the difficulties of living in remote areas and then coming to the cities
- Aboriginal family values and structures
- the way Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people view the land
- different religious views and practices.

Jan suggests the reconciliation program could be organised in two broad stages. The first stage should be built around board games, videos and storytelling. The second stage should be organised around visiting, living and working with Aboriginal people.

Sarah Watkins is the Multicultural Adviser for the Girl Guides Association in Western Australia. Sarah is keen for the reconciliation package to give her advice about how to set up and mobilise Aboriginal groups. She is interested to learn about activities that would meet the needs and interests of Aboriginal girls. She claims that the Guides have a “very white” image and that programs should be adapted to meet the perceived different needs of Aboriginal girls. For example, Sarah has learnt that the value placed on boosting individual self esteem is not culturally appropriate with Aboriginal girls. She would like the reconciliation program to help her learn more about these notions of cultural difference. The reconciliation package should also provide practical advice about how to make contact and establish networks in Aboriginal communities.

Gilbert Augustin is a Cub Scout leader in Western Sydney. He suggests that the reconciliation package should focus on folklore, history and geography for the cubs. He said “it should have facts, be tight and prescriptive. When they get older you can start them thinking about social issues.”

5 PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL ABOUT CONTENT AND FORM OF THE ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION PROGRAM

Form

It is proposed to develop a single publication in the form of a Guide or Book that can be used by Girl Guide and Scout leaders and other youth leaders as a resource when planning and managing educational activities for Aboriginal reconciliation.

Content

It is proposed the publication be organised in the following way.

Section 1 ***Aboriginal reconciliation towards 2000***
Some short essays by prominent non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Australians

Section 2 ***Learning from Aboriginal people about Aboriginal reconciliation***
This section would describe and discuss some values and principles which shape the program. An important principle of this program is the self-determination of indigenous peoples in relation to their participation in the development of the program's content and learning experiences. There has been a history of non-Aboriginal educators designing and delivering learning programs about indigenous history and issues without consulting indigenous people. The result has often been a 're-writing' of history from a non-indigenous perspective. The construction of 'knowledge' by non-indigenous people about indigenous peoples has legitimated the former's world view (values and assumptions).

With this principle in mind, special emphasis should be placed on local self-determination. For this program's purpose, this means the local indigenous community taking control of the learning process as much as possible. A scout/guide leader should make every effort to involve indigenous representatives of the local community in every way. This could translate into:

- when indigenous scouts/guides are members of the group, they should lead some of the groups with the co-operation of the scout/guide leader.
- the parents/carers of indigenous parents should also be encouraged to organise activities. Support ie. fares for transport etc., should be offered.
- the scout/guide leader to meet with representative of local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander elders/organisations and tell them the purpose of the

program, its content and learning activities. This is an important aspect of local protocol. If requested and where possible, the leader can make changes to the program to suit the wishes of the representatives.

- a flexible steering committee or reference group could be established. The group would consist of these indigenous representatives, indigenous local elders, and some parents of the scouts/guides.
- invite indigenous representatives to run particular sections of the program; the local focus such as indigenous/non-indigenous historical relations, present issues etc., is very important. Ask them as a result of the program, what action they would like to see happening in the local area.

Section 3 *Activities*

A range of activities would be developed around the following topic headings.

- Who are indigenous Australians?
- Community development and local Aboriginal organisations
- Living with the land and the sea
- Features of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- Features of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- What happened to the land of indigenous Australians?
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music, art and sport

Section 4 *How to build networks with Aboriginal communities*

Section 5 *Recommended resources*

Turkish Youth: moving from school to work and further study

Funded by the NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission

Completed in 2000

Researcher: Andrew Chodkiewicz

ORIGINAL OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH

To research the way unemployed Turkish youth in south western Sydney learn informally from their experiences with the labour market, education and training. By focussing on one ethnic group within a particular geographic area, the study should provide valuable insights into their experiences. The research may also be able to support the advocacy by the Turkish community organisations in seeking out services and funding that assist Turkish youth to move more easily into employment, or further education and training.

The research methodology will involve a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyse the data. One of the approaches taken by O'Loughlin & Watson (1997) in their study of the long term unemployed was to include a number of life histories to provide insight into the experiences of the long term unemployed from non-English speaking backgrounds. This study will also include a number of 'youth histories', based on interviews with Turkish young people who discuss their experiences of employment, education and training. This will be supplemented by interviews with local community workers, education and training providers and a number of group discussions.

The Turkish Youth Group who meet at the Turkish Welfare Association are the initial contact for the arranging of interviews and meetings with Turkish youth. They meet each week at the Turkish Welfare Centre in Auburn. It is expected that this will lead onto making other contacts throughout the local Turkish community, with both males and females able to interviewed at various locations in the area. With assistance of the group and other workers at the Turkish Welfare Centre we expect to be able to interview approximately 30 Turkish young people during the second stage research phase.

Initially a number of interviews will be carried out with youth at the Turkish youth group to test this approach, before settling on a more detailed outline of questions for the series of interviews. The main focus of the interviews will be on finding out about:

- >∑ their experiences of employment, education and training
- >∑ their plans for the future
- >∑ their need for information and referral to relevant services for employment or further education and training.
- >∑ their individual, group and community learning.

The interviews will be recorded on audio tape and transcribed for further analysis. Where appropriate the Turkish community worker will seek to provide the young people with relevant information and referrals onto relevant employment, education and training services.

A member of the committee of the Turkish Welfare Association will be involved to assist with the project liaison. The Association will be asked to comment on the first draft report for the project and provide feedback on the report.

A representative sample of young people will be interviewed. The sample will be defined by the following factors:

- a) age -15-24 year olds who have left high school
- b) gender - both male and female
- c) language/ethnicity -Turkish as their first language/ either born here of Turkish parents or born overseas
- d) geographic location - living in the south west of Sydney
- e) unemployed; currently unemployed or who have been unemployed for significant periods since leaving school.

This study will bring together the available demographic data on the Turkish young people in the south west of Sydney, using ABS data and labour market figures. According to an analysis by Dhungel (1997:3) of the ABS 1996 Census data, the Auburn Statistical Local Area (within the Central Western Sydney Statistical Sub-division) has one of highest percentage (62.6 %) of speakers of languages other than English in NSW. One of the main NESB communities in Auburn are Turkish speaking.

A review of literature in the field will draw on a number of aspects including:

- ∑ informal learning/adult learning
- ∑ youth policy
- ∑ youth and community work
- ∑ youth and the labour market
- ∑ linkages to education and training
- ∑ studies of Turkish youth.
- ∑ recent studies of Turkish youth.

There are two recent studies, located so far, that include experiences of Turkish youth in the labour market, education and training. Both studies will be drawn on during the literature review and the drafting of the report. Inglis, Elley & Manderson (1992) study of Turkish youth looked at case studies of Turkish families in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, as well as gathering available national data and surveying Turkish high school students. Baylis & Brown (1998) have included data on Turkish youth in their study of the take up of traineeships and apprenticeships among three communities in Sydney. They have interviewed parents, school students and community organisations from Arabic, Turkish, and Vietnamese speaking communities.

The literature on informal learning and adult learning will provide a framework for the study, highlighting aspects to consider during the research with young people. One of the dimensions highlighted in this literature is the need to place the study within an overall economic, social and political context. This helps highlight some of the forces that are impacting on young people moving from school to work, and seeking to continue their education and training. The study is taking place at a time when young people continue to face ongoing high overall unemployment rates ; almost 30% for 15-19 years old and a slightly lower rate for 20-24 year olds. For some ethnic communities, such as the Turkish speaking community, in areas such as Auburn in Sydney, these rates are even higher. This indicates that there are significant numbers of young people, who are finding great difficulties in making the transition from school to work. These difficulties can partly be explained by structural factors in the labour market. One of the major contributors to the study of the way changes to the labour market are affecting youth, Sweet (1995:i) has argued that overall Australia does not do well in preparing many of its young people for work. He felt that young people are being increasingly marginalised from the mainstream of employment, education and training. Recently

Sweet (1998:4) has again emphasised the main issue to consider is the marginalisation of young people from both education and employment. He suggests "it is important to see all marginal young people ; not only the unemployed, but also those who are outside the labour force but not studying, and those in precarious part-time work." Lauritsen (1995:34) pointed out that the impact of structural change in the labour market is leading to a marked increase in casual and part-time employment that sees young people in insecure, low paid, personally demanding and highly competitive work. This is being further exacerbated by the impact of recent federal and state government policies that are contributing to:

- Σ The removal of any benefits from 16-18 olds, who are not studying or in work.
- Σ Privatisation of the CES and the creation of for-profit job placement services with little interest in dealing with 'difficult' placements.
- Σ Work for the dole schemes that include no training component.
- Σ Cutbacks in both federal and state funding for community based organisations, especially ethnic based organisations, making it difficult to fund any services specifically for young people.
- Σ Cutbacks in access programs and available places in entry level courses at local TAFE and Community Colleges.

This study will seek to place the individual experiences and learning within a broader social, economic and political framework.

A follow up survey will be conducted in March next year with the Turkish young people who were interviewed during the second stage of the project. The results of the survey will be included in the findings of the final project report.

A final report has been published by the Centre for Popular Education, UTS.

Effective Pedagogy in Numeracy for Unemployed Young People

This project was led by the UTS Centre for Language & Literacy with assistance from the Centre for Popular Education.

Client: Australian National Training Authority

Completed in 1998.

Researchers: Betty Johnston, Sheilagh Kelly, Stephen Black and Griff Foley

Legal Support with Young People

Client: Marrickville Legal Centre and the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies
with funding from the NSW Law Foundation

Completed in 1995

Researchers: Rick Flowers and John McIntyre

We undertook a study of the pedagogy and practice of police officers, solicitors, youth workers, welfare officers and others who work with young people in the legal system. The research employed a variety of innovative qualitative research methods. The report *Working Together* recommended training focus on encouraging more co-operation between police, lawyers, social workers, and other workers. The report is available in 5 volumes: vol. 1 *Defining the Needs and Issues of Young People in the Legal System*; vol. 2 *The Nature of Support with Young People*; vol. 3 *Aboriginal Perspectives*; vol. 4 *Literature and Training Review and Practitioner and Young Person Perspectives*; vol. 5 *A Collaborative Training Model and Resources*. Published reports are available from the Centre for Popular Education, UTS.

Development of national competency standards for Australian youth sector

Funding: National Health and Community Services Industry Training Advisory Board
Completed in 1993

Researchers: Rick Flowers, Clive Chappell, Andrew Gonczi, Sue Knights, Suzi Quixley,
Barbara Mountain and Tony Holland

This was the first national competency standards project in the community services industry to seek endorsement from the National Training Board. Using a variety of qualitative and participatory research methods it sought to address the distinct nature of practice in the human services industry.

Certificate in Youth Development (South Pacific)

Client: Commonwealth Youth Program, South Pacific Regional Centre

Completed in 1990

Staff: Griff Foley

From June 1989 to April 1990 research and consultations were conducted in a number of South Pacific countries, including Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Fiji, as the first stage of the course development process. Ongoing advice and support was provided to assist the successful development and implementation of a Certificate in Youth Development Work. A series of papers, competency statements and course outlines were produced.

Youth Worker Trainer's Manual

Client: NSW Youth Sector Training Council

Completed in 1992

Staff: Rick Flowers

This consultancy was jointly undertaken with Vaughan Bowie, Lecturer in Welfare Studies, University of Western Sydney. We were engaged to develop educational materials that will be used by experienced youth workers who will be trained to develop and deliver training to other youth workers. In addition we undertook a written evaluation of the whole program development process.