The National Association of Youth Clubs

Political Education Project

FINAL REPORT

November 1981

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NAYC Political Education Project

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Introduction

The Political Education Project ran for three years (October 1978 September 1981). It was funded by the Department of Education and Science (under the Developmental Grants section of Headquarters Grants to Voluntary Youth Organisations) and managed by the National Association of Youth Clubs.

This report falls into two halves. The first half deals with some commonly asked questions about political education and provides a number of recommendations for the further development of the area. In the second half, the work of the Project has been examined.

Mark Smith
Project Co-ordinator
November 1981

1. Political education in youth work ~ some common questions answered

WHAT IS POLITICAL EDUCATION ?

As a starting point we have taken the view that political education is

> "the conscious attempt to help people gain for themselves the necessary knowledge, feelings and skills to be able to think and act politically."

We have understood politics to be about power in society, (whether that society be a tribe, a nation state or some other type); the relations between societies; and the social movements, organisations and institutions which are directly involved in the determination of such power.

Such a definition is only a starting point and it clearly can lead to widely different interpretations in practice. Later we will look at these interpretations but first it is important to establish what the relation between social and political education is.

WHAT IS THE RELATION OF POLITICAL EDUCATION TO SOCIAL EDUCATION ?

Just as political education has gathered a number of meanings - so has social education. There are at least three definitions of social education in common use:-

a. Social education comprises that whole area of planned educational development related to the self, others and society. This is a definition more generally

associated with schools and is the sort of activity that might be found in a lesson entitled "social studies". It is more likely to deal with the knowledge area rather than with feelings or social skills. As such it could easily be presented as an 'academic* subject and be examinable.

b. Social education is primarily concerned with personal development. This is the definition which fits most work labelled "social education" in school timetables (with the exception of that covered in (c) below) and in the youth service. In practice this branch of social education tends to emphasise social relationships within the first two of the categories above - relationships between individuals, and between individuals and social groups. It is more concerned with feelings and social skills than the first example of practice. Examples of this sort of work are discussion groups that deal with sexual relationships or the use of members committees in youth groups to develop skills and group identity.

c. Social education is primarily concerned with community involvement. This is the definition adopted by the Schools Council Social Education Project and work associated with it:

"The principal aim of the project is to provide an enabling process through which children will achieve a sense of identification with their community, become sensitive to its shortcomings and develop methods of participation in those activities needed for the solution of social problems", (Social Education, Schools Council 1974 p 130)

As such this form of social education can easily result in practical projects and surveys that directly involve young people in their local community e.g. environmental clear-up projects, checking for hypothermia amongst old people or campaigning for improved bus services. [This threefold classification comes from the FEU publication "Beyond Coping", 1980]

This project has sought to redefine and reinvigorate the debate over the meaning of social education in youth work. It began with the personal development approach prevalent in youth work and has sought to understand what that might mean when fully connected with the social, political and economic institutions that help shape individuals and groups. Given its focus on personal development it is therefore somewhat different in practice and content to the first area of social education endeavour. Thus we have a working definition:

Social education is the conscious attempt to help people to gain for themselves, the knowledge, feelings and skills necessary to meet their own and others' developmental needs.

This definition in turn is based on certain values:-

1. All members of society have the right to a full emotional, social and intellectual development.
2. Society has an obligation to ensure that people gain access to the resources and opportunities that enable such development.
3. The help given to people must be based on truth and reason and enhance human freedom and dignity.

If we follow the logic of our definition of social education through, then the "necessary knowledge, feelings and skills" must also include those of political action and reflection. In as much as political education contributes towards the personal and societal meeting of people's developmental needs then it is a part of social education. Clearly this means that some of the more technical aspects of political education such as "British Constitution", fall outside social education. Ideas like political literacy and political competency come within. This split would seem sensible as we are concerned with youth work and definitions of work that are appropriate to its practitioners.

WHAT ARE YOUTH WORKERS DOING ABOUT POLITICAL EDUCATION ?

In our survey of youth work provision in this area we have been able to isolate five main forms of political education practice. These forms can be characterised as:

1. Civic/citizenship which grows from workers' concern about the political literacy of young people. This sort of approach might result in things like a series of talks from representatives of the political parties, discussion groups on various issues or a visit to local council meetings. A recent development of this approach can be seen in the "Rights" materials associated with the NYB Enfranchisement Project.

2. Participation, which often begins with the belief that young people should have more of a say in their immediate environment. Examples of a participation approach are members committees and attempts to involve young people in area and youth committees and the like.

3. Workers[1] issues: This approach starts with the workers' interest in a particular issue. Recent examples in this area have been attempts to involve young people in campaigns against nuclear weapons, public expenditure cuts and unemployment. The defining feature is that much of the initial impetus and effort is made by the worker.

4. Young people's issues: This often begins with anger/concern about a particular issue by young people. Here we have campaigns that have been mounted by young people against police harassment and bus route closures. The initial idea is young peoples' (as is much of the subsequent work) but the group may not

be clearly definable as members of a particular social movement. Also the development of user/manager youth provision would fall within this category - but it is likely to have been arrived at through the "Participation" route.

5. Social movement: here both the worker and young people identify with a social movement beyond anything purely concerned with age. This is a growing category of work - where people come to recognise that they are unfairly treated because of some "characteristic" e.g. they are black/unemployed/gay/ handicapped/ female. The young people involved make a connection with a wider movement such as unemployed young people – YOP trainees have been making with the labour movement.

These forms of work are shown diagrammatically in Table One and the following points need to be made about this survey.

a) All the forms of political education shown on the table are bound by educational principles i.e. they correspond to the value base normally associated with educational endeavours in youth work. Thus they:
   - respect the autonomy of the individual
   - have a belief that reason should be applied to all situations
   - place a value on justice and equality

It should be said that there are forms of work that correspond to each of these areas that do not respect these principles and are not necessarily educational.

In the commentary here attention is restricted to those forms of educational practice.

TABLE ONE

	Civic/Citizenship	**Participation**
Characteristic Starting Point	Begins with the worker's concern about 'political literacy' of young people e.g. they know name of MP	Begins with a concern that young people should have more say in their immediate environment and/or the worker's desire to snare his/her workload. e.g. young people need to get more involved in the club.
Typical Form	*Debates about 'safe' issues e.g. Third World *Discussion Groups *Visits to local councils *Mock elections	* Members committee * Members doing jobs around the club * Training events - particularly on skills area
Workers Role	Worker arranges a programme of activities and attempts to sell and run the programme. A schooling/ banking model of learning.	Worker attempts to convince young people of the benefits of 'involvement'. As activities develop the worker may give up certain areas of power. Some activities may not need any intervention from worker.
Main Areas of Tension	* Although broadly consensual - can run up against problems of "balance".	* As it develops workers can feel threatened about their loss of power. * Tension between group and - LEA because young people are "in authority". * Tension between "in" group and "out" group of young people.

Worker Issues	**Younq People's Issues**	**Social Movement**
Begins with the worker's concern about a political issue e.g. Environment / Nuclear Weapons.	Begins with young people's anger/concern about a particular issue e.g. Police Harassment.	Begins with worker and/or young people identifying with a social movement, e.g. "Blackness", "Feminism".
* Films * Discussion groups * Projects e.g. environment * May lead to political action	* informal discussions * training sessions * political action	* special activity groups * consciousness raising groups * self help groups * political action
Worker enthuses about an issue and hopes that it might rub off. May put on some specific event to spark interest. As things take off worker is likely to take more of a background role.	Worker tries to redirect young people's anger into more 'constructive' political action. Then helps them to gain the knowledge, feelings, skills to act on their specific issue.	May begin with worker encouraging people to identify with a movement but could easily be other young people who are the catalyst. Once 'identified' the young people are strongly motivated - thus worker acts more as resource person.
* "Balance" with (LEA) * Can offend the interests being campaigned against plus indirect pressure through employers. * Also between young people and workers i.e. young people not interested/ resistant or worker doesn't like the direction taken.	* Frequent problems between workers and employers as young people often angry about something done by LA or that LA can affect. * Between young people and worker because of attempts at redirection by the worker. * Between workers and other agencies e.g. the Police. * Between young people and other agencies.	* Tension between worker and employer - if seen as "unreasonable" work. * Anger. Lack of comprehension both sides. * Between members and young people who are not in social movement. * Between the workers concerned and workers who are not in social movement.

It must be said that there are only a limited number of projects/ clubs that are involved in these areas. The one possible exception to this is the participation element of political education practice but even here examples of good practice are difficult to come by. The Project did conduct a brief survey on political education practice earlier this year through the NAYC local organisers who are in close contact with the work of the 7000 clubs in membership of NAYC. In general, organisers were only able to name two or three clubs/projects in their area that were involved in any of these areas to any significant degree. Me are, therefore, talking about less than *5%* of the full time and part time clubs in membership of NAYC being engaged in this area.

b) The headings we have here are empirically derived. This means that they do not fit into any neat theoretical framework, and the outcomes of the work are not necessarily what one would predict from the starting point. Thus if we take the third category - workers' issues - many attempts at practice in this area begin with a worker's enthusiasm about a current issue such as nuclear weapons and the environment. They are able to motivate and enthuse young people about that issue from a very political standpoint. Interestingly, the young people that do get involved in such work often become very articulate and independent about that issue although probably staying within the worker's basic orientation. This has a lot to do with the way workers arrive at which issue they use with young people, in that the worker's choice of an issue frequently resonates with the concerns of the young people s/he is working with.

c) The boundaries between each area of work are hazy - the areas shade into one another and there is often movement over the categories. That said they do provide a basic way of orientating thinking about political education and help us to understand some of the problems that arise in the work.

d) There is a sense in which political education has to contain <u>all</u> these elements if it is to be comprehensive. If we look back at our definition of political education, it is

concerned with thinking and action. Action on the political system involves group action. For group action to take place it is necessary to have some identity with other people who have a common interest and the most obvious expression of this is in some form of social movement. This has important implications for youth work as it becomes clear if we follow the logic of social and political education it inevitably becomes oppositional and leaves a large number of questions about how far it can be accommodated within state sponsored youth work.

e) The worker's role, in some senses, is similar in each of the categories in that it is broadly educational, however in Table One some of the differences have been pointed out.

f) As is clear from the fourth line of the table each approach does run into certain forms of tension. Clearly as has been suggested above, there are particular difficulties as the work moves towards the right-hand side of the table, i.e. beyond participative styles of work, and this is exacerbated by workers and managers making a number of common mistakes which we will now examine.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKERS ?

In our experience there are four broad implications for the way youth workers must work if they want to be political educators. Many of the problems occur when workers try to get into areas beyond the civics/ participation end of the spectrum and to some extent could be avoided if the following is borne in mind. Workers need to:~

1. Act politically. Many attempts by workers in this area have been rather naive. Whilst much of the knowledge and skills involved is that traditionally associated with youth work, the activity surrounding the creation of space for this sort of work involves conscious political action. It involves the creation of links with other organisations and bodies that can support and legitimise the work. Also it means the creation of strong and supportive management committees and the convincing of councillors and administrators of the importance and legitimacy of the work. Rather too many workers have treated it as being no different from other areas of their work and, therefore, have blundered into situations that they have not been able to handle, or have created those situations by their own naivety.

2. Act educationally. As we have already said a number of clubs and projects have failed to act educationally in this area. This means that interventions nave not been governed by the sort of values we have already talked about. The work must be open, truthful, enhancing of the person's freedom and dignity. Rather too often workers ! ave got off on a trip of their own. Too often workers have seen themselves as advocates professing to speak for young people rather than directing their efforts into helping those young people to develop skills for themselves. There is much talk in political education of 'bias' and 'indoctrination'. As values are such a central part of human experience, 'bias' is both inevitable and desirable. After all, our values are our bias, they are our humanness. The problem is not the display of 'bias's but the fact that workers are sometimes not open enough about their values.

3. Act professionally. Whilst the concept of professionalism has to be questioned in some respects, i.e. where it seeks to maintain a privileged advantage for those calling themselves professional, the idea that the work has to be done competently within an articulated framework of values is important. Quite a number of the problems have arisen through workers not working out objectives for their work, failing to plan appropriate actions and responses and omitting to evaluate what they are doing. This lack of time for planning and reflection is a common experience for workers and is not totally of their own making. The pressure from their employers to be seen to have large number of young people coming through their doors is highly destructive of professional work.

4. Recognise the constraints of the working situation.

Just how much can be achieved in a particular working situation varies from area to area. Workers need to make a careful assessment of just what is possible. If circumstances (and employers in particular) mean that the form of political education that workers want to engage in will be seriously compromised, then the decision has to be made to pursue the work outside a formal youth work context. In other words it has to be done in the worker's own time - this is a point we will come back to later.

WHAT IMPLICATIONS DOES OUR EXPERIENCE OF POLITICAL EDUCATION HAVE FOR MANAGERS ?

There is a sense in which politically aware workers are always a "problem" for managers. As we saw when examining different models of political education each had possible tensions between workers and managers. A great deal of what we have to say in this area is to do with the establishment of better working relationships between workers and their managers (more specifically for full time workers with LEA

managers). In general this area has to be seen as one in need of considerable improvement. It was given particular prominence by the NAYC Project in Support of Alternative Work (see Policy and Action for Detached Work,1981). Specific to the area of political education we can see seven main implications:

1. Few local education authorities have a clear and unambiguous policy on either social education or political education. Even where there have been clear policy statements that have been agreed at Committee level, when these are transferred into practice and for instance, the local authority becomes the centre of criticism by young people, then there have been examples of considerable backtracking. Any policy needs to be distinctly practical and have the implications clearly stated. Such a policy statement should be first agreed and formulated by both managers and workers.

2. As much of the work of INSTEP has demonstrated, there is a general need for a considerable improvement in the framing of job descriptions for youth workers and their managers. Political education and social education are areas where there is the possibility of tension and difficulty, and a worker's responsibilities and role need to be clearly agreed by both the employer and employee. As well as getting agreed job descriptions there must also be an agreed procedure for handling any dispute about these job descriptions. (See INSTEP Guidelines to a staff development programme, 1980)

3. Beyond a more formal job description there is a considerable advantage in agreeing with workers a code of conduct (at present CYSA is working on such a statement for this area).

4. A great deal of attention needs to be focussed on the style of management adopted in that if workers are encouraging young people to become more directly involved in determining the form of youth work provision they receive then workers

also need to receive similar respect and power. We cannot expect workers to encourage young people to take responsibility for their lives if they are denied a similar responsibility by their employers. Beyond this there is a considerable case for examining ways in which the management of youth work can be made more local and community based. This might involve the "contracting out" of certain pieces of youth work to local groups (See The NAYC Submission to the Youth Service Review for a full breakdown of this area).

5. There is a danger that administrators/officers become immersed in "management" and the roles and behaviours characteristic of bureaucracies. Thus the avoidance of blame frequently appears to assume an importance beyond that of the development of youth work. "Bureaucratic' behaviour is thrown into sharp relief where political education is involved. In a number of cases there has been an almost total failure on the behalf of managers to comprehend what political education aims to achieve and what it actually means in practice. It is our belief that in general officers/ administrators need to spend much more time reflecting on and experiencing social education enterprises.

6. Elsewhere we have argued that social and political education has in general to be a "small" group enterprise (See Creators Not Consumers Ch.2). This has considerable implications. For instance., it would mean the utilization of somewhat smaller youth work units and qualitative rather than quantitative staffing criteria. Over the last few years there has been a discernible move toward 'leisure provision' in youth work. This has been to the cost of developmental work. Much of the pressure for this movement can be attributed to the pressure on resources within youth work budgets. We have to recognise that social education <u>is</u> education and that appropriate <u>educational</u> criteria are used to allocate resources.

7. Given that social and political education needs much selling to local councillors, managers have a considerable role to play alongside workers in

convincing their employers of the worth of the area.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES ?

Local authorities need to sort out where they stand in relation to social and political education work within youth clubs and groups which they support. They must:-

1. Endorse a clear policy statement (see previous section).

2. Ensure their officers agree clear job descriptions and procedures with workers.

3. Promote a full programme of in-service training for their managers and workers.

4. Give careful attention to the creation of appropriate management structures in the light of the points made above.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL EDUCATION FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS ?

A large number of the points already made about the conduct and management of social and political education work apply to voluntary organisations. Given the sensitivity of the area and oppositional nature of some forms of social and political education, it is inevitable that a considerable amount of work in this area has to take place in voluntary organisations. There are three specific areas in which voluntary organisations can help. They can:

1. Give the area some legitimacy by agreeing with policies to promote the

development of social education and political education.

2. Sponsor training in this area and connect with other local and national agencies that have some expertise.

3. Act as direct sponsors for certain types of work such as the group of local youth workers who want to put on an event for young people or the group of young people that wants to produce a magazine.

WHAT CAN THE DES DO TO PROMOTE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION ?

We would suggest that there are two broad possibilities for action by the Department if they want to further encourage the development of social and political education practice within youth work:—

1. It is our belief that the production of a discussion document specifically about social education and political education would be of great help in focussing thinking within local education authorities. We would suggest that the most appropriate people to produce such a document are the Inspectorate. They alone have both the necessary standing and the detailed knowledge of current Youth Service provision. The purpose of such a document would be to promote the necessary debate in order that local Youth Services can formulate clear policy guidelines for the area.

2. Of late there has been some talk of the need to set up a central unit or team to develop the social education curriculum (see the National Youth Bureau submission to the Youth Review). It is our belief that the problem is not so much the defining of a social education curriculum but is to do with the application of such thinking to specific areas of work. We would suggest that the DES has to do two things in relation to National Agencies. Attention must be given to:

The way in which using monies from different funding sources can create distinct and separate units or departments within National Agencies and in turn has lead to a significant level of duplication.

An examination of the degree to which national agencies actively promote and encourage work that is developmental. We would ask that in the assessment the Department makes for the funding of national agencies and organisations some account be taken of the extent to which the organisation is able to deliver resources and help in the areas of social education and political education.

2. The work of the Project

The Project began in October 1978 and finished in September 1981.
It was funded by a development grant from the Department of Education and Science. When the Project began in October 1978 the objectives in the original Project application were reviewed and after consultations with a number of workers and National bodies, emphasis shifted away from what was basically a publications service to an approach that also examined and refined workers' philosophy and practice. It was felt that whilst many workers have become increasingly concerned that their practice has tended to concentrate on individual and group relationships to the exclusion of the consideration of those broader structural factors that shape the everyday experience of young people, their understanding of the 'political' nature of this movement and its connection with 'political education' was often very tentative. Therefore the aims of the Project were revised and could be summarised as follows to:~

1. Assess the usefulness of political education in a youth work setting by developing, implementing and evaluating specific tools and approaches.
2. Provide models of possible informal political education practice.
3. Support, wherever possible, practitioners' efforts to develop a political understanding of their work.

The Department of Education and Science development grant covered the costs of a project co-ordinator, a secretary and the resources necessary to support the Project's work.

These Project aims necessitated the development of an appropriate practice theory

and this has come about through a mixture of observation, literature review and importantly through feedback on our direct activities with workers. The aims of the Project were due to be met through the delivery of four main services for workers. The provision of

* Training events
* Advice and information
* Direct Project work
* Publications

We will now look in detail at each of these areas.

Training

As can be seen in the Appendix to this section the Project engaged in a large number and range of training events over its three year life. The vast majority of these events were requested by the sponsors rather than coming from initiatives by the Project worker. By and large the format for training events has been half/one day workshops although there have been a significant number of events that have been for longer periods.

Sponsors basically fall into three categories:

* local education authorities - youth and community services
* NAYC and its local associations
* higher education institutions

The majority of training events have been aimed at full time workers or full time workers in training, although there have been a significant number of events for both part time and voluntary workers and for youth club members. Obviously the content for each of these groups has tended to be different with full time workers usually being more concerned with social education/political education, part time workers

with social education/participation, and members with the practical side of political education and participation.

As can be seen from the brief description of content, most of the work could be categorised under three headings:

- political education
- participation within youth groups
- social education

The area of emphasis has tended to shift over the life of the Project and in particular with the publications of the Project. Thus when the Project first began the main area of interest was political education theory and participation, but then with the publication in July 1980 of Creators not Consumers there was considerable interest in the ideas developed in the booklet. Therefore the P$_r$oject responded to the large number of requests for workshops to help workers to look at social education. Following the publication in July 1981 of *Organise!* the emphasis again shifted toward political education and more particularly to the practical skills involved therein. This linking with publication was a particular benefit to the training events as it gave them a focus and the possibility for further action through use of the materials. The linking of publications to training events needs careful consideration and the Project certainly benefitted from having one early publication (rather than concentrating its efforts on a final Project report). This certainly has implications for future development projects and the way they are structured.

The frequency of requests for training events has tended to bunch around two periods; the start-up period when there was considerable publicity about the Project and the publication period (basically the last year of the Project).

TRAINING APPENDIX

Sponsor	Description	Topic
Surrey County Council	Workshop on Annual Staff Conference	Pol.Ed.
Herts County Council	Workshop for Full Time Staff	Pol.Ed.
NAYC Chilterns Regional Council	Two workshops - members	P' pation
Cheshire County Council	Two-day workshop for full time staff.	P' pation
D.E.S.	Workshop on Regional Course	Pol.Ed.
NAYC Training Programme	3-day workshop - FT/PT/Vol. workers.	P[1] pation
Cheshire CUYS	1-day workshop FT/PT/Uol	P' pation
Leicester Polytechnic	Workshop/Grad.Diploma Course in Community Education	Pol.Ed.
E.Mids.Young Conservatives	Panel for regional members	Youth policy
Liverpool C.U.S.	Workshop for members of CVS	Pol.Ed.
Merseyside Youth Assn.	Meeting for Executive Members	Pol.Ed.
Avon C.C.	Training Advisory Committee	Pol.Ed.
Essex County Council	Workshop for PT workers	P'pation
Herts C.C.	3-day workshop for members	P'pation
NAYC NE Members Council	Members	P pation
Cheshire and Wirral AYC	Series of workshops + weekend full time workers	Pol.Ed.
Hants. AYC	Members Council	Pol.Ed.
Glos. YA	Workshop - members	Pol.Ed.
NAYC Training Programme	3-day workshop for PT/Vol workers	Soc.Ed.
University of Durham	Workshop for Youth & Community Work Diploma Course	Pol.Ed.
Leicester Polytechnic	Workshop on Grad.Dip. in Community Education	Pol.Ed.
East Sussex C.C.	Workshop for FT staff	Soc.Ed.
Warks.C.C.	Workshop for FT staff	Soc.Ed.
Herts C.C.(N.Division)	Workshop for FT staff	Soc.Ed.
Manchester Polytechnic	Workshop - Y&C Diploma Course	Pol.Ed.
Cheshire C.C.	2-day workshop - FT staff	Soc.Ed.
University of London	MA Course (Pol.Ed.)	Pol.Ed.
Avon Youth Assn.	1-day workshop - members	P pation

Cheshire & Wirral AYC	1-day workshop - members	P'pation
Herts CC	3-day workshop - members	Pol.Ed.
Cooperative Union Ed.Dept	.Workshop for local coop members.	Soc.Ed.
Cheshire & Wirral AYC	1-day workshop FT/PT/UoI	Soc.Ed.
Westhill College	Workshop - B.Ed course.	Soc.Ed.
Glos. Youth Assn.	Workshop - members	Pol.Ed.
Mid.Region Youth Vols.	Workshop. Youth Action Organisers.	P'pation
DES/HMI	Briefing on project's work	Pol.Ed.
Bucks CC	Workshops - PT/Vol Workers	P'pation
Rochdale CYSA	Workshop PT/Vol Workers	Pol.Ed.
Avon Youth Assn.	Workshop FT/PT/Vol workers	Pol.Ed.
NAYC Training Programme	Workshop Trainers/FT workers/ officers	Pol.Ed.
Kent CC	Workshop PT/Vol workers	Pol.Ed.
British à Irish Confederation of youth clubs	Workshop Chairperson/Chief Executives	Pol.Ed.
Sussex AYC	Workshop - FT workers	Soc.Ed.
NAYC Projects Team	2-day seminar on researching, and writing up youth work.	

Advice and information

Here again the Project basically adopted a reactive approach. Given the workload of the Project it was decided not to go out and seek requests for help. As it was, through the Project's life it received between four to six requests per week for various bits of advice and information and these can be broadly broken down into the following categories. Requests from

* **Club and Project workers** for specific programme ideas and resources for use in their units. Lately these requests have been predominantly about how to combat racism.

* **Other National Agencies**. The work in this category basically falls into two pieces:
  a) passing on the sort of information on practical programming, (mentioned above), so that those agencies can answer enquiries they have received.
  b) advising on their own publications - thus the Project co-ordinator has given detailed advice on five or six specific publication projects.

* **NAYC and its local associations**. Here again the requests have largely been about the practical side o" programming.

* **Trainers**. The sort of requests that arise from this area have tended to be both about the philosophy of political education and the practicalities of training events. The Project's experience in training has been a useful resource in this respect.

* **Students**. Here we have had a number of requests from students doing dissertation work in political education and these have largely been students on youth and community courses although we have had one or two from people doing flAs and flPhils.

Beyond purely reactive advice giving the co-ordinator of the Project has been a member of four permanent committees related to the work

* British Youth Council Political Education Advisory Group
* The Fylde Social Education Project Advisory Group
* The Politics Association Executive Committee
* The Consultative Group on Youth and Community Work Training.

The latter was a panel to promote the continuing development of training for part time youth and community workers. This sort of work has been deliberately kept to a minimum. To the extent that we have been pro-active in advice giving, this has largely taken the form of publication.

Direct project work

It was envisaged in the Project plan (March 1979) that we would encourage a limited number of local projects in two or three defined areas (each area involving about six groups). This would involve substantial support from the central Project. The purpose of these projects was basically to make a major contribution to meet the first two aims of the Project i.e. to

* Assess the usefulness of political education in a youth work setting by developing, implementing and evaluating specific tools and approaches
* Provide models of possible informal political education practice.

Approaches were made to workers/local authorities/local associations in two areas:

1. Avon
2. Cheshire and Wirral

CHESHIRE AND WIRRAL

Through close co-operation with the Cheshire and Wirral Association of Youth Clubs the Project mounted an extended course on Political Education for full time workers. This course lasted over four months and comprised of nine workshops, a number of practical assignments and a residential period. The course was designed to enable workers to gain the basic knowledge, feelings and skills to be able to carry through a programme of political education in their work. Twelve workers took part and their thinking and experiences contributed towards our increased attention to social education.

AVON

In conjunction with the Avon Youth Association and the local education authority

agreement was reached to set up the local project on the lines already suggested In the end it was found that the project had seriously over-committed itself and that this work was curtailed before it got fully into operation.

Publications

Although the emphasis shifted in the Project plan away from the original submission's concern with the development of a subscription based political education materials service, there still remained a considerable reliance on publication.

The strategy of publication has been directly related to the development of the Project's thinking, hence the first major publication was on social education and the second on the practical skills/feelings/knowledge necessary for an action based approach to political education. In addition to these major publications a number of articles have been published and three issues of a do-it-yourself magazine produced by members. Listed below are details of these publications:-

CREATORS NOT CONSUMERS
Price: 75p
40 pages
ISBN 0 907095 02 X

This book uses a practical example of young people organising an ice-skating trip to show how youth workers can help develop people's knowledge/feelings/ skills. It goes on to examine ways in which workers can operate more creatively paying particular attention to participation and learning by experience. This is followed by an

explanation of what this kind of learning is in "Social Education" and of the following issues and political implications involved in it. The book was very well received by the youth work press and below are some of the reviews it received:

"Creators not Consumers by Mark Smith is an excellent booklet which, according to the author's foreword, is written to promote discussion about social education. I believe it goes much further and provides a useful rationale for any worker engaged in social education." Richard Loudon, Arena October 1980

"Throughout... ideas are presented clearly, and the important questions are stated without pulling any punches . This is the strength of the work and the feature which undoubtedly will lead to it becoming an invaluable stimulus to many discussions amongst social educators in various areas of youth work". NYB, Social Education in YOP. 1980 .

"Creators not Consumers is a compact, easy to read booklet on social education which endeavours to bridge the gap between theory and practice .... I found the author's account very useful and practical ... It provides a fresh approach to this rather complex problem and is undoubtedly a challenge to the more traditional approach seen in the Youth Service." Mark Preston, Rapport, April 1981.

Creators not Consumers has become something of a standard text on social education. It has become a core book on a number of full time and part time training courses and is regularly appearing as a reference point for articles in journals like '*Youth in Society*'.
First published in August 1980, reprinted in November 1980, and a second edition

ORGANISE!
Price: £1.75 inc p & p
72 A4 pages, over 40 illustrations

ISBN 0 907095 07 0

Organise! is subtitled a guide to practical politics for youth and community groups. It took two years to write and pilot. Part one of the book describes a way of working

and making decisions in small groups that is democratic, personal and active. Part two outlines what is involved in getting information. It explains practical skills involved and gives particular sources and part three provides a step by step guide to the main activities of taking action. Each section has a full listing of resources.

Press Reports

The book has met with extensive press coverage and below are some of the reviews:

"Some people need a lot of persuading that political education is not just something for radical revolutionaries of the extreme left, or the neo-fascists of the extreme right. Perhaps a new book, Organise? by Mark Smith and published by NAYC, will help to persuade some that it is about understanding society, how it works and how change can come about... I only wish I had read this book long ago. Perhaps I wouldn't have made some of the mistakes I have done. It's one of the most practical and down to earth guides I have read, and it helps the reader step by step through such things as how to set up an effective working group, organising meetings, keeping records, keeping members involved, getting information at the local community or central government level, resources, using normal channels for change, lobbying, making news, writing speeches, organising demonstrations, and even fundraising. In parts its almost like a youth workers handbook."

Arena, October 1981

"An extremely useful book covering almost every aspect of organising. It concentrates on pressure group politics and campaigning. Although there is a big section on 'getting started' it's not only for beginners - "Information is power" and "Taking Action" are for everyone. It sets out to show ways of organising that are democratic, personal and practical. The underlying theme of the book is awareness - what you are doing, why, who you are up against, how successful tactics are, etc. The awareness is also put on a personal level — relating to others in the group, taking part in meetings, accepting responsibility and building up confidence and skills. Although the book goes into great detail on now to do many things, the style brings out the importance of political education, and being able to use that knowledge and skill to tackle anything - and that makes it a very worthwhile guide." Community Action No 55 Sep-Oct 1981

"This is a bright and readable 'guide to practical politics for youth and community groups' written by the National Association of Youth Clubs' political education project director. Although aimed mainly at youth club groups it clearly has application to a much wider range of young people, including school groups. Its useful comments on meeting preparation and running may be of interest to adults too." Education 11 September 1981

"This publication is packed with information, ideas and good advice, and clearly presented. Well worth the money." Voluntary Action. Autumn 1981

Organise was first published in July 1981 and it already has become a course book on a couple of full time courses and has met with a very wide range of orders including a large number of bookshops, community projects and higher education institutions as well as more usual youth work outlets. To date the book has sold 1500 copies and we are in the process of preparing a second edition.

MEMBERS ONLY

Three issues of this magazine were published. It was a do-it- yourself news and views magazine written by and for young people. Over 500 copies of each issue were subscribed to and it included articles on Northern Ireland, the needs of rural young people, the police and producing your own newsletter. In addition to the three issues of Members Only subscribers also received copies of the magazine produced by young people involved in the GMYA/NAYC Homelessness Project (that project is also funded by a DES Development Grant) and a magazine about Nuclear Warfare produced by young people on a project weekend.

ARTICLES

A Practice for Freedom. Teaching Politics Vol 9 No 1 1980

This article outlines what the characteristics of a youth work approach to political education might be and the problems involved in it.

NAYC Political Education Project Social Science Teacher Vol 8 No3 1979

A brief introduction to the work of the Project.

Redefining social education, Youth in Society No 50 3an. 1981

This article was largely based on chapter 3 of Creators not Consumers.

Learning inter-personal skills - social groupwork in schools

Social Science Teacher Vol 10 No 4 1981

Published in their Briefings series this pull-out supplement defined what social groupwork is and what the implications for its introduction into schooling could mean. It ended with a brief guide to available literature.

A brief project assessment

As we spelt out in the Project plan (March 1979) an assessment of work such as the Project has been doing is a most difficult process. Thus, much of what follows is intuitive. A second related problem to assessment is in relation to our original aims. As the Project progressed it became apparent that these aims were perhaps less appropriate than had been originally thought. The key "disturbing" factor has been our perception of the need to concentrate on developing social education theory/practice and relating it back to political education. However, this said, we can list six broad contributions the Project has made.

1. The Project has stimulated and developed thinking about social education.

The Project provided the first systematic re-visit of the area for 10 years. It has provided a new definition of the concept and brought the idea of developmental needs into the centre of the model. As has been reported in our review of the Project's publications, *Creators not Consumers* influenced the content of training courses and appears to have become a significant work. Since the appearance of the book a number of other articles and booklets have appeared (and are scheduled to appear) about social education in different contexts.

In addition the Project's development of thinking about social education has been reflected in some of NAYC's work including its submission to the Youth Service Review.

2. The Project has contributed to the development of a curriculum for informal political education.

The Project's approach to social education and political education was based around a number of factors including the need to:

* be opportunist
* use experiential learning
* be participative
* put the work in its social context
* look for a process rather than product outcomes
* be open and clear about values and to match them to practice

This approach was described in *Creators not Consumers* and it had clear implications for the sort of curriculum and method that was appropriate. In order to help workers and young people to gain the necessary knowledge/feelings and skills to carry forward such an approach the book *Organise* was produced. It is the only book that deals comprehensively and at an appropriate level with practical politics for youth and community groups. The sales and reviews of the book clearly indicate the need for such a resource and a degree of success for the book in meeting those needs.

3. The Project has supported practitioners' efforts to develop a political understanding of their work.(Aim 3 of the Project plan)

A great deal of the training input has been to accept youth work within its social and political context and indeed a much enlarged section of *Creators not Consumers* (2nd edition) deals with the ways politics are reproduced in day-to-day youth work. It is clear the Project has made some contribution to the area, but it is impossible to

quantify what it has done.

4. The Project has provided models of possible informal political education practice (Aim 2 of the Project plan)

Earlier on in this report we suggested five models of political education work that were current within youth work. These are empirical models - they reflect what is actually happening rather than what should happen. This model will be the basis for an article outlining possible directions political education can take in youth work.

5. The Project has made some assessment regarding the usefulness of political education in a youth work setting. (Aim 1 of the Project plan)

Creators not Consumers (2nd edition) provides a description of the usefulness of political education in youth work or rather more specifically within state sponsored youth work and looks at some of the limits of political education within that sector. Our comments in this report on models of political education practice further develops this argument.

6. The Project has had a considerable impact on NAYC

As this Project was one of the first funded through the development grant section of Headquarters Grants it is worth reflecting on the impact of having a developmental project centrally based. In the past projects funded under experimental grants have tended to be based in local community but managed from the Headquarters. There has, therefore, been a tendency for such projects to have a less developed identity

than one placed in the central organisation and for only a limited inter-change of ideas between the two. It is a significant feature of this developmental project (and the other developmental project funded at the same time - the project in Support of Alternative Work) that they have both made important contributions to the work and thinking of the organisation. In addition there has been a considerable reverse flow from the other staff at NAYC. Specifically three areas are worth noting:

A) The development of thinking on social education which has already been mentioned is reflected in NAYC [1] s submission to the Youth Service Review.

B) As both Projects put a particular emphasis on publication there has been renewed interest and growth in knowledge in the marketing, presentation and content of publications for youth workers from NAYC. Certainly the output of both developmental projects has set new standards in youth work publishing.

C) Training. Both Projects have gained considerably from being able to plug directly into the expertise of trainers at NAYC and in turn have been able to contribute to the development of techniques and presentation of training within the organisation.