

**Confluences of identity, knowledge and practice:
building interprofessional social capital
ESCR Seminar 4 proceedings**

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**The effects of professionals' human and cultural
capital for interprofessional social capital**

Seminar 4 Proceedings
**Confluences of identity, knowledge and
practice: building interprofessional
social capital**

Joan Forbes & Cate Watson (Editors)

The effects of professionals' human and cultural
capital for interprofessional social capital



CENTRE FOR
CHILDREN'S
SERVICES
RESEARCH &
POLICY STUDY

**CONFLUENCES OF IDENTITY, KNOWLEDGE AND
PRACTICE: BUILDING INTERPROFESSIONAL
SOCIAL CAPITAL**

RESEARCH PAPER EDITORS

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Identifying and examining the disciplinary and other knowledge bases with which practitioners across the children's sector identify and draw upon as intellectual resources in their integrated service for children, young people and families is an important and timely concern in the current moment in Scotland and other places. To explore the interfaces and interstices of professional knowledge, values and their effects for/in practice, a group of researchers from the universities of Aberdeen, Glasgow and Strathclyde has instituted a programme of research seminars: *The effects of professionals' human and cultural capital for interprofessional social capital: exploring professional identities, knowledges and learning for inter-practitioner relationships and interprofessional practice in schools and children's services*. This research seminars series is supported by an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) award.

In May 2009 the fourth and final two day research seminar in the series was held at the University of Aberdeen, its title: *Confluences of identity, knowledge and practice: building interprofessional social capital*. This final meeting in the series, which drew the series together, explored how the complex relationships between professionals' identities, knowledge and practice influence the development of forms of collaborative working and may, or may not, operate to build social capital. The seminar participants debated the effects for the professional/interprofessional identities and practices of children's public services practitioners

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Perspectives on 'becoming' and 'being' a headteacher.

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The limits of collaboration: social capital, professional identity and institutional power.

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Addressing the socially-constituted self through a common language for mental health and social services: a cognitive-analytic perspective.

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The pretty story of joined-up working: a 'case-study' of interprofessional partnership.

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of recent discursive shifts in policy towards integrated working relationships. The meeting considered how recent policy which has sought to 're-story' narratives of professionalism around new ecologies of practice that transgress hitherto impermeable professional boundaries has introduced critical tensions into the processes of and spaces for individuals' professional identification/s. Finally, the impact and appropriateness of professional norms of practice in the form of standards and the implications of a common standards framework in developing, or inhibiting, good collaborative practice and in its potential effects, for example, for professional flexibility were key considerations in the debate.

Aims and Objectives

An aim in this seminar series is to bring together social science and health researchers, children's sector practitioners and members of the children's public services' governance and policy communities together with representatives of interested voluntary agencies and regulatory and inspection bodies to explore important critical issues and questions around the building-up and operation of practitioners' human, cultural and social capital in the current moment of moves towards children's services integration. Seminar themes include:

- researching professional identities: theorising social and institutional identities;
- exploring subject disciplinary and practice-specific knowledges and learning for interprofessional practice;
- examining how practitioners work together on schools and children's services: current practices and future prospects;
- analysing the confluences of identity, knowledge and practice;
- in/through the seminar series, building interpersonal and interprofessional social capital between and amongst group members.

The objectives of the seminar series are to:

- examine the tensions and complementarities in the theory and practices of interprofessional working in schools and children's services found in the different disciplinary and knowledge base identifications drawn upon by different professional groups;
- investigate the implications and challenges for the multiplicity of theorisations and self-positionings of practitioners and professional groups for the operation of co-practice work relations, networks and teams in schools with particular reference to how children's services integration policy and related school workforce remodelling is operating in schools;
- examine the wider socio-economic debates concerning the relations between social capital and human capital and, specifically, to explore how professionals' human capital may create interprofessional social capital, the inverse of much of the relevant social-human capital literature which examines how social capital builds human capital;
- provide a practitioners' forum that focuses on current and future service integration developments in schools and children's services, providing a space

for participant practitioners from education, health, social care and other agencies involved in children's sector reform to learn about, share and consider ideas of good practice in 'joined-up' working;

- identify opportunities to build collaborative research networks and openings and spaces for cross-disciplinary and cross-professional theoretical scholarship and empirical research, producing and exchanging knowledge that will continue to inform debate in the substantive fields.

Papers from the final meeting in the series are now brought together in this edited collection: *Confluences of identity, knowledge and practice: building interprofessional social capital: ESRC seminar 4 proceedings*, published in the Research Papers series of the University of Aberdeen. In keeping with the seminars, this edited collection is intended for all who are interested in current transformations in children's services including, but not limited to, practitioners, managers and leaders, academics, policy makers and representatives of government agencies from the fields of education, health and social care.

It is intended that this publication together with others emerging from the seminar series: *The effects of professionals' human and cultural capital for interprofessional social capital*: will present interested readers with thoughtful and challenging analyses that provide timely critical critique of important, and sometimes troubling, issues and concerns emerging from current radical restructurings and reformations of the children's sector for the capitals and identities of those involved.

Key debates from the first three meetings in the series are published in previous papers in the Research Papers series:

Forbes, J. & Watson, C. (Eds.) (2009) *Research into professional identities: theorising social and institutional identities. ESRC Seminar 1 Proceedings*. Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen.
ISBN 1-903714-18-4

Forbes, J. & Watson, C. (Eds.) (2009) *Exploring subject disciplinary and practice specific knowledges and learning for interprofessional practice: ESRC Seminars 2&3 Proceedings*. Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen.
ISBN 1-903714-19-2

Copies of the above papers are available from the seminar series administrator: Jennifer Boyd (jennifer.boyd@abdn.ac.uk), School of Education, University of Aberdeen.

INTRODUCTION

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Three of the papers contained in this collection were presented at the fourth seminar in the ESRC series, which took place at the University of Aberdeen in May 2009*. The seminar sought to focus on the 'confluences of identity, knowledge and practice' and in so doing reflect upon the possibilities and challenges of 'building interprofessional social capital'. The fourth paper included here, by Kerr, is drawn from the practitioner presentations given at the third meeting in the ESRC series: *Practitioners working together in schools and children's services: current practices and future prospects*, which took place at the University of Strathclyde in January 2009.

Walter Humes considers the limits of collaboration and in so doing identifies weaknesses in both the discourses of collaboration – involving multi-agency working, communities of practice and interdisciplinary research – and the assumptions upon which such practices are based. The problems include the blurring of lines of responsibility, the formation of protectionist models of professional identity and the marginalising of certain ethical concerns. He illustrates these deficiencies with examples drawn from health, education and social work. His paper concludes with a critique of the notion of social capital. Ian Kerr's paper, whilst presented at an earlier seminar in the ESRC series, provokes consideration of related issues as he reflects on the models of the socially constituted self underpinning mental health interventions and practices. Michael Cowie and Megan Crawford offer findings from a multinational project into the experience of 'becoming' and 'being' a school principal or head teacher. Finally Cate Watson employs a fictionalised narrative to identify the perils and the pitfalls of 'joined-up working'.

'Collaboration', Humes argues, is part of a 'feel good', upbeat, rhetoric in policy which nonetheless, has considerable serious implications for policy and practices including: legislative changes; the re-design of existing service structures, and remodelled workforce training. The introduction of this rhetoric of collaboration in policy has initiated new research agendas and re-configured the professional identities of practitioners working in Children's Services departments or integrated community schools. The rhetoric is connected to other trends in public services: the new managerialism and workforce remodelling especially. He explores how

collaboration is not necessarily as benign as its advocates suggest, but instead signify an agenda of greater institutional control. Often collaboration has been adopted in rhetorical terms only rather than operationally. He argues that attention should be placed on the boundaries between service practices, as it is there that people can learn, as well as face discomfort. Professional identities and knowledge claims are often questioned and practices contested in social work, education especially in relation to the expertise of parents and carers in specific neighbourhoods. Humes also suggests consideration is given to the hierarchies that exists within as well as between professional groups (e.g. between teachers and pastoral workers in education and doctors, nurses and therapists in social and health care services). His thought provoking paper reminds us that well-intentioned interventions, including collaborative research programmes, can have considerable unintended consequences.

Kerr continues this critique in the paper, albeit from a different perspective and from an earlier seminar primarily geared toward a practitioner's view of issues arising from inter-agency working. Kerr focuses on the 'caring professions' – including mental health and social work – faced with dealing with people whose problems he argues may be largely attributable to societal, rather than personal dysfunction. In part his argument is related to similar arguments about the wider health implications of the organisation of societies (as spelled out for example by Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) in *The spirit level*). He uses a fictionalised clinical case study to illustrate his argument that professionals in mixed community mental health teams need to adopt a socio-psychopathology model of the individuals that they deal with. In particular Kerr identifies 'cognitive analytic therapy' (CAT) – a still evolving model of psychological development and therapy – as an important tool to frame such work. CAT is based on the underpinning ontological notion of a radically socio-culturally formed self and a relational approach to mental health that refuses psychopathology, in favour of social psychopathology.

Like Humes this leads Kerr to a critical position regarding the notion of social capital, although from a different epistemological position. For Kerr social capital is replete with ethnocentric, Western-oriented and individualistic assumptions about the self and social life. As a model of practice CAT seeks to overcome this ethnocentric baggage and remind health, education and other children's service professionals that what they address in their work is 'the (mutative) internalisation of formative socio-cultural experience and values'. In order to illustrate this Kerr provides a descriptive account and diagrammatic representation of the dialectical forces impacting on the fictional character 'Jim'. The paper is a provocative intervention that poses a serious question: are collective understandings, practices and systems misrepresenting and failing those that they claim to benefit?

'Perspectives on "Being" and "Becoming" a Headteacher' returns the focus of the collection to the field of education and in particular consideration of professional socialisation and preparation programmes. Cowie and Crawford provide a snapshot of their findings from a study of 'new' – from year one to year three in their role - headteachers in Scotland that had taken part in a formal preparation programme.

Carried out in conjunction with colleagues in eleven other countries, the International Study of Principal Preparation (ISPP) offers insights into the needs of headteachers and principals. Cowie and Crawford chart the way these needs change over the three years in being in the post. Although they acknowledge their study was small scale and non-generalisable, they identified ways in which the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) programme had shaped the professional identities of their respondents. They also recognised that those who took part in the SQH programme would encounter competing demands – to be both critical and independent thinkers whilst also tough and intelligent auditors of practice in their schools.

Cate Watson concludes this collection of papers with a 'pretty story': she uses this device to interrogate the notion of 'joined up' working within human services. She offers a fictionalised satire derived from interviews she conducted with professionals at two organizations – a voluntary sector agency and a primary school. Through this innovative text she reveals the construction, performance and interplay of organizational structures, institutional practices and professional identities. The paper provides a fitting conclusion and condensation of the themes, concerns, and challenges identified at the final seminar and the ESRC series as a whole.

* ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (ESRC) Research Seminar Series 2008-09: 'The effects of professionals' human and cultural capital for interprofessional social capital: exploring professional identities, knowledges and learning for inter-practitioner relationships and interprofessional practice in schools and children's services'. (Principle Investigator: Dr Joan Forbes, Director of the Centre for Children's Services Research and Policy Study, School of Education, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 5UA).

THE LIMITS OF COLLABORATION
SOCIAL CAPITAL, PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND
INSTITUTIONAL POWER

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INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the discourse of collaboration, exemplified in the current emphasis on multi-agency working, communities of practice and inter-disciplinary research. It argues that while such developments are understandable responses to perceived weaknesses in previous modes of operation and forms of provision, there has been insufficient critical scrutiny of their underlying assumptions. Considerable attention has been directed at issues of structure, communication and professional training, but the potential risks of a 'collective' approach to service provision have been under-examined. These include the blurring of lines of responsibility, the formation of a 'protectionist' model of professional identity, and the marginalising of important ethical concerns. The argument is illustrated with examples from the fields of education, social work and health. In the final part of the paper, the implications for theories of social capital are explored.

Let me begin by drawing attention to what might be called the discursive field of collaboration; that is, the group of associated terms which, taken together, represent a predominantly positive interpretation of collaborative working. These include the following: partnership; teamwork; integration; networking; negotiation; collegiality; 'joined-up' thinking; crossing boundaries; inter-professionalism; inter-agency cooperation. This list is not exhaustive but it is indicative of the mutually reinforcing vocabulary which is often invoked when the nature and purpose of collaboration are being discussed. It would be possible to explore the nuances of meaning the various terms suggest but that is not my main focus in this paper. All I want to highlight at this stage is that the discourse of collaboration constitutes an upbeat, feel-good rhetorical field, increasingly global in its appeal. Writing from an Australian perspective, Janine O'Flynn refers to the 'cult' of collaboration, suggesting a slavish and uncritical acceptance of the discourse (2009). We might

draw comparisons with the language of *Curriculum for Excellence*, with its mantra of four capacities (successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors). These capacities have become the unquestioned currency of professional exchanges among Scottish teachers, arguably steering them away from any deeper analysis of the model of curriculum which underpins them (see Priestley & Humes, in press).

However, invoking collaboration is not merely a rhetorical device. It has substantial implications for policy and practice (see Forbes & Watson, 2009a). These can be considered under various headings:

Structure

Integrated Community Schools represent one example of an attempt to link the services provided by education, health and social work. In some local authorities, this approach is repeated on a larger scale by the setting up of comprehensive Children's Services Departments, rather than separate departments for different aspects of welfare provision.

Legislation

The move towards greater inter-professional collaboration has raised questions about the consistency of legal frameworks for teachers, social workers and health professionals. As will be shown below, this has sometimes led to tensions between staff coming from different professional backgrounds.

Training

Historically, different professional groups have been trained separately, pursuing distinct academic courses and placement experiences. As greater collaboration between them becomes the norm, so training programmes need to be reviewed. An unresolved question is how far joint elements of training should take place at pre-service or post-qualifying stages (the latter as part of continuing professional development).

Communication

Where the sharing of information among professionals is expected, there are sensitive issues to do with record-keeping, client confidentiality and data protection, again raising questions of legal consistency.

Research

Inter-disciplinary research can pose particular problems, with researchers approaching projects from different traditions and methodological assumptions. Multi-authored publications may lead to a series of intellectual compromises – ostensibly in the interests of inter-agency cooperation – which weaken the findings.

Professional Identity

Different professions have evolved their own systems of professional registration and recognition, in some cases with elaborate statements of standards and values set out by national bodies. There is clearly potential for divergence here.

Practice

At an operational level – for example, during multi-agency case conferences dealing with challenging clients – hard questions arise about the roles, responsibilities and power of the various professionals involved.

Policy

Reconfiguring relationships among professionals has a knock-on effect in relation to the formation of policy communities, especially those which are expected to advise government about the future direction of service provision. For this to be effective, there has to be a good 'fit' between the policy communities and the departmental structures of government.

It can be seen, therefore, that collaborative working is not just a new way of describing what professionals are hoping to achieve. Potentially it could lead to a revolution in the way staff in education, health and social work are expected to carry out their responsibilities. This is not unconnected to two other (related) trends, which have already impacted on public services, but a proper examination of these would fall outside the scope of this paper. First, there is the dominance of a particular approach to management, which has been imported from the private sector. This is characterised by a fondness for strategic plans, operational objectives and performance review. And, second, there is the global trend towards workforce remodelling which requires staff to be flexible, accountable, target-driven and corporate-minded. Seddon (2008) provides a sharp critique of both of these trends.

COMMUNITIES OF ENQUIRY AND INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

Let us now look a little more closely at the nature of collaboration and the various forms it takes. Within schools, teachers are increasingly urged to become part of communities of enquiry with their colleagues, sharing knowledge and skills, and engaging in action research projects. For example, here are two of the aims of the 'Learners, Learning and Teaching' network of the Applied Educational Research Scheme (AERS) in Scotland, designed to enhance research capacity in education and to promote links between university faculties of education, local authorities and schools:

- [To develop] a new model for collaboration among [communities of enquiry] in Higher Education Institutions and [to promote] strong links and collaboration with the professional practitioners and with other academic disciplines.
- To develop and evaluate a 'toolkit' for those seeking to establish communities of enquiry in education and a web of instrumentation for those wishing to investigate them. (AERS, no date)

Much depends on how communities of enquiry are set up and how decisions about what to investigate are arrived at. Does the original impetus come from teaching staff, the school leadership, or some external agency? If the second or third of

these, the choice of topics to investigate may not reflect the real interests of staff: for the sake of an imagined greater corporate good, individual freedom may be restricted. There is a strong case for respecting diversity and acknowledging that valuable professional development can take many forms. The desire to create one big collaborative 'happy family' is often management-driven and may be motivated by a wish to contain dissent. Thus collaboration should not be regarded as necessarily benign in its origins or purpose: lying behind its promotion, forces of institutional power may be at work. In other words, the discourse of collaboration may mask an agenda of control.

Another manifestation of collaboration can be seen in the promotion of inter-agency cooperation. The argument for this approach has been strongly advanced in recent years, particularly in the wake of tragic events in the UK such as the murder of Brandon Muir, aged 23 months, in Dundee, and the 'Baby Peter' case in Haringey. Despite a series of previous recommendations for more effective communication and cooperation among professionals, these cases keep occurring. While sharing information about vulnerable children is undoubtedly important, it can be argued that what might have prevented some of these terrible tragedies was not a more effective 'case conference' but an individual with the courage to step outside 'approved procedures', challenge bureaucratic obstruction and out-of-touch managers obsessed with budgets and targets, thereby shaming the various agencies into taking action. However, justified moral outrage is not seen as a desirable 'professional' characteristic: anyone who exhibits it runs the risk of being labelled 'not a team player'. Witness the fate of Margaret Haywood, the nurse who was struck off the register of the Royal College of Nursing because of her involvement in the *Panorama*¹ exposé of appalling treatment of the elderly in a Brighton hospital.

These initial reservations need to be tested against some of the empirical evidence that is available from research investigations covering inter-professional and inter-agency thinking and practice in education, health and social work. The next section will review the findings of a range of studies which offer detailed insights into how collaboration is interpreted and enacted in a number of contexts.

Some Examples

The first two studies I shall refer to both take a more positive view of current thinking about collaboration than I do, but both raise interesting issues worthy of attention. The first is a study by Nadia Farmakopoulou, carried out in Scotland, looking at collaboration between education and social work, particularly in relation to special educational needs assessment. Her overall conclusion is that 'collaborative activities in this field continue to be limited in extent and poor in quality' (2002, p. 1051). Her working definition of collaboration includes:

- Crossing occupational boundaries
- Setting aside the 'rightness' of your discipline
- Being willing to listen to what colleagues from other disciplines are saying.

She suggests that collaboration can be conceptualised in various ways: in terms of a **social exchange perspective** where professionals perceive mutual benefits or

gains from interacting with each other; in terms of **power/resource dependency** where linkages may have been forced rather than chosen but rational self-interest dictates that that is the route that must be followed; in terms of a **political economy perspective** which looks at the wider legal, political, social and cultural pressures which are brought to bear on professionals in different fields. Institutional power is particularly relevant in relation to the second and third of these perspectives.

Farmakopoulou found that there was a significant gap between the stated advantages of collaboration claimed by her respondents and actual practice. Contact between educational psychologists and social workers was limited and there were frequent disagreements and conflicts between them. But, despite this, claims were made about the personal benefits of collaboration (job satisfaction, support from colleagues) and the altruistic benefits to clients (holistic assessment, better understanding of the family circumstances). In other words, the discourse had been assimilated (the cult of collaboration was evident at a rhetorical level), but there was limited commitment to its operational expression, often for very understandable reasons – such as resource constraints, or pressure of work.

She also highlights the importance of what she calls 'inter-organizational homogeneity', stating that 'the occurrence and frequency of inter-agency collaboration is influenced by the internal bureaucratic procedures of the collaborating parties' (2002, p. 1058). Within local authorities there is generally a strong emphasis on following agreed procedures, completing necessary documentation, and securing managerial approval: this might lead to the conclusion that, although there may be differences of detail, the same management mind-set may apply across different occupations. However, Farmakopoulou suggests that between educational psychologists and social workers major differences are evident:

- *Different priorities* (for educational psychologists, the priority is children with additional support needs; for social workers, child protection cases)
- *Different modes of working* (educational psychologists focus on the child; social workers focus on the wider needs of the family)
- *Different perceptions of time-scales* (educational psychologists were perceived by day-care staff as adopting a 'come, assess and leave' approach); social workers expressed the view that educational psychologists did not take the time to get to know the family and the child's background, which they felt was needed in order to suggest the most appropriate package of services.

Farmakopoulou ends by stressing the importance of acknowledging areas of conflict and providing time and space to resolve them. This requires a high degree of trust – without trust 'there is no sound basis for collaborative working' (2002, p. 1063). She also calls for joint training and for what she calls the 'acquisition of a welfare identity', by which she means that 'professionals would see themselves as members of a network of welfare services' (2002, p. 1065).

My second example deals with the question of boundaries in inter-professional work and comes from Anne Edwards' 2008 Scottish Educational Research Association lecture, subsequently published in *Scottish Educational Review*

(Edwards, 2009). The particular focus of her article is policies designed to reduce social exclusion. She sees boundaries as places where people can learn but also as uncomfortable places where identities are questioned and priorities argued. These processes are not confined only to professionals and she notes: 'it was not always easy for practitioners to adjust from being the expert who inhabited a culture of specific expertise to learn to recognize the expertise that parents and carers brought to discussion of their children and neighbourhoods' (pp. 7-8). She also claims that sometimes professionals manage to create learning spaces in spite of, rather than because of, the bureaucratic organisations within which they work. However, she acknowledges that it is hard for schools to incorporate practices which are genuinely informed by the procedures and values of social work, because the rituals and routines of schools are well-established and often fairly inflexible.

She is attracted to the idea of 'relational agency', which she defines as 'a capacity for working with others to strengthen purposeful responses to complex problems' (Edwards, 2009, p. 10). She sees this as not simply a matter of technical skill but of 'affective, values-driven aspects of professional work' which respect 'the different motives of other professionals' (p.10). Although I take a less optimistic view of much of what goes on in the name of collaboration than Edwards, I think this subjective, personal aspect of her analysis is important and I will return to it later. She asserts, rightly in my view, that 'work on understanding both general values and precise motives is a necessary pre-requisite to responsive inter-professional work' (p. 11). How much scope is there for this kind of engagement? It opens up important questions about the relative value of knowledge, experience, procedures, ethical values and personal feelings in decisions about vulnerable children. It also raises difficult issues to do with status and power. As she says: 'Boundary spaces are not benign neutral places. Rather they can be sites of struggle over identity and knowledge and in particular whose knowledge prevails' (pp. 13-14).

One of the empirical studies that Edwards cites is an investigation of a policy initiative in England designed to prevent the exclusion of vulnerable youngsters from secondary schools. This involved enhanced pastoral support for the target group. 'The most striking finding in four of the five case study schools was that the academic systems were becoming increasingly distinct from the pastoral systems' (Edwards, 2009, p. 14). This was partly a function of workforce remodelling affecting non-teaching staff and the strong emphasis on academic results expected of teaching staff. Pastoral work was passed to 'welfare managers' who were paid as teaching assistants. It is not hard to see what the effects of this might be on attitudes and status, and the tension that might arise between schools as academic systems and as pastoral support agencies. At one level, this separation had some advantages. Welfare managers were sometimes able to address problems which the schools' academic systems could not cope with, and were developing links with other agencies in touch with the vulnerable youngsters. And some teachers welcomed the emergence of a separate system, freeing up their time to concentrate on the attainment agenda. But it clearly set limits to the amount of genuine 'collaboration' that could be claimed to be taking place. Moreover, although the welfare managers were making contact with social workers it was not clear how social workers rated their knowledge and expertise. In inter-professional work it is hard to avoid perceptions of hierarchies of knowledge – which may

derive from a range of things (qualifications, salary, training, power, professional ideology, etc). The research concluded that welfare managers were 'potentially vulnerable practitioners' and that 'there is still a great deal to be done to achieve inter-agency collaboration at an organisational level' (p. 18).

Issues of status are also very evident within the health field, where there is a substantial literature on barriers to collaboration. Research has looked both at situations involving different health professionals (doctors, nurses, therapists etc) and at situations where health professionals are required to work with other professional groups (social workers, teachers, voluntary agencies). In one study, the operation of health care teams was subjected to a critical incident analysis and it was found that difficulties arose from three sources: from the team dynamic when members acted towards one another as representatives of their professions; from the intellectual assumptions of team members, operating from different knowledge bases; and from the bureaucratic influences of the surrounding organisation (Kvarnström, 2008). Communication was seen as the main problem in another study which examined joint provision of services to families where parents had mental health problems, with communication between adult psychiatrists and child-care workers, and between general practitioners and child-care workers, being particularly problematic (Stanley, Penhale, Riordan, Barbour & Holden, 2003).

Scepticism about collaboration is reflected in many empirical and theoretical studies but it is only fair to point out that some writers are now trying to counter what Hudson calls this 'pessimistic tradition' (Hudson, 2002). Martin-Rodriguez, Beaulieu, D'Amour & Ferrada-Videla, (2005) seek to identify the determinants of successful collaboration, separating out 'interactional determinants', 'organizational determinants' and 'systemic determinants'. And Axelsson & Axelsson (2009) propose a move from territoriality to altruism 'as a condition and a possibility' for successful interprofessional collaboration.

Clearly the debates will continue. What is evident, however, is that exhortations from governments and policy communities, proposing collaboration as the way forward for a wide range of occupational groups, are encountering quite substantial problems at an operational level. This bears out the point that was made earlier about the far-reaching implications of the discourse. The various elements involved – structure, training, communication, power, bureaucracy – interact in complex ways, that cannot easily be controlled. Well-intentioned interventions may have unintended consequences. Resistance may be based on fear of change or territorial self-interest: but it may also be based on genuine intellectual principle or an honest belief, based on experience, that management-led initiatives may not produce the benefits to the clients that are claimed. The need to be alert to these ambivalences is also apparent in relation to collaborative research.

RESEARCH

The discourse of collaboration has featured strongly in research. Capacity building, as pursued by AERS, for example, has promoted collaborative working,

partly for very worthy reasons, linking novice researchers with more experienced colleagues. Furthermore, there is strong encouragement from the UK research councils to pursue inter-disciplinary research, on the grounds that there are mutual benefits to be gained from working across traditional boundaries. But there is a downside to this too. Think of the growing number of multi-authored articles and books where it is impossible to disentangle the particular insights of individual contributors. The 'knowledge production' is collective and individual responsibility – and creativity – is airbrushed out of the finished product. Too often this leads to blandness, a mediocre amalgam of cautious analyses. It can also encourage a form of 'groupthink', in which intellectual autonomy is surrendered to a powerful reference group.

In an article in *Research Intelligence*, Chris Holligan, a colleague at the University of the West of Scotland, and I put it rather more strongly when we wrote:

'Collaboration produces collaborators, new cadres of professors and researchers who are disinclined to probe power too provocatively, if at all, or argue for radical alternatives in public domains. Those being 'mentored' into this culture defer easily to the guidance of more experienced academics and, wanting to become members of this community, are prepared to conform, to self-censor . . . the educational research community has been complicit in its own containment'. (Holligan & Humes, 2007, p. 26)

There is another respect in which collaborative research carries dangers. I am thinking of the ethical approval procedures with which we, as academic researchers, have willingly constrained ourselves in recent years – they have provided fertile territory for academic bureaucrats to exercise their 'gatekeeping' fetishes. Once again, the origins of ethical approval were entirely admirable – protecting clients, particularly vulnerable clients, and ensuring that consent is 'informed'. But this quickly developed into a mechanism of control which is sometimes used to deny access for perfectly legitimate enquiries. It is hard enough within one discipline to secure internal and external approval for research. How much harder is it likely to be across several disciplines – especially ones which are potentially very sensitive such as many of those in the health and social work fields? I can think of ground-breaking research from the past which would simply not be allowed to proceed nowadays, such as John Bowlby's work on maternal deprivation (see for example Bowlby, 1979) or Frank Coffield's (1973) work on gangs. But no doubt the prospect of bringing into alignment the ethical approval guidelines of education, social work and health is already filling some academic bureaucrat's heart with delight.

Chris Holligan and I said that collaboration produces collaborators. In wartime, the word 'collaborator' was used to describe those who gave comfort to the enemy in exchange for certain benefits or to avoid persecution. It involved sacrificing principle for the sake of personal advantage. Is it too fanciful to suggest that parallels can be drawn with present-day forms of collaboration in the academic community?

At the beginning I referred to the discursive field which constitutes the cult of collaboration. There is, of course, another dimension to the discourse – that which applies to the supposed beneficiaries of the discourse, the clients. Its key terms include: participation; voice; empowerment; entitlements; personalisation; choice; rights; confidentiality; inclusion; support; well-being. Once again the list is not exhaustive and each term might be subject to detailed deconstruction. But the main point is that this alternative delineation of the discursive field shifts the focus from the professionals to the supposed beneficiaries. It is a perspective that is often linked to claims about the importance of building social capital among disadvantaged groups (see, e.g. Allan, Ozga & Smith, 2009).

It is not without significance, I think, that the literature on collaboration is weighted much more heavily towards the professionals than the clients. There is insufficient questioning of the ethics of professionalism. Professionalism is, in fact, a double-edged concept. At its best it stands for entirely desirable qualities: high standards, public service, concern for the clients and continuing development. But at its worst, it stands for self-interest, protectionism, exclusivity and an arrogant conviction that professionals always know best. Examples of these less desirable qualities can be found in all the professions – teaching, law, medicine, nursing, social work. I would argue that some of the effects of collaborative working could lead in a direction that strengthened rather than mitigated the negative sides of professionalism.

Take professional identity, for example (see Forbes & Watson, 2009b). It is often argued that collaborative working, especially working at the margins, at the boundaries between professions, can encourage reflection and cause people to redefine their identities. That might be the case but suppose the outcome was rather different – that different professional groups sought to define the core values that they shared more explicitly and produced common mission statements that they all subscribed to. That could lead to a more rigid, more monolithic version of professionalism where the scope for dissent, for challenge, would be reduced even further. If the position of whistleblowers is uncertain at the moment, what hope would there be for those integrated, collaborative professionals of the future to dissent from the approved, negotiated principles of integrated services, particularly if they were enshrined in formal agreements, reinforced in statements of professional standards, and promulgated in firmly applied protocols.

What we are seeing in the area of professional collaboration is merely one manifestation of a global trend towards uniformity and conformity of thinking and practice across a wide range of social spheres. We are familiar with the notion of the McDonaldization of society (Ritzer, 2008). What is happening to professionalism is merely one example of this trend: set menu, advertising hype, cheap ingredients and staff who are expected to be endlessly cheerful despite (in some cases) their poor employment conditions. The key drivers are economic and managerial, though the rhetoric makes great play of social justice and community engagement.

So whose social capital is being developed: the clients, the professionals, the senior managers, or the policy makers? Who have the greatest opportunity to expand their knowledge, to become part of networks that might make a difference,

to build relationships of reciprocity and trust? Are we not witnessing merely another instance of how power is differentially distributed and how language is used to create the illusion of better times ahead? Will this really make a difference to the family living in poverty, the child whose parents are drug addicts, the teenager with learning difficulties who has been excluded from school, the youngster in local authority care? Will professionals really be willing to cede some of the institutional power that they have built, consolidated and protected over many decades?

Increasingly I am inclined to feel that the answer to these situations will not be found in the restructuring of services – bureaucrats always go for restructuring as their preferred option – or in agonising over what ‘new professionalism’ might look like, or indeed at looking at different types of social capital. We have a society in which the dominant values are individualism, consumerism and materialism: despite all the talk of rebuilding community, for many people a brief moment of celebrity – or celebrity by proxy – means more than stable relationships, local rootedness or ethical principles. All this is summed up chillingly in the later novels of the late, great J. G. Ballard who died in April 2009. I would particularly recommend *Cocaine Nights* (1996) and *Super-Cannes* (2000). These novels, set in the near future, present a world in which shopping malls have become places of worship, in which advertising and television brainwash a population that believes itself to be ‘free’, and in which the human impulse to violence is allowed controlled expression by corporate interests. It is also a world in which all sense of community has disappeared. In *Super Cannes* one of the characters says:

The twentieth century ended with its dreams in ruins. The notion of the community as a voluntary association of enlightened individuals has died for ever. We realize how suffocatingly humane we’ve become, dedicated to moderation and the middle way. The suburbanization of the soul has overrun our planet like the plague. (Ballard, 2000, p.263)

So my conclusion is that we should be rather sceptical of the discourse of collaboration if it is de-contextualised from these wider social, political and economic contexts. We should be sceptical of the motives of some researchers who see it as new territory to colonise. We should be sceptical of professionals who seize it as an opportunity to navel-gaze about their own role and status. We need to focus our attention much more effectively on the supposed beneficiaries of all this collaboration – the poor, the sick, the elderly, the marginalised, the excluded, and the vulnerable. We need to concentrate on doing better at trying to understand their experience, at listening to what they have to say, and, where they are afraid or inarticulate, helping them to find their voice. Building their social capital is much more important than extending ours.

NOTES

¹ BBC Panorama programme in July 2005

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ADDRESSING THE SOCIALLY-CONSTITUTED SELF
THROUGH A COMMON LANGUAGE FOR MENTAL
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

A COGNITIVE-ANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

Current models of professional work in Western cultures for a spectrum of problems ranging from the acute psychiatric to more general problems in living or in growing up are currently informed by very varied or 'competing' paradigms. These range from the biomedical, to the psychological through to the more exclusively socio-economic. However current models are rarely able to offer more than the beginning of an adequate, integrated and synthetic account of the contributions and importance of these factors, in particular of their developmental dimension. Most of the models employed in Western cultures are furthermore inadequately sensitive to the considerable cultural variation world-wide, and indeed within our own broader culture, with regard to the experience of psychosocial distress and disability, the ways in which it is framed and the ways in which help or support may be sought. Some of these problems may be related to and conceptualised in terms of diminution of 'social capital' or to the well-recognised effects of socio-economic inequality. There is increasing evidence from at least some models of psychological development and therapy, and from infant psychology (highlighting our biologically-based capacity for intersubjectivity) that human beings are to a very considerable extent both socially formed and located through a transformative psychological process described by Vygotsky (1978) as 'internalisation'. It is argued here that any coherent and robust model needs to incorporate a semiotically-informed, 'socio-psychodevelopmental' dimension in order adequately to account for individual, and collective, human health and well-being, or, distress and dysfunction. An important corollary of the socio-cultural formation of the 'individual' so conceived is that there can be no such thing as purely individual 'psychopathology' but only ever 'socio-psychopathology' and that therefore 'individual' problems cannot be conceptualised or addressed apart

from a full consideration of the formative and current social context of which they represent a, largely unconscious, dynamic fragment. A lack of adequate models to conceptualise this may render futile attempts to help or heal 'individuals' and may lead to collusion with underlying societal dysfunction. It may also, importantly, lead to disagreement and stress amongst professionals. We have shown (Thompson, Donnison, Warnock-Parkes, Turpin, Turner & Kerr, 2008), in a pilot project offering a basic training to a professionally-mixed community mental health team using the integrative cognitive-analytic therapy (CAT) model, that acquiring a coherent, common language acknowledging and describing such 'socio-psychopathology' and its individual expression (in terms of dysfunctional and damaging internalised 'reciprocal roles') can help to focus more clearly and collectively on the task or, alternatively, enable limit setting, facilitate more meaningful communication, increase team cohesion and morale, and reduce stress and 'burn out'. Finally, it is suggested that an internalised psychosocial entity which we have conceptualised as 'subjective communality' may represent a more important dimension of mental health and well-being than the description of more external characteristics of a society collated under the rubric of 'social capital'. These points are illustrated by a fictionalised clinical case example.

BACKGROUND

Both mental health and social work services, as well as various other non-statutory or voluntary agencies for adults and children are, in all Western societies, under an increasing pressure to address and offer interventions for a range of problems extending from, for example, acute psychiatric disorder to more general long-term problems in living or in growing up. These may be frequently interconnected and mutually enmeshed although they are most commonly addressed from the perspective of very different or 'competing' paradigms. Indeed some work is informed rather more by eclectic and idiosyncratic 'approaches' rather than any clear model of theory and practice. Formal models would range from the more strictly biomedical, to the psychological, through to the more exclusively socio-economic. Although there is good evidence that a range of factors from the biological through to, especially, the socio-cultural are implicated in individual psychological distress and dysfunction (Rutter, 2000; Harris, 2001; Read, Van Os, Morrison & Ross, 2005), most approaches do not adequately integrate these various factors into working and helpful models of theory or practice although they often pay lip service to models such as the 'biopsychosocial' as proposed by Engel (1977). Although representing an important advance, Engel's model has also been subject to serious conceptual criticism due to its inability to integrate the various factors discussed and its inability to act as a useful predictive instrument (see McLaren 1998). We have previously argued (Ryle & Kerr 2002, Kerr & Ryle 2005; Kerr, Dent-Brown & Parry, 2007) that such models fail either to be adequately socio-psychodevelopmental or dialectical and fail, in particular, to take into account the socio-cultural formation (or deformation) and constitution of the self for which there is increasing recognition and understanding (see below).

This failure is typically compounded by a very Western focus on the individual in mental health and social work approaches and a failure, for the most part, to recognise that the psychological 'deformation' or problems in living or in growing up experienced by 'individuals' cannot, in fact, be conceived of apart from their psycho-developmental, socio-cultural formation as well as their current context (Kirmeyer, 1989, 2005; Bhui & Bhugra, 2007). This is not to say that that individuals may not experience and present with often considerable distress and disability and may possess also a sense of unique subjectivity, psychological insight and of agency – although from this perspective much less than we might imagine. Indeed the individuals encountered in mental health and social work practice present with precisely these largely unconscious, internalised social experiences, assumptions and values which may appear, and be, to a large extent 'irrational' and may result in patients or clients appearing to undermine or sabotage efforts to assist them (Leahy, 2001). This may be due to, for example, low self-esteem or the operation of internalised 'self critical' voices. Or they may enact similar e.g. critical or hostile patterns towards others. Unsurprisingly, such presentations are very commonly encountered in areas where post-industrial and urban deprivation has been endemic across generations in whole communities. Importantly, the lack of a thorough-going model of human experience and motivation results in a rock upon which well-meaning public health initiatives may founder – predicated usually as they are on assumption of rational, insightful and sensibly-motivated individuals. These conceptual limitations continue to prevail despite: constructivist or constructionist concepts of the self prevalent within academic sociological discourse (see reviews in Burkitt, 1991; Gergen, 1994, 1998; Parker, 1998; Shotter & Gergen, 1989); the partial acknowledgement of the importance of social factors within more biomedical approaches (for example, Kendell & Zealley, 1993); the focus in some strands of psychoanalytic (Mearns, 1998; Mitchell, 2000) and systemic thinking (Harari & Bloch, 2005) on the internalised relational nature of the psyche; and the clear statement of the social formation of self in models such as group analysis (Brown & Zinkin, 1994; Dalal, 1998; Stacey, 2003) and notably in cognitive-analytic therapy (CAT) (Ryle & Kerr, 2002; Kerr & Ryle, 2005).

Implicit in CAT is what we have described previously (Kerr et al, 2007) as a 'socio-psychodevelopmental' dimension which, it will be argued, has considerable implications for models of human development and well-being and for thinking about attempts to intervene in this area. Unless such a dimension is incorporated into coherent and robust models of (collective) development and well-being, it is argued, there exists not only a massive risk of collusion with dysfunctional and reprehensible social process and pathology, but also of perpetuating a system whereby well-meaning professionals inevitably become demoralised, stressed and 'burnt out' (Kerr et al, 2007). This problem, broadly speaking, is recognised by a range of authors within e.g. the tradition of community psychology (e.g. Hagan & Smail, 1997; Moos, 2008; Orford, 2008) who stress the importance of social context in attempts to intervene therapeutically and note the increasingly recognised failure of the idea of 'therapy as technology' (Orford, 2008) in addressing more chronic and complex problems, or who, from within the critical psychiatry tradition (see Ingleby, 1989; Double, 2002; Summerfield, 2001, 2004;

Thomas & Bracken, 2004) highlight the dangers of inappropriate professionalisation of human distress and suffering, particularly in different cultures. However such authors do not propose thorough-going, alternative models of psychosocial distress and disability nor means of conceptualising and addressing them. The issue of the cultural determination and limitations of our Western models of mental health and well-being is however important, and ultimately unresolvable, especially given increasing understandings of the socio-cultural formation of human beings as a result of our extraordinary developmental capacity for intersubjectivity and for cultural learning (Bruner, 1990, 2005; Rogoff, 2003).

Intersubjectivity refers to the predisposition and capacity most humans have from the earliest moments of life to 'tune into' and share the mental states, emotions and motives of others (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001). Our early development is therefore characterised by a complete immersion in, and formation by, the minds of others and the sociocultural milieu which in turn has shaped them. The importance of this capacity from an evolutionary psychology perspective in contributing to the 'success' of our species as group animals has been stressed by many authors (Donald, 1991; Stevens & Price, 1996). A partial biological basis for this extraordinary capacity (through networks of so called 'mirror neurones') is being gradually clarified (Gallese, Keysers & Rizzolatti, 2004; Rizzolatti & Craighero, 2004). Significantly these networks have been shown to be deficient in severely autistic children who display precisely a difficulty in engaging intersubjectively with the minds and emotions of others. This has led authors such as the cultural psychologist Jerome Bruner to postulate that *Homo sapiens* actually exists effectively as a set of distinct 'sub species' (Bruner, 2005), and similarly to Anthony Ryle (personal communication), the creator of CAT, to note aphoristically that 'human beings are biologically predisposed to be socially formed'. An important consequence of these understandings is that there can be no such entity as a self which is universal throughout all cultures, notwithstanding our considerable evolutionarily-rooted commonalities, but that socio-culturally formed selves represent sets of distinct and largely irrevocably shaped and constituted entities (see parallel discussion in, for example, Schweder & Bourne, 1982; Burman, Gowrisunkur & Sangha, 1998; Bhui & Bhugra, 2007). Importantly too therefore these sets of selves cannot simply be addressed within the conceptual framework of any one model of mental health and well-being such as our current highly individualistic, 'functionalist', but value-laden, Western ones. Nonetheless some models may offer conceptualisations which are more cross-culturally valid than others depending on the extent to which they incorporate understandings of the socio-cultural formation of the self and its collective nature. It should also be noted that many features of urbanised post industrial Western societies, including the breakdown of extended family or communal life, can be argued in themselves to contribute to and represent many of the so called mental health disorders or social problems which our models and activity purport to address and work with (see e.g. Millon, 1993; Fruzzetti, Shenk & Hoffman, 2005; Kerr et al, 2007). Indeed our attempts to intervene may unwittingly perpetuate and exacerbate them through an inappropriate 'functionalistic' focus on the 'individual' as the origin and locus of any such problems to the neglect of deeper underlying social causes. It may also be noted that these emerging understandings of the socio-cultural

formation and relativity of the self have also huge implications for international politics, diplomacy and concepts of human rights which it is well beyond the remit of this chapter to explore.

This conceptualisation of human development and well-being also moves significantly beyond the important, but from a CAT perspective more limited, measures of social structure and function addressed by concepts such as 'social capital'. Although this broad but in many ways imprecise concept, notably as popularised in recent years by Putnam (Putnam, 2000; and see reviews by Halpern, 2005; Arneil, 2006; Field, 2008) has generated important discussion and insights (including specifically noting suggestive if broad correlations between levels of social capital and mental health see e.g. Whitley & Mackenzie, 2005), it has, by definition, focused rather exclusively on 'external' and measurable features of social or community function such as 'civic engagement', membership of organisations, quantities of social contact, or observable behaviours relating to mutual trust or societal norms. Arguably too, many of these features arise consequent to and are dependent on deeper socio-economic structures and processes (see Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009) as well as, dialectically enmeshed psychosocial ones. The concept has also been criticised for tending to neglect the 'dark side' of community or collective social function and well-being for those excluded from a thriving local community (Field, 2008), or for minorities such as ethnic groups or historically-oppressed groups such as women (Arneil, 2006), although these issues are broadly acknowledged by Putnam. Above all, the literature on social capital tends, in a rather uncritically Western manner, to refer to society or community as the sum total of a collection of individuals rather than seeing them as merely 'dynamic fragments' of a bigger whole by which they have been formed and within which the meaning and fulfilment of lives continues to be determined and located. This formation includes the psychological 'internalisation' of social and cultural meanings and values which represent, importantly, a territory implicitly addressed by the activity of mental health and social work professionals. In this regard we would see an internalised 'socio-psychodevelopmental' dimension conceived as 'subjective communality' as, in many ways, much more critical to our individual and collective well-being than measures of social capital as currently understood, notwithstanding an obvious relation between them. Such an internalised 'socio-psychodevelopmental' entity is also clearly related to other important features of our societies such as poverty or unemployment (Bruce, Takeuchi & Leaf, 1991; Weich & Lewis, 1998) or 'relative inequality' as explored by various writers notably Wilkinson and co-workers (Marmot & Wilkinson, 2006; Wilkinson, 2005; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). A further explication of this concept, currently being researched, will be offered below but first a brief overview of the current CAT model of development and psychopathology will be given in order to illuminate subsequent discussion. This will also be illustrated by a brief clinical case summary aiming to illustrate and substantiate some of these theoretical and practical considerations.

CAT

CAT is a still-evolving integrative model of psychological development and therapy, which stresses the social and relational formation of the self and its 'psychopathology'. It was initially formulated by Anthony Ryle over a period of several decades but has been further extended both theoretically and clinically by a range of other workers, notably Mikael Leiman in Finland (see Ryle & Kerr, 2002; Kerr & Ryle, 2005). Although initially representing an attempt to integrate the valid and effective elements of psychoanalytic object relations theory and the then evolving discipline of cognitive therapy (including notably Kelly's personal construct theory), it has been subsequently further transformed by consideration of Vygotsky's activity theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Leiman, 1992, 2004; and see Ryle & Kerr, 2002), and also notions of a dialogical self deriving from Bakhtin (Holquist, 1990; Leiman, 1992, 2004) as well as by important developments in infant psychology (Stern, 2000; Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001; Reddy, 2008). This has included recent findings stressing the actively intersubjective nature (and formation) of developing infants and their predisposition and need for active, playful, collaboration and 'companionship' (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001). These findings have influenced CAT concepts of formation of the (highly social) self and, correspondingly of its 'deformation' or 'psychopathology'. CAT describes early internalised, formative, relational experience in terms of a repertoire of reciprocal roles (RRs), and their associated dialogic voices (Stiles, 1997; Leiman, 2004) and subsequent habitual coping or 'responsive' (Leiman, 2004) behavioural patterns as reciprocal role procedures (RRPs). These are understood to be partly determined by inherited temperamental variation as well as the neurobiological consequences of early (e.g. traumatic) experience. Common RRs range from at best '*properly cared for-properly caring for*', for example, through to at another extreme '*neglected and abused-neglecting and abusing*'.

CAT adopts therefore a fundamentally relational focus and stresses the importance of the transformative and mutative psychological 'internalisation' within a developing 'individual' of surrounding social structures and conditions, and of, semiotically-mediated, interpersonal experience. The outcome of this process is an 'individual' who is socially formed and constituted by developmental interpersonal experience and cultural values and whose very sense of subjective self, relations with others, behaviour and values are socially-determined and relative, and are for the most part unconscious. A very brief quote from the philosopher of the 'dialogic' self Bakhtin (1984, pp.287-288), whose work has been an important recent influence on CAT, may give a flavour of this:

...a person has no internal sovereign territory; s/he is wholly and always on the boundary; looking into her/himself, s/he looks into the eyes of another - or with the eyes of another.

A well known quote from the Russian psychologist Vygotsky may also give a sense of the concept of internalisation, stressing the *interpersonal* origins of *intrapersonal* 'activity' through a mutative and transformative process:

Any function in a child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category and then within the child as an intrapsychological category. This is equally true with regard to voluntary attention, logical memory, the formation of concepts and the development of volition. We may consider this position as a law in the full sense of the word, but it goes without saying that internalisation transforms the process itself and changes its structure and functions. Social relations or relations among people genetically underlie all higher functions and their relationships. (Vygotsky, 1978, p.163)

(See Cox & Lightfoot, 1997, for further discussion and accounts of empirically supported elaborations of this theory). An important corollary of the process of internalisation, understood in this Vygotskian sense is that, as noted above, although it is an individual who experiences and presents with distress and disability, there is in an important sense no such thing as individual 'psychopathology', but only 'socio-psychopathology'. This statement, which will be to most contemporary, post-Cartesian, Western sensibilities probably largely counter-intuitive, will be further elaborated below.

The therapeutic style of CAT is proactive and collaborative, consistent with findings on the nature of normal human growth and development from infant psychology and also consistent with emerging evidence on the features of successful psychotherapies, and indeed of other social interventions which stress an active therapeutic alliance, and are clear and coherent to both professionals and 'patients'. CAT focuses on the internalised social and relational origins of a patient's difficulties and problems (in terms of their repertoire of RRs and RRPs) and offers a means of addressing these both in general but also as they may be enacted within the therapeutic relationship. This work is aided by the use of summary 'reformulation' letters and maps which are conceived of in the language of Vygotsky as 'psychological tools'.

The professional or therapeutic relationship and its setting is, for many patients and social work clients, frequently experienced as perplexing, frustrating and provocative and often leads to coping in habitual ways which may be experienced or construed by professionals as 'difficult' or 'hard to help' (see Kerr, 1999; Leahy, 2001; Ryle & Kerr, 2002; Kerr & Leighton, 2008). Frequently frustrated knee jerk 'reactions' by professionals may all too easily then result in (collusive) rejection and annoyance – thereby often compounding familiar early formative experiences for patients and clients (Kerr et al, 2007) and effectively representing collusion with the patient or client's repertoire of RRs. Therapeutic work in CAT focuses on the collaborative description of the formative, often largely unconscious, reciprocal roles (RRs) and the coping patterns (RRPs – including associated core beliefs, dialogic voices and emotional states) and, importantly, their consequences (usually reinforcing initial formative experiences in 'vicious cycles') and then on attempting to help patients to try things differently in the context of a more benign and facilitating relationship. However the latter, although important, is rarely in itself enough and indeed may constitute colluding with a, for example, 'needy victim-sympathetic carer' RR to the neglect of other more 'difficult' RR

enactments, for example 'abusing' or 'self-sabotaging'. It is important to be aware of all of these in professional work – especially given that such collusion may perpetuate or exacerbate unwittingly the difficulties with which a patient or client may present (see also case discussion).

Implicit also in these reformulations, in addition to their powerfully acknowledging a personal narrative, is a depiction of a particular socio-cultural formative and current context which is usually beyond the remit or power of, for example, mental health professionals to address or modify. Nonetheless such cultural micro-mapping may be important in acknowledging and noting the impact of such influences and how they may impact on attempts to offer therapy or social assistance. In this respect this process has obvious parallels and overlaps with the 'social power mapping' described by Hagan and Smail (1997). Arguably the CAT approach offers a clearer and more effective means of conceptualising and dealing with the risk of collusion either directly with a patient or with a professional care group by means of techniques such as contextual ('systemic') reformulation or mapping (see *Figure 1* below, and Kerr, 1999; Ryle & Kerr, 2002). Indeed an increasing use of CAT, and a move away from standard individual therapy or case work, is to inform systemic consultancy work whether clinical or organisational. We have argued that such mapping is in fact always applicable, even if not very obviously, with every 'individual' treated or cared by our services.

A further implication of the model and of these understandings is that ultimately therapy or social assistance may only, or best, be achieved by engaging the ownership, support and participation of a 'broader community' at large – as opposed to professionalising it inappropriately as has tended to occur within e.g. the IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies¹) initiative in England and comparable initiatives in Scotland² and elsewhere – notwithstanding that specialist understandings and expertise may be required to underpin or support mental health and well-being initiatives overall. Such approaches are historically partly embodied in the therapeutic community tradition (see Kennard, 1999) although arguably this has lacked a coherent theoretical basis beyond embodying (important) ideals such as 'democratisation', 'communalism', 'reality confrontation' and so forth (see Kerr, 2000). But to move towards this a major paradigm shift is required which our services and our society as a whole will need to address, implement and evaluate. At the least in routine day to day work a coherent model of the socially constituted self can enable better communication and lessen professional stress. We have previously described a largely successful pilot project which offered an intensive skills level training in CAT to a mixed professional group in an attempt to achieve this (Thompson et al, 2008). An example of this approach to thinking about treatment is given below in the case where contextual and social factors, both formative and current, are also highlighted along with the challenges implicit to our ways of working. It will also highlight the need for coherent culturally-sensitive, and robust models of human development, mental health and well-being.

A SOCIO-PSYCHODEVELOPMENTAL DIMENSION AND INTERNALISED 'SUBJECTIVE COMMUNALITY'

From the foregoing CAT-informed considerations the view is taken here that a fundamentally important aspect of what 'individuals' in our culture and society present with, and what we as professionals address, is the (mutative) internalisation of formative socio-cultural experience and values. This includes broader social conditions and norms which may also include e.g. religious affiliations or cultural values. In particular, an important dimension of the psychosocial internalised world of patients and clients is that representing what we (Kerr, Ryle, Abernathy – work in progress) have called 'subjective communalities'. This is conceived as representing *the formative internalisation of a sense of collective identity, meaning and purpose, a sense of mutual support and trust and sense of acknowledgement and appreciation of personal experience and narrative*. Initial clinical impressions suggest that this represents an important dimension of mental health and well-being and appears to correlate with conventional measures of mental health problems. Furthermore it undoubtedly limits and determines the long-term outcome of any intervention whether primarily of a psychological, pharmacological or social nature. This contextual limitation is in fact well recognised broadly in terms of outcome and recovery from and also aetiology of, for example, post traumatic disorders (Summerfield, 2001, 2004) or even psychotic disorders (Warner, 1994; Read et al, 2005;). We argue that this construct represents a more meaningful, immediately proximate and important dimension for our work which more genuinely represents the internalisation of the quality of social and community life than that offered by the notion of social capital. This by comparison represents, we argue, more of an epiphenomenon - although there are obvious commonalities and overlaps with some features of 'subjective communalities' e.g. levels of mutual trust. Implicit in this construct too however is a paradigmatic challenge to conventional Western notions by suggesting that the individual constitutes a dynamic fragment of a social whole both in formation and context and cannot be considered apart from this. It also challenges the demonstrably illusory but deeply ingrained Western (particularly North American) belief that meaning and fulfilment in life can somehow be achieved on a purely individual basis (Ryle & Kerr, 2002). A similar argument has been propounded by authors such as James (2007, 2008) although arguably he does so from a more individualistic perspective and does not move to consider the further implications of a socially-constituted self. This shift represents conceptually a reversion in many ways to more generally accepted but unconscious understandings of our social psychology from earlier (collective) ways of life in our evolutionary history. This understanding frequently represents in our experience (Kerr & Ryle, 2005) a major stumbling block at an experiential level for both trainees in this model of psychotherapy but also more generally for professional colleagues of various backgrounds - not to mention the general public.

FICTIONALISED CASE SHOWING EXTENDED CAT BASED 'CONTEXTUAL'
REFORMULATION

Jim – 'not up to it'

Jim was a young man in his early twenties who had been referred for assessment and possible treatment to a therapeutic community by a despairing probation service following his release from prison where he had been serving a sentence for a serious assault. Whilst in prison he had been diagnosed with a probable mixed antisocial and borderline type personality disorder and had seen a psychologist for a course of cognitive behavioural therapy, but he had dropped out of this saying it just wasn't relevant. However it was felt that there were significant psychological 'issues' underlying his difficulties and he was willing to be referred.

His background included an upbringing in a deprived inner city area in a highly dysfunctional family (for implications of this see Millon 1993; Fruzzetti et al, 2005) where both parents drank heavily and argued constantly and his father in particular teased, taunted and beat him frequently saying he was worthless and useless. He had learned early on to keep things to himself and to try to cope alone. He had done poorly at school where he had overall felt ignored and rejected by staff although he been a talented sportsman and had a trial for a well known local football club. However he had been dropped by them due to his increasing alcohol and drug misuse. He had several brief relationships all characterised ultimately by arguments and fights. He had, however, a son by one of these girlfriends with whom he had little contact at that time. He was currently living back home with his by now elderly mother.

At assessment he came over as 'touchy', 'wary' and rather 'paranoid' although he also presented with obvious distress and unhappiness about his situation and stated that he really wanted to 'give it a go' partly for his son for whom he 'wanted to do better'. Despite considerable misgivings about his motivation and capacity to engage he was offered a place which he took up. However his progress in settling in was slow and characterised by continued wariness and a pattern of withdrawing from groups and activities when questioned or challenged or of getting into arguments. The community found him hard to support. However he continued to express a determination to 'stick' with it although it became clear that he struggled with the idea that treatment was not a passive process but something which he would need to actively engage in. His presentation elicited different reactions from the community with some (mostly female) members often being sympathetic and concerned for him whilst some others were resentful or actually afraid. Finally however, he became involved in a heated argument in a group session during which he stood up and threatened another (male) group member although he was dissuaded from acting. He then threw a chair across the room and stormed off and left the building. The community heard some time later that he had been arrested following a further fight in a pub and was back in prison. Reactions to these events were varied and included the views that 'he hadn't been really motivated', 'was taking the piss', 'was dangerous', he was 'psychologically badly damaged', was 'projecting his anger onto the community', was 'doing his best', 'needed anger management' and overall that he was 'not up to it'. Some months later a letter

arrived from Jim in prison saying that he had been thinking about his experiences and that he felt he had gained something from his brief time in the community and that he had some better idea of what 'pushed his buttons and why' and that maybe at some time in the future he would like to give it another go.

CAT Map: 'Jim' - key formative Reciprocal Roles (RR)

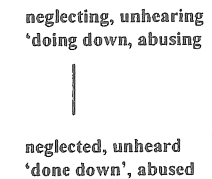


Figure 1a. Diagram showing formative (compound) reciprocal roles for Jim

CAT Map: 'Jim' – key RRs and coping enactments – 'reciprocal role procedures'

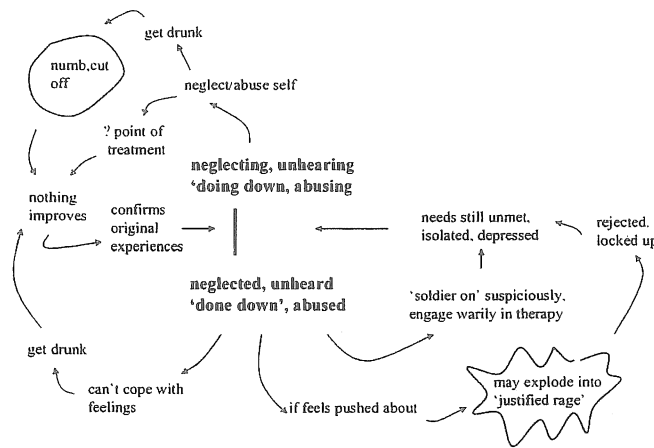


Figure 1b. Diagram showing key reciprocal roles and reciprocal role procedures with their consequences for Jim.

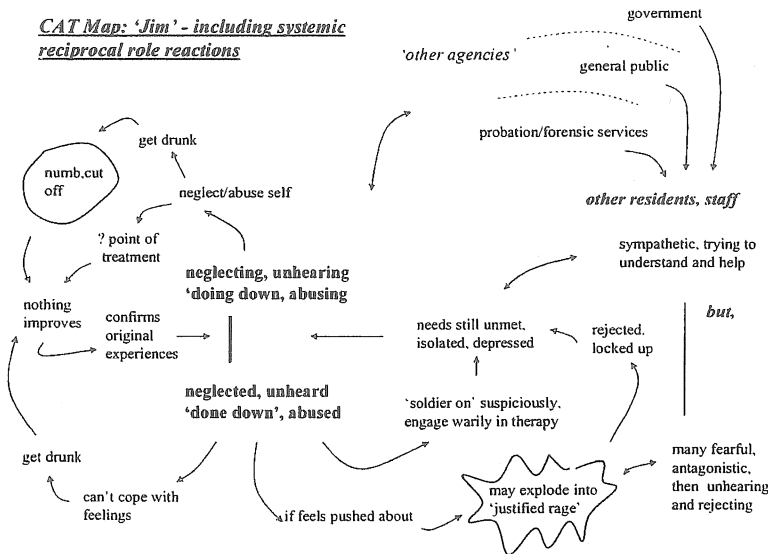


Figure 1c. Diagram of extended 'contextual' reformulating showing reactions (reciprocal role enactments) of the treating team and further systemic and social pressures around them all.

Overall, Jim's story illustrates a sadly not uncommon experience in contemporary Western society (and also in others) where adverse early interpersonal experience as well as its social context and cultural values are internalised in an individual in a profoundly damaging way leading to a trajectory of ever worsening and self-perpetuating difficulties for which, all too often, an individual is 'blamed'. These for Jim culminated in an unhelpful but inevitable detention within the prison system and the diagnosis of a formal mental disorder. Both of these occurrences can be seen to represent also the workings of a dysfunctional social system. Tragically his very difficulties led to misunderstandings and rejection at school, by the prison and probation service and then later by a therapeutic community. None of their approaches were adequate to engage and help such an individual although some members of these institutions obviously felt concern and also impotence in the face of these, ultimately, systemic difficulties. Incidentally and importantly, Jim's sense of internalised 'subjective communality' as outlined on the diagram would clearly have been very low. This diagram also illustrated how, critically, when he felt humiliated he could explode with 'justified' rage – a very common and well-documented dynamic in violent acts (especially male) in those who finish up in prison. Critically, services lacked a clear and robust model with which to describe these experiences and their consequences. The series of diagrams in Figure 1 represents an attempt to outline and describe from a CAT perspective in a non-judgemental fashion these experiences and their consequences and also systemic pressures and reactions. On this basis, at some point in Jim's story this perspective might arguably have improved understandings and enabled more effective action to be taken in a more 'joined up' way by the various professionals and others involved. On a more positive note, Jim had clearly managed to retain some sense of hope and concern for others (notably his son) which might possibly enable him at some point to again seek appropriate help and get off the pathway on which he has found himself, although the statistics for such outcomes for those who find themselves in his position are not currently encouraging. Finally, rather than whether Jim was 'up to it', the question might better be posed whether our collective understandings and systems are therefore 'up to it'.

CONCLUSIONS

The 'caring professions', including mental health and social work both in general and also for young people, face major and increasing challenges and pressures to address an apparently inexorably rising tide of problems which may ultimately be largely attributable to societal dysfunction (Wilkinson 2005; Wilkinson & Pickett 2009; Kerr et al, 2007; James, 2007, 2008). This is undoubtedly due in part to an increasing acceptance and destigmatisation of mental health and social problems. However, the location of these problems 'in' the individual and their 'functionalistic' attribution can be argued to represent, rather paradoxically, a version of Marcuse's (1964) notion of 'repressive desublimation' in that this

acceptance and focus can be seen to distract from the need to address the 'bigger picture' and ultimate (socio-psychodevelopmental) causes of these problems, as argued above. Whatever their status, such problems have contributed to a demand for services and solutions from the general public as well as politicians and agencies such as the judicial system. But the challenge of addressing these is compounded by the absence of coherent and integrated models with which to understand and address them. Instead, there exists a range of models with different viewpoints on the nature of such problems and of their solutions. Above all, there exists a very Western pressure and tendency to conceive of mental health and social problems as being somehow a 'functional' technical problem located within or around the individual. This applies whether they are conceived of in terms of abnormal genetics or biochemistry, psychological structures or social circumstances. All of these points are illustrated to some extent by the previous case discussion.

Although the understandings and literature generated in the social capital tradition have contributed stimulating insights and discussion on this topic, nonetheless these remain essentially focused on more external features of society and as such represent epiphenomena related to deeper underlying determinative structures - including socio-cultural factors. Any adequate model must ultimately bridge disciplines as e.g. suggested by Wilson (1998) in advocating his notion of 'consilience' (i.e. the interlocking of causal explanations across different intellectual disciplines). Such models must also offer a coherent integrative and synthetic account of the various factors, which contribute to the formation of deformation of the individual and offer predictively suggestions for practical action. Authors such as James (2007, 2008) and Wilkinson (2005, 2009) indeed attempt to do so from a very complementary perspective to that offered here. However we (Kerr et al, 2007) have also suggested that, given emerging understandings regarding the radically social formation of the self through mechanisms such as inter-subjectivity, it is also evident that in fact there is no such thing as individual psychopathology but only ever 'socio-psychopathology'.

This assertion contains a clear acknowledgement that for the most part the major determinants of our individual and collective mental health and well-being are socio-cultural and socio-economic and incorporate both the consequences of aspects of our collective life such as poverty or especially inequality (Bruce et al, 1991; Weich & Lewis, 1998; Wilkinson, 2005, Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009) but also culturally relative and variable values and norms. Collectively these cannot be ultimately incorporated into one standard universal model of mental health and well-being despite implicit Western aspirations to do so. It is suggested that, although such (culturally relative) integrative models are far from complete or fully worked out, we can begin to suggest what their components might look like - notwithstanding that we still do not have for example means of assessing fully of the genetic background of an individual, or a fully meaningful account of their upbringing and early inter-personal experience or of a current life situation as experienced by an individual - never mind their developmental and dialectical interactions (see also discussion by e.g. Rutter, 2000; Harris, 2001; Bolton & Hill, 2003). Such models, even in their early formulations, should however and can (Thompson et al, 2008) be taught routinely we argue, ideally during pre-

registration training, to a whole range of professionals ranging from the psychiatric and nursing through to social work and other statutory services such as the judicial system or in schools. Such initial models need urgently to be translated into the public domain and democratised in order that these emerging fundamental understandings of the constituents of our (collective) health and well-being can be addressed and acted upon along with more accepted common understandings in public health of issues such as sanitation, hygiene or diet,

In particular such a model of mental health and well-being represents a major challenge to currently, highly individualised, approaches to and assumptions about this territory as well as about meaning and fulfilment in life in general. Many of the interventions which will be required to improve mental health and well-being overall in our societies will need to occur at a broader socioeconomic level.

Finally, it is suggested that an entity here conceptualised as 'subjective communality', representing an internalised psychosocial dimension within patients and clients in our public services, may prove to be much more important than the external functional features of a society addressed by the notion of social capital. This conceptualisation also complements emerging understandings that mental health and well-being cannot be an individual 'achievement' but is rather rooted and located in our collective life. It is consistent also with the assertion that, ultimately, active participation by the public at large will in the end be critically important in owning, acknowledging and addressing (collective) mental health and well-being. Above all there is a continuing need for cross-disciplinary bridging and model building without which we will continue to operate in professional 'bunkers' - in effect ignoring what each other is doing, undermining our effectiveness and frequently colluding with ultimate underlying sociopathogenic causes.

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NOTES

¹ <http://www.iapt.nhs.uk/>,

² <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/mentalhealth/>

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PERSPECTIVES ON 'BECOMING' AND 'BEING' A HEADTEACHER

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INTRODUCTION

This paper draws on research undertaken in Scotland as part of an International Study of Principal Preparation (ISPP) involving researchers from Western Australia, Canada, East Africa, England, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, East Africa, Turkey and the United States. The study is designed to address the question, 'How useful are preparation programs to novice headteachers?'. Our starting point was a shared belief that headteacher preparation is a crucial aspect of school development and progression, and that programmes of preparation should have positive outcomes for those who participate in them. Four assumptions guide the ISPP:

- good leadership and management can be taught and nurtured;
- the primary purpose of headship is to facilitate effective teaching and learning;
- headteachers' learning needs vary as they progress through their careers;
- cross-cultural perspectives can inform theory and practice.

The overall research objectives for the study are to examine how programme graduates handle the experience of becoming a head and to consider the relationship between learning outcomes and programme graduates' leadership and management practice as headteachers. In Scotland, as in many other western countries, a considerable amount of resource is involved in designing, developing and delivering a preparation programme, the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH), and so it is important to investigate the extent to which engagement with the programme helps shape the professional lives of programme graduates who become headteachers. Although there may be a degree of ambivalence about the immediate practical value of the SQH among heads and deputies who have not

engaged with the programme and a wide perception (again among those who have not participated in the programme) that the programme is too 'academic' (MacBeath, Gronn, Opfer, Lowden, Forde, Cowie & O'Brien, in press), no attempt has been made to link the capacities developed in the SQH and the deployment of these capacities in the practice of participants following appointment. Studies of this kind are important because the extent to which preparation relates to what is expected of headteachers and how they behave once they take up post is critical (Walker & Qiam, 2006).

Starting in 2006, researchers in the ISPP began to track the experience of first-year heads in a range of contexts. This paper is based on work in Scotland focused on the experience of a small group of primary school headteachers in the first, second and third year of their appointment (Cowie & Crawford, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2009b).

BACKGROUND

The backdrop to headteacher preparation is the unrelenting pressure on heads to improve schooling. Anxieties regarding school underperformance in a competitive global economic environment have intensified the work of headteachers (Grace, 1995) and brought political pressure to raise educational standards. The increased demands and complexity of headship over the past two decades are recognised widely. Several studies across the globe point to how headteachers have had to come to terms with heightened expectations, performance management and increasing public accountabilities (MacBeath et al., in press; Galton & MacBeath, 2007; MacBeath, 2006; Gronn, 2003; Mulford, 2003), a process Gronn (2003, p.147) calls 'greedy work'. These expectations, demands and pressures have changed the nature of headship and given rise to a set of working conditions that many appear to find unattractive and the education system in Scotland, in common with systems elsewhere (Gronn, 2003; Howson, 2005), is finding it difficult to recruit headteachers (MacBeath et al., in press).

Another contextual consideration is the linkage of the *leadership* of the headteacher with *improvement* in much of the research literature (Fullan, 1992a, b; Hargreaves, 1994; Sammons, Hillman & Mortimore, 1995; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; MacBeath & Mortimore, 2001; Leithwood & Rhiel, 2003). Although the influence is relatively small, indirect and not fully understood, according to Leithwood and Rhiel (2003) the leadership provided by the head has measurable effects on student learning, behind only the effects of the quality of the curriculum and teaching.

Two imperatives overlap when considering headteacher preparation. One relates to the needs of the system to consider succession planning and to ensure the quality and development of schools. The other relates to the needs of individuals. From a systems perspective, there is a supply problem with large numbers of vacancies anticipated over the next few years (MacBeath et al., in press). From the perspective of individuals, it is important that people are encouraged to want to do the job and that opportunities are provided to allow teachers to develop confidence in their leadership and management capabilities and to acquire appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. Both imperatives challenge the principle that

people and how they are treated are two of the least significant factors for consideration in schools (Whitaker, 1997, p.144), and this is perhaps why the design and delivery of preparation programmes for aspirant headteachers has become a global enterprise (Huber, 2004).

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT PREPARING HEADTEACHERS?

There may be consensus that the role of the headteacher matters and that preparation is important, but there are considerable disagreements, often philosophical and political, about what kinds of heads are needed, what skills and attributes are needed and how heads should be trained. There may also be concerns about the quality and relevance of preparation programmes. In the United States, for example, a study claimed to have found many flaws in the programmes provided by 25 of 28 university base programmes describing as 'little more than a grab-bag of survey courses' (Levine, 2005, p. 28). Although the Levine report relied on outdated data and contained several methodological shortcomings (Young, Crow, Orr & Ogawa, 2005), its central finding that many programmes lacked focus and coherence and bore little relation to the realities of managing and leading schools could not be ignored.

Despite its shortcomings, the Levine report challenged everyone involved in headteacher preparation to question the presumption that pre-appointment preparation does any good. While it seems reasonable to assume that programmes of preparation will equip participants with attributes required to enable them to deal productively with the challenges they face on appointment, we cannot be certain that they do. Evaluation of headteacher preparation however is problematic and the problems involved should not be underestimated, particularly if preparation is considered in terms of its effects on systemic change and school improvement. It is not a straightforward matter to find robust evaluation techniques 'sensitive to the many nuances of behaviour within development processes and capable of measuring intangible outcomes' (Tyson & Ward, 2004, p. 206).

Clearly one single evaluation approach will not get to grips with the complexities involved. It is important therefore to evaluate programmes at different levels. Kirkpatrick (1994) suggests that development programmes should be evaluated in terms of participant perceptions, learning, performance and ultimate impact. Leithwood and Levin (2004) present a helpful framework that outlines the relationship between programmes, leadership practice and student outcomes in six stages ranging through preparation experiences, participant satisfaction, changes in participants' knowledge, skills and dispositions and changes in practices in schools to changes in classroom conditions and improved student outcomes.

Too often, it is only the first two stages that are evaluated. The SQH programme, for example, stood up well to intensive scrutiny in a national evaluation (Menter, Holligan & Mthenjwa, V. with Hair, 2003) but this evaluation explored the view of recent successful programme graduates and participant satisfaction studies which cannot give us a strong understanding of either the utility or the influence of preparation programmes. With this in mind, the study reported in this paper explored the perceptions of novice heads regarding the utility of their

preparation experience. Although we cannot look at ultimate impact, the perceptions of new heads enabled us to comment on how participation in the SQH programme influences initial performance.

The preparation context

The politically driven 'competence movement' that emerged in teacher education in the 1990s, is mirrored in headteacher development in Scotland through a national Standard for Headship (SfH) (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2005). The introduction of a standard for new heads had a massive influence on preparation for the headship with the alignment of a professional award, the Scottish Qualification for Headship, with the academic award of a postgraduate diploma. The SQH is therefore a benchmark qualification that is underpinned by the SfH. Programme delivery includes online learning, supported self-study and face-to-face events, but the programme is predominantly workplace based with candidates being required to manage and lead whole-school projects and provide portfolios of evidence containing a claim for competence against the Standard supported by a reflective commentary. The SQH takes just over two years to complete. Regional consortia, partnerships of local authorities and universities, are licensed to deliver the programme by the General Teaching Council for Scotland following an intensive accreditation process during which partnership arrangements and the programme specification, design and structure are scrutinised in detail.

Attainment of the Standard for Headship became mandatory for new headteachers in August 2005. Until 2008 the only means of determining whether an individual attained the SfH was by gaining the SQH. Making attainment mandatory presented the then Scottish Executive (the government in Scotland) with a problem since the number completing the programme, particularly from the primary sector, is not large enough to fill the number of posts likely to become vacant over the next decade. In the short term therefore, local authorities may consider that a person has attained the Standard based on his/her experience to date.

However, an alternative route towards attaining the Standard has been introduced because, it has been argued, the SQH programme does not meet the needs of all potential applicants (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2006). The intention is that local authorities accept more responsibility for supporting individual participants through increased mentoring and coaching supported by trained and experienced headteachers, with candidates presenting portfolios of evidence to the General Teaching Council Scotland to support a claim for competence against the Standard.

The universities have no part to play in the alternative route, which raises questions to do with how standards are derived, who is involved in this process (and who is not) and how the process of attaining the Standard is controlled. Standards may define what is expected of headteachers, but what these questions suggest is that the social and political reality of headteacher preparation has multiple layers, is open to differing interpretations, and is dependent on many factors.

THE RESEARCH DESIGN: THREE INTERCONNECTED STUDIES

Looking at headteachers new in post is a developing research area (Crow, 2007) but research in this field suggests that the needs of new heads change remarkably quickly in the early years of headship (Day, 2003; Holligan, Menter, Hutchings & Walker, 2006) and that new heads themselves also change considerably over a short period of time (Weindling, 1999). Because the research literature suggests that socialisation is a staged process (Aardts, Jansen, & van der Velde, 2001; Earley & Weindling, 2004), we were also interested in the socialisation processes involved. Earley and Weindling (2004) describe a two-phase process of socialisation for new heads. The first phase involves professional socialisation and takes place before appointment through programmes of preparation, first-hand experience derived from current and previous posts and through processes such as observation and modelling. The second phase, organisational socialisation, occurs after appointment and it is during this period that personal and professional values, abilities and interpersonal skills seem to be critically important. A three-phase research design was therefore employed in our research. This involved an initial round of interviews after graduates from the programme had been in post for a year (Cowie & Crawford, 2009a). Following the first round of interviews, the five heads completed monthly logs over a six month period (Cowie & Crawford, 2008). The third phase consisted of a second round of interviews almost two years later (Cowie & Crawford, 2009b). Taken together, the three studies explore the reality of the lives of new heads as reported through interview and reflective logs and consider the extent to which the SQH helped prepare them for the experience of headship.

Phase 1

The first interviews were undertaken with a narrative approach in mind. Narrative analysis seemed particularly important because of its focus on the relational, on the individual, the interplay between the individual and the social and the 'reality producing' nature of the interview (Roberts, 2002, p. 15). We wanted to know who our new headteachers were, why they wanted to become headteachers, how they became headteachers, what drives them and how they dealt with their new duties and responsibilities. The idea of storied lives draws on recent developments in social psychology, which suggest that self-narrative is an important part of identity formation, and one's sense of self. Headteachers make their own sense of their past, their training and their present by updating their narratives to produce 'coherent narratives of self' (Kearney, 2003, p.55). Because it stresses the 'lived experience' of individuals, the importance of multiple perspectives, the existence of context-bound, constructed social realities, and the impact of the researcher on the research process (Muller, 1999, p. 223) the narrative approach seemed well suited to an investigation into the early years of headship.

The experiences related by the headteachers were subjected to the 'most explicitly reflexive stage of the analysis process' (Elliot, 2005, p. 158), where the

reader reads the text in a sense, for her/himself, and so we inserted our own selves along with our own background, history and experiences into our analysis of the headteachers' experiences.

The first phase outlined the story of five teachers becoming headteachers, examined their reflections, and began to make connections between their experiences. From the narratives it became clear that participation in a formal preparation programme is not the beginning of the story. Without exception, the new heads talked about having been 'talent spotted' and encouraged to accept responsibilities outside the classroom. These development opportunities broadened their outlook and helped develop confidence and self-belief. Secondment, promotion to senior teacher or being asked to take on a temporary acting promoted role was significant for all of the heads, revealing a need to believe that they could become a head before embarking on the SQH, and suggesting that the observation by Day, Stobart, Sammons, Kington & Gu (2006) that self-belief influences personal efficacy in teaching, is also true of wanting to move on to headship.

Stronach, Corbin, McNamara, Stark and Warne (2002) discuss the construction of professional identities and how professional knowledge is constructed in the working through of tensions at different levels of experience, an effect which is reflected in the narratives discussed in phase 1. When asked to talk about aspects of the programme that they found helpful, the new heads could not be pinned down to specifics. Although there was some mention of particular content areas, there was more talk about principles, reflecting on purposes, values and learning needs and about overall approaches to management, integrating theory and practice, developing skills, abilities and confidence. The overall influence appeared not to be related to specific areas of content but to situated and social processes that helped the then aspiring heads to construct their identities as headteachers. Identity formation and learning are closely related in that learning 'implies becoming a different person (which) involves the construction of identity' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 53) and takes place where the social environment and the individual learner intersect. Participation in the SQH appeared to legitimise their role and establish their right to practise leadership and management (Reeves & Forde, 2004).

The narratives also suggested that the supportive groups established during the preparation programmes were significant. Working with each other within the preparation programmes also helped develop their professional identities. Through collaborative activity and networking with colleagues, a sense of trust developed, allowing the new heads to share and learn with and from each other. In the absence of support from their local authorities, these networks continued beyond the term of the preparation programme and developed into something approaching small communities of practice in which there is 'a set of common approaches and shared standards that create a basis for action, communication, problem solving, performance, and accountability' (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p. 38). For some, these enduring networks provided a conduit through which new learning was developed and knowledge was shared. This reciprocity and the value given to this by the new headteachers can also be seen as part of the broader discussion into social capital (Halpern, 2005), which has been significant in discussions about such networks (Baron, Field, & Schuller, 2000), although not without its own critics.

There is also a sense in the phase 1 narratives in which the new heads' identities as headteachers, which were developing at different levels of experience before and during the preparation programme, were affirmed through gaining the qualification, 'providing a means of entry into a particular social status' (Reeves & Forde, 2004, p. 9). Following Bourdieu (1991), it can be argued that the Standard for Headship constitutes 'symbolic capital' (representational/reputational capital) and that attainment of the Standard added to the new headteachers' qualifications (and skills) or 'human capital' based on the 'social capital' acquired through gaining new knowledge and educational credentials and the social networks of relationships with shared norms and trust (Putnam, 1995) which developed during the SQH experience.

Again following Bourdieu, what seems clear is that the appropriation and use of a social language pertaining to the programme was significant as a medium of power. Reeves and Forde (2004) argue that the power and language of the SQH is particularly influential because it reflects and endorses the privileged managerial discourse of the Scottish Executive (now the Scottish Government). In looking at the social processes involved in work-based learning in the context of the SQH, Reeves, Turner, Morris and Forde (2003) talk about the authority of the language of the SQH and the power of the Standard and how this appeared to be important for SQH participants in re-configuring their professional identity. In our study, the programme and its related reading also appeared to initiate the new heads into new forms of language and new understandings and helped to validate their new professional identities. Our analysis suggested that the ability to converse within this new discourse developed participants' confidence and belief that they could engage with the demands of the job.

Our overall conclusion was that the new heads were able to assume new identities with relatively high levels of confidence in relation to key aspects of their role, without the 'shock of the new' experienced by new heads in previous studies in Scotland (Draper & McMichael, 1998, 2000) and the decline in confidence levels reported by Earley, Evans, Collarbone, Gold and Halpin (2002), and that this process of identity configuration was reinforced and confirmed through experience in post as the associated concepts were put into practice.

The complexity of contemporary society, however, means that the content of socialisation must involve an orientation and openness to 'change in the priorities of the principal's tasks, and change in what constitutes an effective organization' (Crow, 2006, p. 319) as well as change in personal identity. Completion of a year or so in post is only the beginning of a much longer socialisation process. Although participation in the SQH helped the novice heads to configure their professional identities and to equip them with the attitudes, skills and behaviour necessary to 'hit the ground running' on appointment, each school has its own accepted norms and values. Not only is there pressure to operate in term of prevailing orthodoxies as reflected in the 'dialect of managerialism' (Reeves et al. 2003), there is also pressure to adapt to the norms of the culture of the new school. However, socialisation processes involve interaction with others and in beginning headship newcomers do more than passively slide into an existing context (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). New heads bring with them their own set of

values, beliefs and role expectations, although the reality of being a head and developing a new identity may put these to the test (Daresh & Male, 2000).

Phase 2

The second phase explored how the new heads handled the 'bumpy ride of reality' (Draper & McMichael, 1998, p. 199) in more detail and reported on outcomes from the log analysis and themes reflected in the headteachers' comments. The heads were asked to summarise their professional activities each month over a six month period, note the meetings and events they participated in or attended, and to highlight any concerns and successes experienced. They were also invited to identify and describe a significant incident, issue or theme from each month's work and respond to the following questions:

- Who was involved?
- What happened or seems to be happening?
- What was/is your role?
- What decisions did you make? Why? What was the outcome? Was it successful?
- Was there some part of what you did that you would do differently next time? Which part? Why?
- How might you have been prepared to tackle it?
- Was any of your preparation programme useful? If so, how and in what way?

The headteachers were also invited to add other comments which they considered appropriate.

What we found was that although the workload demands were almost overwhelming and the emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) told at times, the heads seemed to cope comfortably with competing and multi faceted demands. The logs show that much time was taken up with a variety of meetings, in and out of school, mirroring findings reported by Hobson, Brown, Ashby, Keys, Sharp and Benefield (2002) that much of each day is taken up with a variety of relatively minor but nevertheless important and sometimes quite complex tasks and activities. These demands are challenging because they are relentless and compete for the head's attention, confirming the significance of well developed interpersonal skills in headship and the need for headteachers to be able to prioritise and manage time effectively (Holligan et al., 2006), but we found no evidence of significant adjustment difficulties. In contrast to the findings of Earley and Evans (2004) that new heads did not feel prepared for headship despite the development of preparation programmes, the heads were enthusiastic and seemed able to deal confidently with multiple demands. We were able to exemplify this in relation to significant issues or incidents that they responded to in the six month period.

The incidents or issues reported in the reflective logs were not dissimilar to the problems of early headship in the literature review by Hobson et al. (2002) or identified by Holligan et al. (2006). Hobson et al. found that relatively new heads felt professionally isolated and had problems dealing with several aspects of their newly acquired responsibilities and Holligan et al. found that novice heads

expressed low levels of confidence. The logs in this study also reflect some of the uncertainty that may be characteristic of early headship (Day, 2003), but they also suggest that incidents were regarded as challenges and learning opportunities and that they were handled appropriately and with a degree of confidence.

The logs reveal busy schedules, but it would be misleading to characterise the experience of the new heads only in terms of having to deal with a series of big and small problems requiring immediate solutions. The entries reflect the demanding nature of headship, leaving limited space in which to develop educational improvement strategies. But the logs also show that the heads were careful to keep the longer term strategic perspective in mind when dealing with incidents or issues. For example, entries show them encouraging participation and working to build staff and pupil confidence and capability. The findings in phases 1 and 2 do not suggest that the heads were wholly preoccupied by everyday tasks in the initiation phase, but the central tasks of the head involve educational leadership (Cheung & Walker, 2006) and securing staff commitment to improving the quality of learning and teaching (Sackney & Walker, 2006), and in phases 1 and 2 the novice heads had not begun to focus on educational improvement strategies.

Phase 3

In the third phase, we continued to focus on how the now 'not so new' heads understood their situation. A second round of interviews in their third (and in one case fourth) year in post afforded the heads an opportunity to reflect upon their experience to date. As in the earlier phases, however, the perspectives gained are the headteachers' representations of their experiences, which we, as researchers, recontextualised and interpreted in the light of our own backgrounds and experiences (Josselson, 1995). Our account therefore only reflects a partial truth because the findings are a 'representation of a representation' (Krauss, 2005, p. 3) and our analysis constitutes our interpretation of this representation through the filter of our experience. Nevertheless, 'it is through this process of re-working identity that the individual attains and maintains an individual authentic voice' (Kearney, 2003, p.134), and the headteachers' authentic voices clearly emerged.

The focus in phase 3 was on how the new heads had developed and enacted their understanding of leadership. We wanted to know about their sources of satisfaction (and dissatisfaction), about the extent to which their approaches and priorities had changed, about changes they had introduced and about challenges and tensions encountered. We also explored how they now viewed the job, how they described their leadership styles, the support available to them and how they envisioned their schools' futures.

All were still enjoying the job – most of the time. Satisfaction was gained from making a demonstrable difference, being able to influence lives beyond the scope of the classroom and building effective relationships with parents and the wider community. What was noticeable was that into the second year they began to lead as well as manage. Without exception the heads referred to initiating 'second order' change (Cuban, 1998) aimed at raising improvement capability in the second year, as well as other significant changes that were beginning to produce successful outcomes, and they were proud of what had been achieved so far.

Change included the development of active approaches to learning; ways to increase parental involvement; and the introduction of a more rigorous approach to school self evaluation. Collaborative working and engaging staff was seen as an important part of enhancing the school's improvement capability.

Although all of the above were a source of personal and professional satisfaction, their knowledge, understanding, personal qualities and interpersonal skills were tested and challenged in different ways. Change often meant movement away from the approach of the previous head. The heads had strategies to deal with any passive resistance, which they compared to the experience of a new teacher being tested by pupils.

The most significant challenge was to develop improvement capability and maintain a strategic focus in the face of pressures from workload and staff, but this strategic aspect was evident – in marked contrast to the first round of interviews. Despite the insistent demands on them, the new heads found time to think strategically and talked about empowering staff and encouraging them to be more confident about accepting responsibility. Determination to retain a strategic focus while managing the multiple and competing demands made on them contributed to the complexity of the job, but although some reported that they had found the demands of the job greater now that the 'honeymoon period' was over, their confidence had increased and they were able to deal with some issues more quickly because they had become routinised. Without prompting, 'the not so new' heads talked about and illustrated how the SQH experience had helped develop their knowledge, understanding and interpersonal skills, and provided insight into the complexities of headship in ways that had allowed them to be proactive at a relatively early stage of headship.

The trusting relational networks that had provided support during their engagement with the SQH were still maintained through email and telephone contact and occasional meetings, but the dialogic interactions that had allowed them to share experiences and perspectives and develop new insights and practices had dissipated. The networks had become social networks and fell well short of what can be characterised as communities of practice. While individuals appear still to turn to each other for advice and support, when groups met together they were social occasions and with limited exceptions, where participants had 'intellectual discussions again', the heads reported that the meetings did little more than provide 'opportunities for a wee moan and groan'.

DISCUSSION

To what extent, then, did the pre-appointment experience of the new headteachers prepare them for the reality of life as a school head? Our studies were based on self-reported data and our sample size was too small and gender biased to allow generalisation or to allow us to come to any definitive conclusions. All the new heads interviewed are women and women appear to have particular occupational and professional challenges within both their personal lives and current policy contexts that affect both how they are viewed and how they view themselves as leaders (Fitzgerald, 2003). Our small sample features diverse career pathways that may or may not be reflected in the general headteacher population, but what we

can say is that engagement with the SQH appeared to provide grounding in the identity of 'being a headteacher' and that it afforded access to supportive networks that had the potential to become communities of practice.

Our findings in phase 1 suggested that engagement with colleagues and involvement in the SQH programme had helped participants to configure their professional identities as headteachers by exploring and recognising new ways of being and developing 'new relationships, actions and roles' (Williamson & Robinson, 2009, p. 46). This allowed them to face the challenge of headship with confidence and enabled them to 'hit the ground running'. In the first year they were getting used to 'being a headteacher' and to the school's culture and to new colleagues, and had not begun to engage in improvement strategies. Clearly participation in the SQH preparation programme and the completion of a year or so in post represents only part of a longer socialisation process and over the course of the second year the data suggest that heads became more secure in their professional identities. In phase 3, heads highlighted particular aspects of the programme, including experience of academic reading, which had helped broaden their perspectives and enabled them to take a strategic view. What was particularly noticeable in this phase was participants' passion and commitment. In very different school contexts, each individual seemed to be aware of, and able to deal with, pressure to conform to different norms, and to have the ability and confidence to initiate significant change. Their emerging professional headteacher identities appeared to be characterised, at least in part, by resilience, increasing self reliance, an ability to reflect and question, a sense of agency and a commitment to continue to develop their own professional learning and that of the teachers that they work with.

However, global discourses concerning modernisation, performance management and improvement are reflected in educational policy in the UK and these discourses have had an impact on professional development (Gleeson & Husbands, 2003). The emergence of 'new public management' (NPM) created a complex context of reform and accountability (Clarke & Newman, 1997) and the introduction of a standard for headship can be seen in terms of an attempt to reconstruct meaning and identity among headteachers, as well as an attempt to control quality and specify outputs, all of which are characteristic of 'new managerialism'.

The SfH, for example, reflects the ambiguous mix of bureaucratic central control that standards represent (Gronn, 2003) with a rhetoric of professional autonomy. Analysis of the Standard reveals its opposing narratives and the tensions between underlying values and principles. One narrative is to do with capability and improving practice, but the other is about accountability and policy implementation. It can be argued that the need to adhere to a defined standard may encourage aspiring heads to configure their professional identities in ways consistent with the features of 'new managerialism'. Although emphasis is placed on critical thinking and reflection on practice in the SQH, the programme is set within prevailing orthodoxies. Competence in terms of attaining the standard can be seen as a controlling mechanism and a means of limiting the discourse surrounding what it is that headteachers do. Pressure to conform might conflict with educational ideals (Stevenson, 2006) and this locates headteacher preparation

within the debate about the nature of contemporary professional identity and places aspiring and new headteachers in a 'complicated nexus between policy, ideology and practice' (Stronach et al., 2002, p. 109).

It also raises fundamental questions about how headship is conceptualised in Scotland, how the leadership and management of headteachers is assessed, the extent to which headteachers are free to act in principled and innovative ways and about the purposes of preparation programmes and who is responsible for their design, development, delivery and accreditation.

One problem with standards is that they give a spurious impression of rationality and precision in defining what competence is and who is certified as 'competent'. This is attractive to politicians, and perhaps goes some way towards explaining why attainment of the Standard is (at least rhetorically) mandatory for all new heads. However, quite how the Standard is interpreted and how aspiring heads demonstrate attainment of the Standard is a matter of debate and within this debate there are arguments about power and about who controls the credentialising process.

If, as we have argued, headship involves complex, practical and interactive processes, then headteachers need higher order skills, a deep understanding of school contexts and cultures, and a firm grasp of theory and relevant research, to enable them to develop frames of reference that can guide their behaviour and decision making (Bush, 1998, 1999). Our study also points to a need to build on the preparation experience of new heads and pay more attention to their support and development needs and to the socialisation processes involved (Crow, 2007; Walker & Qiam, 2006). The heads in this study reported disappointment at the lack of support provided by their employers following their appointment and failure to encourage the embryonic communities of practice identified in phase 1 may be a missed opportunity. Communities of practice may also become inhibiting, however, and if networks of new headteachers are to be encouraged or facilitated, care will need to be taken to ensure that new heads continue to be open to change and encouraged to question accepted notions and assumptions (Crow, 2006).

If complexity is the defining characteristic of contemporary society and openness to change, change in what heads do and changed definitions of effectiveness are important aspects in relation to socialisation (Crow, 2006), then debate about headteacher preparation may reflect fundamental disagreement about what kind of headteachers are needed and what kinds of skills and attributes are required. Universities have the dominant role within the consortia responsible for the SQH and are mainly responsible for designing and delivering the programme, which means that SQH participants are encouraged to challenge orthodoxy, to look outward to hard social and political issues and to interrogate their own position and perspectives. As postgraduate students, they are required to adopt a critical approach, but independent and critical thinkers may not be required in a system that advocates 'tough, intelligent accountability' (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2004).

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THE PRETTY STORY OF JOINED-UP WORKING
A 'CASE STUDY' OF INTERPROFESSIONAL
PARTNERSHIP

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, children's services policy is mobilised around the notion of 'joined-up working', a 'pretty story' in which policy, generated within the current discourse of 'child protection', is offered as a vision of what might be achieved (and hence what could be avoided) if professionals only set aside their selfish self interests and worked together for children. The pretty story of joined-up working presents as smooth uncontested consensus, imposing closure, while simultaneously offering a utopian vision based on partnership and collaboration. Indeed, as Filander (2001, p.5) notes, 'working in groups and teams is part of the emancipatory narrative of the pretty story', drawing on core ideals such as empowerment, reciprocity and ownership. This all sounds rather cosy, but as Hartley (2007, p.205) warns, while such discourses of legitimation appear 'to incorporate democratic procedures' arguably they do no such thing, functioning instead to draw attention away from systems and structures and darkly hinted at 'shortcomings in the sphere of public service delivery' (Eccles, 2009, p.21) and instead laying the blame for failure to deliver squarely at the door of these professionals. Joined-up working in the current policy discourse therefore functions as a mantra, one effect of which is to cast professionals in deficit terms. The aim of hegemonic discourses is precisely to naturalise and so create a certain taken-for-grantedness. Here the rarely challenged assumption is that collaboration 'will lead to more coherent and effective service delivery' (Petch, 2008, p.4) and so better outcomes for children. Well-publicised failures of professionals to be joined-up creates the metaphor of the gap through which children fall, a dark well, conjuring all the nightmarish intertextual terrors and the not-so-pretty stories of childhood. Such failures produce a kind of stunned collective incredulity, prompting media-inspired knee-jerk reactions, one effect of which is to deflect attention away from the interesting and complex ways in which 'organisations', as discursive structures, do indeed organise those who work within

them, governing the network of relations in which norms, trust and reciprocity (those three stalwarts of social capital theory) develop and operate.

Concepts of joined-upness, of partnership and integrated working are central to New Labour 'third wayism', and while Scotland may not have bought into the neoliberal agenda to the same extent as England, it is still relevant. In relation to children's services, what Forbes (2009, p.10) refers to as the 'inter/integrated policy trajectory' took off in Scotland with the *New Community Schools prospectus* (NCS) (Scottish Office, 1998), a policy initiative inspired by the development of full-service schools in the US which aimed at providing a full range of 'human services' either on school grounds or in 'easily accessible locations' (Dryfoos, 1993, p. 29). The NCS prospectus viewed schools as 'hubs' around which services would cluster delivering integrated services for children. While this version or vision of joined-up working has not in practice been fully realised (HMIE, 2004) – with moves now focusing on the integration of services 'in the space that cuts across children's services boundaries' (Forbes, 2009, p.13) – some initiatives which locate services within schools have been established. This paper constitutes an analysis of such services, drawing on data from case studies of professionals and agencies working in schools to support children and young people at risk of social and school exclusion.

It has become traditional, in writing about joined-up working, to tease out a taxonomy of related though distinct terms (see, for example, McCartney, 2009, p.26). In the case studies on which this paper is based, 'interagency' working 'where two or more agencies work together in a planned and formal way' (Forbes, 2009, p.12) probably applies. On the partnership continuum the form of working could be placed somewhere between co-operation ('agencies agree to work on a mutually defined problem but maintain separate boundaries and identities') and co-ordination ('agencies work together in a systematic way and may pool resources to tackle mutually agreed problems') (Petch, 2008, p.2).

At the policy level the will to joined-upness presents as 'closed consensus' (Allan, 2009, p.37) but how does this play out in practice? This paper aims to expose the pretty story of joined-up working to scrutiny at the micro level. In particular, the paper examines the construction, performance and interplay of organisational, institutional and professional identities when different organisations occupy a shared workplace in order to examine how these identities are constituted by, and mobilised within, the practice/policy nexus – or hiatus.

INSTITUTIONS AND IDENTITIES

There is a growing recognition in organisational studies of the importance of constructs surrounding 'identity'. Alvesson, Ashcraft and Thomas (2008, p.17) suggest three reasons for this, each of which relates to different interests and is situated within a distinct theoretical framework. The first is 'technical/functionalist' in scope. This orientation connects identity to behaviour and is aimed at improving institutional effectiveness and providing solutions to organisational problems concerning the management of individuals at work; the second has to do with understanding 'human (organizational) experience', and assumes that 'identity holds a vital key to understanding the complex, unfolding and dynamic relationship between self, work and organization' (Alvesson et al, 2008, p.8).

The third is critical or emancipatory and aims at revealing 'problems associated with cultural and political irrationalities', exploring the 'darker aspects of contemporary organizational life' (Alvesson et al, 2008, p.8). This paper is principally concerned with the last of these and aims to juxtapose discursively produced identities in order to examine the irrationality or perhaps, drawing on Paul Virilio's (2007) notion, the *integral accident* that inhabits the spaces between policy, institution and professional practice.

The theoretical frame for identity as understood in this paper draws on Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) theory of discourse and Althusser's (1971) notion of interpellation. Torfing (1999, p.301) defines a discourse as a 'relational totality of signifying sequences that together constitute a more or less coherent framework for what can be said and done'. Power inheres in the articulation or arrangement of the elements of the discursive field, producing meaning, and this provides subject positions for identification. But the articulation of the elements within the discursive field is only ever partial, there is always a surplus of meaning and this renders the field unstable and liable to reorganisation. It is this instability that gives rise to the domain of politics as the force that attempts to pin down meaning and so impose hegemony. In Althusser's terms identification arises through a process of interpellation and it is this act of being interpellated into the discourse that creates the relational 'identification with' that gives rise to subjectivity. Interpellation figures identification as a process in which one is 'hailed' and turns in recognition: the act of turning constituting the 'topological inauguration of the subject' (Butler, 1997, p.4). This process is invisible – we think of ourselves as free subjects in a way that appears to us 'obvious'. But this apparent obviousness, Althusser (1971) argues, is an effect of ideology. In the act of turning we (mis)recognise our desire.

It follows then that the extent to which identities are congruent (or not) depends upon the degree of alignment of articulated elements within the discourses which produce meaning; it also follows that identities are subject to re-arrangements of the discursive fields within which we practice. (Less this conjures unattractive notions of discourse determinism, it should be borne in mind that in the conceptualisation presented here 'identity' – social, professional, institutional etc – is recalcitrant, constituting the sum total of more or less permanent identifications within the multiplicity of competing, conflicting, over- and under- lapping, and always unstable, discourses that carve up meaning. Within an organisation, what may be termed 'collective identity' [Brown, 2006] is therefore a labile and ambiguous construct imbued with conflicts and mutualities, complicities and resistances, resonances and tensions. Identities are coalitions and as such are precarious, always under threat.)

I have elsewhere suggested that the mechanism which mobilises the relational 'identification with' is narrative (Watson, 2006). In effect, we mobilise our subjectivities through our narrative performances. Narratives therefore serve as temporally (and temporarily) constructed positioning devices by means of which we do 'identity work'. Autobiographical narratives take the long view, doing, undoing and redoing self over a lifetime. But the ephemeral narratives of the everyday, the mundane and unexceptional – what Bamberg calls 'small stories' (see, for example, Bamberg, 2004; Watson, 2007) are where identities are performed and re-performed on a daily basis. In this way through our narrative

performances we are both positioned by discourses and act to position ourselves. This conceptualisation admits agency, but this agency – defined by Torfing (1999) as our ability to act with intention – arises from within the discursive framework in which we are positioned.

Moreover, the positioning that identity work requires us to do demands that we locate our selves in relation to the other, a form of social manoeuvring informed by

emotions, moral judgments and approbations, and political or economic interests. Such phenomena often appear to inform the claims of ‘sameness’ or ‘otherness’ in relation to, for instance, male and female roles, colleagues, subordinates, younger and older generations as well as more detailed organizational differentiations. (Ybema, Keenoy, Oswick, Beverungen, Ellis & Sabelis, 2009, p.307)

This positioning of self ‘appears to be instrumental in attempts to establish, legitimate or challenge the prevailing relationships of power and status’ (Ybema et al, 2009, p.307). Through this construction of the other we establish claims for our own competence (see Watson, 2007).

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The data on which this paper is based are drawn from a small number of case studies of interagency/interprofessional working in schools. Although the studies which inform this paper included interviews with parents and pupils as well as staff of both organisations, only interview data from staff have been drawn on here since it is the interprofessional relationships I am particularly concerned to examine. Interview data have been used to construct a fictionalised account which constitutes a narrative analysis of identities mobilised within the two organisations. The dialogue sticks very closely to what the interviewees actually said (though in some cases this has been altered to provide greater anonymity), but their words have been condensed in order to highlight particular aspects of the performance of identity and the ‘individuals’ presented here are all fictional characters, amalgamations to render the ‘script’ more manageable in performance terms. This approach does not aim at the transparent representation of data (itself a fiction) but at its re-presentation in such a way as to create ‘narrative truths’. Clough (2002), defending such fictionalisations in educational research says, ‘as a means of educational report, stories can provide a means by which those truths, which cannot be otherwise told, are uncovered’ (p.8). Fictionalisations confer anonymity as well as offering researchers ‘the opportunity to import fragments of data from various real events in order to speak to the heart of social consciousness’ (p.8). However, while wishing to appropriate Clough’s arguments to legitimise the approach adopted in this paper, in addition a key aim of the representation here is precisely to construct a partial narrative (in both senses of the word). This gives rise to satire, as a means to highlight the ways in which, within the ambiguous embrace of the organisation, teachers, other professionals and their respective managers, construct and mobilise their identities. In this way it draws on a notion of research in a baroque framework (MacLure, 2006; Watson, 2008), characterised

as a mode of research that aims to disrupt the metaphysics of closure so prevalent in modernist policy discourses and to antagonise those discourses ‘intent on the suppression of dissent, diversity, complexity and unpredictability’ (MacLure, 2006, p.224).

The therapeutic turn

Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) have alluded to the ‘therapeutic turn’ within current educational discourse. They warn of the ‘dangerous’ rise of therapeutic education and the ‘diminished self’ this discourse gives rise to:

Therapeutic education immerses young people in an introspective, instrumental curriculum of the self, and turns schools into vehicles for the latest political and popular fad to engineer the right sort of citizen. (p.64)

The therapeutic turn as defined by Ecclestone and Hayes manifests throughout the curriculum. In England this is apparent in the adoption of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2005), and is similarly evident in *Curriculum for Excellence* in Scotland (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2004). The embrace of therapeutic education is observable in such activities as ‘circle time’, peer mediation and restorative approaches to discipline as well as more specialised, individually targeted interventions involving outside agencies and professionals. Whether or not one agrees with the polemic offered by these authors it is clear that a current concern with emotional well-being of children is a factor underlying transformations in children’s services, which can be interpreted as the attempt to develop the social and human capital of children and young people as a means to combat social exclusion. The case studies on which this paper draws can all be said to be located within this ‘therapeutic turn’ and so for reasons of economy have been distilled into a single, and entirely fictitious, case involving an organisation offering generalised (and unspecified) ‘therapeutic support’ services located within a primary school.

Following Slavoj Žižek’s example, I make the following announcement:

All characters in the following narrative are fictional, not real – but so are the characters of most of the people I know in real life, so this disclaimer doesn’t amount to much. (Žižek, citing a Slovene TV reporter, 2006, p.33)

A CASE STUDY OF INTERPROFESSIONAL WORKING

In which it is seen that identity is mobilised and performed around the (mis)recognition of the other...

In the interviews teachers took care not to criticise the other too overtly. Teachers expressed support for the interventions offered with remarks like: *'it's great to feel that somebody is probably helping them out'*, and *'I mean I am passionately in favour of it. And I like these people, every last one of them I have really liked, it's not that I have got a problem with any of them.'* Appearing to be unthreatened by the other, offering recognition of the legitimate area of expertise of the other, signifies self as a mature, rational professional who buys into the discourse of interprofessional practice, while simultaneously creating a credible platform from which to construct the other as lacking. In this way, while ostensibly being supportive the services offered were simultaneously trivialised, and the outside workers constructed as impermanent, changeable and especially *part-time* –

Interviewer: *So how helpful have you found the support being offered?*

Teacher 1: *It's great. Having the support workers here has just become part of the whole structure of the day, well, not the day exactly, because they are not here every day.*

Teacher 2: *Yes, and quite often a child has maybe got an issue on a Monday, and you say right – and they go away and fill in a wee form, and they post it in the box. And you know every day they are saying, 'when am I going to see her?' And you try to explain, well – she is not actually here until the end of the week.*

Teacher 3: *Janine [the Support Service Manager] comes in on a Monday – or is it a Tuesday?*

The other is also infinitely substitutable...

Teacher 1: *Janine is here now. Before Janine there was – I'm sorry her name has gone – I said Elizabeth. No, it was Elizabeth, it was Elizabeth. It's Annabel I'm thinking of – who initiated it.*

In this way the teachers signalled their own professional commitment and permanence, though not surprisingly Janine constructs herself in rather different terms:

Janine [Support Service Manager]: *I see the teachers every morning. Like for example, I saw the teachers of two children we are working with today, I saw them this morning, just to check in with how the children were. And then every week I catch up with all the teachers who have children doing individual work with us. Then there are other ones that I am just monitoring constantly. I do end up*

monitoring quite a lot of children, and you do really need to know them all, or at least their names..

Key attributes of professionalism traditionally cluster around knowledge, expertise and responsibility. As with commitment, these dimensions were also mobilised around the metaphor of 'time' as a commodity with the teacher constructed as having *lack of time*, a narrative strategy used to point up the greater responsibilities and complexities associated with the teacher role when contrasted with the other who has time to spend and can use this to 'sit with' the child.

Teacher 1: *And with the best will in the world you tried to listen, and you tried to take time to listen. So it was nice to feel that somebody else was going to be there and that was their total remit for that.*

Teacher 2: *Somebody is giving them the kind of attention that you would love to give them and you simply can't because either you don't have the skills or the time – usually the latter – and because you have another agenda. You have got to have them on task. You have got to have them working. You can't, in inverted commas, waste time on letting them talk out their problems.*

Or as in this comment, constructing the other as having time to spend with the child – and simultaneously devaluing this – while also demeaning their expertise. Here, the support worker is portrayed as a 'vent', rendering the child safe for school (in the sense of being undangerous).

Teacher 3: *And he was getting someone to sit with him and spend – I think it was 45 minutes – maybe an hour, no I think it was 45 minutes, to actually let off steam and whatever.*

Naturally, the researcher was keen to establish who was referred for support, but a strange ambiguity surrounded this. The resulting confusion enabled aspects of professional expertise to be performed by both teachers and support workers. Support workers frequently talked about teachers as only interested in one thing – behaviour (by which is meant *bad* behaviour). In this way, they constructed themselves as interested in the *whole child*, and succeeded in distancing themselves from the teachers' narrower sphere of concern.

Support Worker 1: *I think some teachers might assume that that the behaviour is going to suddenly, or gradually, get better.*

Support Worker 2: *The teacher's interest in, their concern for the child is particularly the effect that it is having on the rest of the class. It's a lot to do with just not being able to get their needs met in a classroom situation. [Interviewer: Yes, yes of course, yes] Which isn't the teacher's fault – they have got a huge amount of pressure on them.*

There is a certain ambivalence here – whose needs are we talking about?

Support Worker 1: One of the challenges is working in a therapeutic way within an educational setting because there are two obviously really different aims going on. And it needn't be a conflict I mean because in these schools they are very kind of open to us and they are really kind of welcoming about it but nevertheless we have got a completely different goal. It's not about good behaviour you know and then going back to the classroom where it's very much about being good and doing things right and achieving. So there is a real conflict.

Janine also constructed herself as concerned with the well-being of the whole child through a narrative strategy that centred on the teachers' lack of understanding of the wider issues (ostensibly presented as a barrier imposed by the teachers' lack of time, but in effect calling into question teachers' capacity to engage with the bigger picture).

Interviewer: What do you think are the main challenges in your work?

Janine: So, yes and also communicating children's emotional needs to staff can sometimes be a challenge because they are coming from quite a different angle. And the biggest barrier to that is not that they are not willing to think about it because they absolutely are, it's the time - because they are really quite big conversations that you need to be having really, and you don't always get big conversations.

Interviewer: No. No you don't.

Janine: And also it's hard for them to focus on one person a lot because they have got all their children and they have got a different remit so - I don't want to make them feel -

Interviewer: I suppose you don't want to make them feel inadequate.

Janine: No, no.

Interviewer: You have got quite a difficult line to tread.

Janine: Uh huh, yes.

Janine also scored by expressly recognising classroom control as a key concern for the teacher (arguably the very core of the teacher's being) and simultaneously trashing it.

Janine: And they can share their wonderful strategies with us as well. They help our management of the child's behaviour in the corridor - walking down to the room and back again for example.

While similar themes emerged in the narratives of the School Senior Management (counsellors as dilettante, questioning the efficacy of the service etc.) these were performed in a very different way. In effect a managerial self is constructed

metonymically as standing for the organisation: *we know... our school ethos... our teachers... we are a team... the staff...* This construction of Self as Organisation or Institution forms a key part of the performance of managerial authority.

School Senior Management: There is no doubt that it is very much seen as a key element in school life (we know that from the daily feedback that the management team gets). Our school ethos is that everybody works together as a team. So we are a team. Janine is the third manager we have had. Janine is here every Wednesday (but she is switching to alternate Wednesdays).

Throughout the interviews frustration is presented as a mobilising narrative of professional identification. Various others attempt to thwart the teacher as professional - in the case of pupils through their misbehaviour; in the case of families through their 'dysfunctional' nature; and in the case of other professionals through withholding information about pupils. (But it is precisely in this threat that identity is realised, the other is the antagonistic force which is held responsible for the blockage of the teacher's full identity but without which identification would not occur.)

Janine: Obviously we have to respect pupil confidentiality, but you can give teachers a general gist. So they might be saying 'oh so and so seems so angry this week'. So it's alright then to go back and say 'well he has been working hard on that anger with us'.

But this was evidently viewed differently by the teachers...

Interviewer: ...and do you get enough feedback about what's going on?

Teacher 2: Well, what would be most valuable would be to have a report saying how it had gone but not vague metaphorical kind of terms about working hard - what does that mean?

Teacher 1: I don't know if am entitled to go and say 'what did he say' 'What was his side of things?' 'Why did he behave like that?' 'What did he say to you?' I don't feel I am entitled to ask that. Yet I have shared with her what has happened. I just get the feeling that that it's one sided.

And the support workers obviously viewed this differently...

Researcher: how much contact do you have with the teachers?

Support Worker 2: I purposely go down to the staff room at break times and I am available and discuss what is happening. It is very much a two way road I feel...

But the support workers too had their frustrations...

Support Worker 1: *It's difficult to grab the teachers, to have a chat with them, specific teachers, just because they are so busy, but we always go down to the staffroom at break time.*

But again...

Teacher 2: *And they aren't obviously much in the staff room because – well they are only in the two days – or maybe just one day in the week and obviously they have got other things to do.*

The teachers' frustration surrounding communication was, however, an important part of the construction of professionalism for the support workers for whom maintaining confidentiality is a key aspect of identity.

Interviewer: *Are there issues about confidentiality?*

Janine: *I mean your point about in the staff room, teachers talk about children. My workers are really shocked by that. And so we have to prepare them that teacher confidentiality is different from our confidentiality.*

Though this was rather robustly contradicted by School Senior Management.

Interviewer: *Um...what about issues of confidentiality? I mean how are they managed within the staff because I mean...the support workers, they draw a definite circle around what is confidential and what is not. And I wondered the extent to which teaching staff can understand that boundary because teachers by and large, although they do respect confidentiality of course, within the staff room context they will talk quite freely with their colleagues about anything virtually that has happened in their classrooms.*

School Senior Management: (tetchily) *I don't know. I don't know that that's as true as you perhaps think it is. I would say that people are pretty professional about what is discussed openly in the staff room.*

Interviewer: *Yes. I don't think I was trying to suggest that...*

School Senior Management: (peremptorily) *No.*

(In this exchange with the interviewer we see School Senior Management mobilising her identity as authority figure.) Naturally, the interviewer is interested in finding out from School Senior Management whether the presence of the support workers has had an impact on pupils and the school. Again, ambivalence emerges surrounding the role of the service. School Senior Management is at pains to point out that the best results are achieved with children whose difficulties do not present primarily as 'behaviour problems'. But, precisely by suggesting that the service is ineffective in addressing the key (pedagogic) concern of control the service is undermined.

Interviewer: *What difference has it made?*

School Senior Management: *With some individuals – I don't believe with all – but with some it has made a huge difference. Interestingly my experience is at this school that it hasn't made its biggest impact on very badly behaved children. But that's not surprising really – a once a week session, no, that's just not going to solve it. The majority of the individual referrals are boys on the whole, not all of them, but I would say probably more are for behaviour that yes creates some sort of disturbance. Sometimes it makes them worse of course.*

At the chalk face then, both teachers and support workers experienced frustration in the nature of the collaboration, but this was dismissed and smoothed over by management and constructed rather unproblematically as a synergistic *shared territory* or as one Senior Manager of the Support Service put it in response to the interviewer's question:

Interviewer: *You have got a whole load of sort of contradictions in the way you work haven't you?*

Support Service Senior Management: *I think things might appear to be contradictions but actually when you look closely at the strategy for working within the fabric of a school and maintaining an integrity within your own service remit I think what we have come up with is a very well tuned – at best a very well tuned – model of joint working. Because joint working is not sacrificing one organisation's identity or objectives for the benefit of the other, it is a fusion that allows the integrity of each to value the separateness, for mutual advantage.*

So in all this we see a complex activity of positioning of self and other at all levels of the organisations involved. But where is the child in all this? For the teachers the child who might be referred for therapeutic support was the problem child (a construction which invoked notions of time as change, a turbulent flux against which the professional remains steadfast).

Teacher 2: *They are getting more and more freedom. Running seriously wild. So many of these children are the ones that come in and they are yawning their heads off in the morning – have had the fizzy juice and a packet of crisps standing in the line – because you know it's all part of quite a lot of family situations we have here now.*

Teacher 1: *And they all seem to have tellies in their room. Stay up ridiculously late (and all the research is saying that if they haven't slept they are not ready to learn). They are making these demands. P7 is a hard stage now.*

And the family is to blame...

Teacher 3: *At the base there is a dysfunctional family, every single one. The more you scrape away.*

Whereas the other professionals tended to construct the child as the client thereby establishing a distinct area of expertise. The child also emerged as constructed by the range of agencies that might potentially be involved. In this way the child's subjectivity materialises through the discourse of 'needs' in the tiered model of assessment used by CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and as a probability in the discourse of risk.

Support Service Senior Management : *If a child is referred and through the assessment process we feel this is a tier three child that's an important piece of the work actually and if they are working with a child and the child is the subject of a multi agency piece of work then obviously we will be represented on that group.*

In this way the signifiers used to construct the child are set in motion, and through this continuous play in the place where, to draw on a Lacanian notion (Lacan, 2001[1977]), the *real* once was these signifiers mask the fact that what they claim to refer to is not there. The signifiers efface the child while giving the illusory appearance of reality. The child is constructed through practices of 'assessment' by the different professional groups as part of their own constructions of identity. The sharply differentiated knowledges and the discourses from which identifications arise and which serve to construct 'the child' create incommensurable positions. Identity is, as Krejsler (2005) describes it, a 'field of struggle' played out over the body of the child ostensibly 'at the centre', but a centre which materialises as the void...

EPILOGUE – SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THE 'IDEOLOGY OF RATIONALITY'

How can we relate the foregoing to ideas surrounding the building of human and social capital and the metaphors of 'bonding, bridging and linking' (Forbes, 2006) which is the focus of this collection of papers? Batteau (2000) says, 'organizations more or less succeed in maintaining a façade of order' (p.728) but 'by imposing boundaries, hierarchic order, and an *ideology of rationality* on differentiation, [they] create a context that is inherently fragmentary and contradictory' (p.730, emphasis added). In this way, he goes on, organisations themselves are productive of 'confusion, scrambling, chaos and disorder' which is 'masked by smooth talk and polished manners' only in the executive suite and the boardroom. Juxtaposition of different organisations is likely to intensify this fragmentation and contradiction in which 'what might appear as unanimous, routine decisions will often, when submitted to closer inspection, be revealed as the source of all kinds of frustrated desires, unstated criticisms, and endlessly deferred confrontations' (Torfing, 1999, p.123). The imposition of boundaries, hierarchic order and the ideology of rationality constitutes almost an inversion of the three pillars of social capital – bonding, bridging and linking – actively undermining the possibilities for integrated working while also shifting the focus away from organisations' disorganisation and onto individuals. In effect, (and at risk of being guilty of what Baron (2009) describes as capital proliferation) frustrating the possibilities for the production of *interprofessional* capital.

The 'ideology of rationality' is evident at the level of policy formulation too which, as instrument of government control, attempts to construct particular subjectivities through articulating the elements of the discursive field in order to say what, at any given time, constitutes the 'good' teacher, social worker, parent, child etc. Currently, subjectivisation in the discourse of 'needs' which produces the therapeutic turn gives rise to diagnosis as a resource to be drawn on – in this discourse having needs becomes a source of human and social capital. As Johnson (2008, p.34) says, nowadays 'State power does not situate itself against the individual but instead cultivates an individuality whose sustenance requires constant surveillance, nurturing and development'. This realisation of one aspect of the 'control society' (Deleuze, 1995; Watson, in press) is, however, subverted at the level of subjectivisation as the appearance of hegemonic rationality gives way to the ontological incoherence that attends processes of identification. This is the central contradiction, the accident in the gap between policy and practice. Yet this is also, paradoxically, where possibilities for agency and resistance are located.

But the ideology of rationality also pervades much research around interprofessional working. Social capital theory itself seems suspiciously rational in intent. Research in the baroque moment attempts to get away from this, embracing ontological incoherence and questioning the closures that produce reality. What might such an approach do for social capital theory? Notions of bonding, bridging and linking would take on a very different appearance in the elliptical architectural milieu of the baroque but might open up new ways of conceptualising and theorising interprofessional working that move beyond and disrupt current understandings. We researchers too have our own hegemonic discourses. In confronting these 'our constant task is to struggle against the very rules of reason and practice inscribed in the effects of power of the social sciences' (Lather, 2007, p.73).

But that's another (pretty) story.

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