

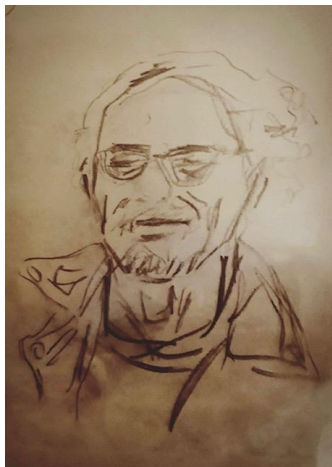
**University
of South
Wales**

Youth work in 21st C Europe

Navigating and negotiating access to young people's lives

'Noorum 2023'
7th Estonian Youth Sector Forum

Tallinn, May 2023



Dr Howard Williamson CVO CBE FRSA FHEA
Professor of European Youth Policy

Roots and routes

Youth worker since the 1960s

Youth researcher since the 1970s

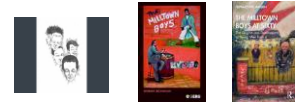
Youth policy advisor since the 1980s



Just Hanging Around!

RESEARCH
Youth crime and justice
Youth unemployment
Education and training
Children and families
Health (substance misuse)
Youth policy

Youth Crime & Justice RESEARCH
The Milltown Boys (*Five Years*)
Residential care as an alternative to custody
The surveillance of public space: CCTV
The Milltown Boys (*The Milltown Boys Revisited*)
Knife & Gun crime (*The Street Weapons Commission*)
Peer Violence in Public Space (*Portraits*)
The Milltown Boys (*The Milltown Boys at Sixty*)



Youth Crime & Justice POLICY
Adviser, Home Office review of Attendance Centres
Member, Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
Chair, YJB Youth Crime Prevention and Inclusion Committee
Co-Chair, Youth Justice Committee for Wales
Member, The Street Weapons Commission
Adviser on youth offending, South Wales Police
Non-Executive Director, RJ4All International Institute

Policy and Practice roles
NYA Advisory Committee on Youth Research
Chair, European youth research correspondents
Secretary, ISA Research Committee 34 (youth)
Editorial Boards: *Journal of Youth Studies*,
Youth Studies Ireland, *Scottish Youth Issues Journal*,
Perspectives on Youth, *Youth Voice Journal*,
Youth and Globalisation,
International Journal of Social Pedagogy,
Reviewer, referee for research applications
Book reviewer, manuscript referee.....

ROOTS
Council house, public school
Rugby/Latin, Football/fags
Jimmy Ruffin, Jimi Hendrix
Scouts, youth club
Young Oxlam, Care for the Elderly
Queen, Slade, Sham '69



Youth unemployment RESEARCH
The Youth Opportunities Programme (*Out of School*)
Employers' recruitment and training strategies
Disadvantaged youth in the labour market
Business start-up in rural areas
Training for enterprise: young people & autonomy
The 'status zero' studies [later termed 'NEET's']
Mapping 'disaffected' youth

Youth unemployment POLICY
Youth Opportunities Development Unit advisory panel
New Deal Task Force Advisory Committee
New Deal for the Most Disadvantaged
Auditor General for Wales review of 'NEET's'

Children & families RESEARCH
Family Centres
Assessment of social work competence
Upstairs, Downstairs: a child environment survey
Children and family need
Children need choices (*Children Speak*)
Advocacy services for children
On Track: parent support & training, partnership working, family therapy
Mobility and the Over-50s
The Rural Activities Centre: the social inclusion of young adults with learning disabilities

Children & families POLICY
Children's Plan Advisory Group 0-7
Children's Plan Advisory Group 14-19
Chair, National Independent Advocacy Board
Steering Group, End Youth Homelessness Cymru Working Group, Care-experience and Homelessness



Sport, music, learning, mixing, moving [Youth work, 2nd hand cars, flashy motorbikes, photography, cottage midsummer music; guitar playing, football coaching...]

Education & Training RESEARCH
The ethos of an open-access FE college
Job-skills analysis in three occupations
Mini-enterprise in schools project
Regional development & vocational training
Phoenix co-operatives
Attendance, attitude, achievement
Gender equality in education
Schools and the community: service learning
Learning through an alternative curriculum
Realism, relevance & respect: police in schools

Youth work and community development POLICY
Member, Chair, Birmingham Young Volunteers
Member, Grassroots Management Committee (Cardiff City Centre Youth Project)
Chair, Wales Youth Work Partnership
Vice Chair/Chair, Wales Youth Agency
Champion, National Citizen Service
Rapporteur-General, 1st European Youth Work Convention
Rapporteur-General, 2nd European Youth Work Convention
Rapporteur-General, 3rd European Youth Work Convention
Welsh Government youth work reference group
Ad hoc high level task force on youth work, CoE
Member, Committee, Pontypridd Town Association Football Club
Informal adviser, Welsh Government Interim Youth Work Board



Education & Training POLICY
UK Parliamentary Adviser on Education

ROUTES
Youth work practice
Open club work, project work, street-based work, teaching, supervision
Youth research
Offending, training and unemployment, enterprise, substance misuse, homelessness, mental health & learning disability, public care, labour market recruitment
Youth policy
Youth work, alcohol and substance misuse, youth training, social inclusion, youth justice, curriculum reform, volunteering, safeguarding and advocacy
Wales, UK, EU, Council of Europe, UN

CAREER
Youth worker
Academic
Policy adviser
Volunteer

Youth Policy RESEARCH
Strategic responses to 'disaffected' youth
DGXXII Citizenship study
Youth employment and the enterprise culture
Youth policy in the Netherlands
Council of Europe international youth policy reviews (Country reviews & Supporting young people in Europe Vol 1-3) (*Youth and Policy: Contexts and Consequences*)
(*About Time! youth policy from a European perspective*)



Youth Policy POLICY
Social Exclusion Unit PAT 12 (England & Wales)
Extending Entitlement expert group (Wales)
Gender Equality Committee, Council of Europe
EU White Paper on Youth
Youth Partnership (EU & CoE) Advisory Board (*Dialogue and Networks*)
Youth Policy Indicators' Group (CoE)
Keynote Plenary speaker, 1st Global Forum on Youth Policies
Rapporteur, Council of Europe Youth Sector Agenda 2030
Member, Core Group, EU DG Regio Youth Manifesto



One key message:
Maximise the reach of +ves
Minimise the reach of -ves

What else have I learned?
Distinguish target groups
The importance of outreach
Incentives, 'branding' and marketing campaigns
The value of 'critical people at critical moments'
Maintaining client-centred, not provider-focused...
Stepping stones and pathways
The Thoughts of Chairman How!
Columns in Young People Now



Teaching
Youth studies
Youth culture
Youth perspectives
Engagement and experience
Social policy / youth policy
Research methodology
Ethnography
Participant observation
Oral history / interviews
Social media
Advanced Introduction to Youth Studies



Health POLICY
Chair, Youthlink Wales (HIV/drug prevention)
Vice-Chair/Chair, Alcohol Action Wales
Welsh Advisory Committee on Drug & Alcohol Misuse
Chair, Wales Drug Prevention Committee
Member, Pompidou Group, Council of Europe
Member/Chair, Substance Misuse Advisory Panel for Wales
Member, Wales Advisory Panel on Substance Misuse
Steering Group, Voice-Action-Change, Recovery Cymru

Health RESEARCH
Participative approaches to health promotion (*Taking Part*)
Health and personal development: smoking
Health promotion and alcohol use
Drugs and outreach services

Youth work & community development RESEARCH
The Ely Youth and Community Project (*Strategies for Intervention*)
Active learning in practice: what does youth work do?
The Lifechance Project (*Social Action for Young People*)
Curriculum in Context: youth work in Wales
The needs of young people 15-19 and the youth work response
Young people, the youth service, and transitions
Self, space and place
The work of the Helsinki Youth Department (*The Wonderful World of Youth Work*)
The history of youth work in Europe (*The History of Youth Work in Europe Vols 1-7*)
The concept of 'youth participation'
(*Approaches to youth participation in youth and community work*)



Becoming a youth worker

As a young person, wanting somewhere to go, that was warm, with my mates, our own space, to have some fun..... **THIS IS THE BOTTOM LINE**

Footballer in the park

The building of a 'community centre' – in OUR park

The establishment of a youth club

Key issues (literally the 'key' issue):

- Confidence/impertinence/voice
- Relationships and Trust
- Opportunity and Experience

The idea of youth work

‘Plus ça change, plus reste la même chose’?

- The third milieu of socialisation?
- On their own terms, on their own turf?
- Spaces and bridges?
- The voluntary relationship?
- Young people set the agenda?
- Laboratories for democracy?
- Space, support, stretch?
- A holistic approach?

These are all contested and debatable issues

Balancing Acts

Probably the hardest job in the world? !!!

- Balancing intervention with response
- Balancing individual & societal expectations
- Balancing leisure and education (and care?)
- Balancing the life led versus the life developed
- Balancing comfort zones and stretch zones
- Reconciling principles with pragmatism
- Holding the line

See also *Reflective Trialogue: 12 'trilemmas' for youth work*

Extending entitlement

Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales (2000)

- Education, training and work experience
- Basic skills
- Opportunities for achievement through volunteering and active citizenship
- High quality responsive and accessible services
- Independent careers advice and guidance
- Personal advice and support
- Advice on health, housing, benefits and other issues
- Recreational and social opportunities
- Sporting, artistic, musical and outdoor experiences
- International opportunities
- The right to be consulted and to participate in decision-making

Where does youth work 'fit' or 'fit in'?



Predicting the Future.... (of anything)



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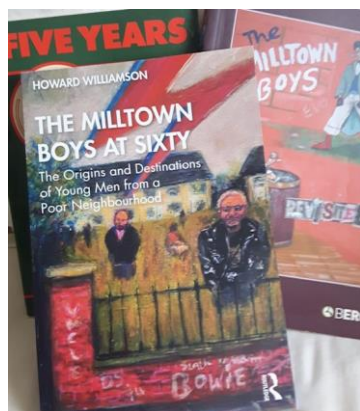
The Milltown Boys' study

1973 - 2023

1973-1978

1999-2004

2016-2021



“If you’re not dead and this is still your number, call me back” (Tony, 2015)

Changing Europe

The 'new' Europe/contemporary Europe

1. Democracy
2. (L)earning
3. Climate
4. Technology
5. FOMO
6. Security
7. Energy
8. Identity
9. Mobility
10. Health

Some key issues for youth work?

- Play
- Participation
- Partnership
- Proof
- Proficiency

Aide-memoire:

- Conceptualisation
- Credibility
- Connection
- Competence
- Crisis & opportunity

Rhetoric, reality and relevance

Youth work as a 'dog'
(looking for a home)

Listening, humour/fun,
patience

Opportunities and
Experiences

Meaning and Relevance

Relationships and Trust....?

Process and Outcomes....?



Dehydration

Relationships

Trust

Process

Space

Time



Targets

Outcomes

Measurement

Performance



Rehydration?

Targets
Outcomes
Measurement
Performance



Relationships
Trust
Process
Space
Time

“You don’t grow grass by pulling it”



Youth workers are gardeners, not mechanics.....

Education/Learning is not about the filling of a vessel but the lighting of a flame (Plutarch)

The European Youth Work Agenda

'Signposts for the Future'

[The 3rd European Youth Work Convention 2020]

Youth work provision

Quality development

A common direction

Beyond the youth work community of practice

Recognition

Innovation and emerging challenges

Policy frameworks

A strategic framework for youth work development

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Thank you
Aitäh