A HISTORY OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

CONTENTS

PROLOGUE
MISSING HISTORIES

A History of Childhood Participatory Spaces

In this chapter I introduce the concept of space and irrationality by following Foucault and others into a revision of the importance of place. Foucault (1986, pp22-27) has set us up for thinking about space as central to identity formation.

> A whole history remains to be written of spaces - which would at the same time be a history of powers (both terms in the plural) - from the greatest strategies of geophysics to the little tactics of the habitat. (Foucault, 1986).

And certainly a history of children's spaces is still to be written. Children have had access to and have been colonised within numerous spaces over time. These are spaces of complex cooperation and contest between children themselves and between children and adults. A couple of theses spaces have been selected for analysis in this volume: school grounds, and public play areas. A history of them would be a history of the some of the powers that have effected the construction of childhood; Hall's routes to our roots in these places. My interest in space and place is in vogue - but the focus on space is not for fashionable reasons.

Foucault's 'epoch of space' is definitely with us. We created and are created by the power relations found inherent in spatial relations. As Munt (1998, p164) points out bodies are only what bodies can 'do' in a space. The desire to move on and find another 'better' space is with us all; our current spaces are inadequate for *all* our needs. We might ask to what extent can we find parallels with the strong metaphor of homosexuality's 'closet' in the constrained spaces wherein we locate children today? What have been the 'locating forces' that place children there? What about the possibility of children's 'coming out' (See Grosz, 1995, p92)? But there are other writers who also bring 'space' into the frame.

Brasset (1994) romps lucidly through some of the key players in contemporary thinking about space and the postmodern condition. He takes us through Jameson, Lefebvre, Deleuze and Guattari and Bachelard to review the situation regarding space and how we might think

about it. His first manoeuvre is (ironically) to set us out on a journey that is chronologically ordered. We are initiated with Kant's early integration of the question of space and subjectivity. Afterwards, we quickly take on Bachelard's use of the poetic imagination to expand our notions of space rather than reducing it to any *essence*. Bachelard importance for this thesis is the way in which he expands Kantian rationally bounded subjectivity into the 'nooks and crannies' of spaces in *The Poetics of Space* (1958). There is no boundary between the subject and the continual (re)telling of stories of the spaces that enable the subject to have a life. Brasset rightly compares Bachelard's 'topoanalysis' to Guattari's 'cartography. Like topoanalysis, cartography 'feels, fills the space it moves in; it does not tie up loose ends and constructs no ultimate universal frames of reference' (p9). The only necessary vehicle for border-crossing into the most unexpected of spaces is a good (strategic?) narrative. One term used by geographers for such a narrative is the map.

In my retelling of a unification of narrative theory and the many versions of cartographically inspired theory in geography and related disciplines we might say: 'In living a life and continually desiring to re-tell new stories we also replenish our 'maps' with new layers of meaning and in doing so we also move through different places.' Here we can hear the echoes of Deleuze and Guattari's cartography with its commitment to the loss of difference between the map and the territory and the Baudrillardian (1983) commitment to the map as precedent to the territory. But a commitment to 'maps all the way down' is not as difficult as some would have it. It is not a question of Euclid having his tightly organised way with our spaces. Nor is it a reduction of a life to a two dimensional text. It *is* a question of having a commitment to a Bakhtinian dialogism, however, *within the spaces of a text.* The 'text' can be any of three spaces of Lefebvre (1991): a narrative of a habitual life - our spatial practice which is a lived space that is filled with characters who go about their daily lives. Many authors have invited readers into these textual spaces. Lefebvre's second orientation for space is what he calls the Representation of Space. Here, space is conceptualised, the space of scientists, planners, architects who supposedly identify what is lived or perceived (1991, p38). What is a historical representation of space if not also a text? These mappings 'geometricise space' and appropriate places for specific people and activities. They 'territorialise' space (Deleuze). We have never left language behind in any of Lefebvre's structures. His final structure is a space for the dream. Brasset (1994, pp15-16) sees Bachelard's dreams as akin to this kind of space. But Lefebvre also accepts that his three

structures are insufficient in describing space. He moves, towards the end of his book (Lefebvre, 1991), to an oscillation between these three definitions. He dissolves the differences between them, and in doing so cuts his own arguments from under himself quite openly and effectively (Lefebvre, 1991, p422-23) and does away with any systematisation of space in favour of continual confrontation of interests and ongoing participation by varied interests in the production of space.

Missing Histories

In the different approaches to children's participation in planning, design, maintenance and care of local places we will find differences. These differences have given expression to different discourses on 'childhood'. An examination of the cultural settings, the voices of children, designers, parents, etc will give us a clue as to the competing forces that are in play in the continual construction of childhood within these practices. The idea that childhood should be *constructed culturally* rather than be more essentially described by such stage theorists and developmental psychologists as Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg, is not new. A glance over the research conducted in the discipline of history will provide us with useful material in this regard. Reflexively, in advance of your reading of this section, we should acknowledge that most of the historical analysis is parent, family, or adult-centred. The invisible child is the character that eludes representation despite the clever use of statistics by some authors.

The criteria used by historians to evaluate the scene also reveals current thinking about childhood rearing practices. Levels of abandonment are reported as showing levels of affection by some and as showing cultural differences by others. A cursory glance at the history of childrearing shows how things have not always been the way they are now and, implicitly, will not stay the same in the future. For some parents living in different times, the killing of illegitimate children was a matter of honour as was the case in Corsica (see Cunningham, 1995, p94). Predominantly, however, what little history has been done with children in mind has tended to look into the question of whether adults *loved* their children. Love provides the chief criterion for a water test of a good family in the 1990's while authority over children would have been the determining factor in the early 1900's. Nowadays, parents in Britain and the USA are advised to give 'unconditional love' to their children. Expressions of love are culturally defined by the amount of things children get

from their parents in the form of toys mainly. Concomitant with this is a rise in the culture of 'care'. Family practices of a few years ago are reconfigured as verging on abusive today. Children are not to be left alone in the house. They never handle 'power tools'. They keep off the 'busy streets' and are discouraged from cycling to school. Two stories follow. They show how the self-initiated projects of children get can get renarrated in the 1990's as tales of neglect and abuse. They expose this recent change in the mindset of parenthood. First a brief story about my own experience cooking chips in the late 1970's! At this time it was not popular or regarded as economical to buy ready-cut frozen chips or perhaps there were no ready-cut chips available - I cannot remember.

Story 1 - Cooking Chips

As children my brother and I loved chips. My mother worked part-time, so we had a time alone in the house between finishing school and our parents coming in from work. We often had instructions on how to help have the dinner ready for the evening. On Fridays we set about cooking chips for ourselves. This was an arrangement we negotiated because our mother was not keen on going to all the 'hassle' of peeling and cutting them after work. I can't remember what age we were but at most we were in our early teens. Nowadays, many would say the use of an open chip-pan filled with superheated oil by children would be nothing short of neglect. For us it was a chance to have a say in our own diet, a chance to help out at home and a chance to experience caring for ourselves. Our mother (an unlikely feminist) was keen we would learn how to cook for ourselves too.

Story 1 - Cycling to School

As a child of five I cycled to school, mostly on the footpath. It was a distance of about a mile. Initially, I had 'stabilisers' (extra back wheels for learners). There was a bike shed in the playground where I left the bicycle. The sisters of Mercy in the school were aware that I came to school this way. Today, in a town of smaller size in Scotland, children are told not to come to school by bicycle until the age of about ten. There is no bicycle shed. The main reason given for the ruling is the dangerous roads. Certainly, the roads are busier, and cars are quieter and hence more lethal. One parent, who went against the school policy and encouraged her child of four to come to school by bike attracted the attention of the head teachers and staff. The

parent in question already had the reputation of being a 'careless' parent and the child did report being hungry a lot. But this is not my point. The school rule shows a real change in thinking about what children are regarded as being able or not able to do. It is interesting that schools rarely build bicycle sheds anymore. Neither are Local Authorities much prepared to acknowledge the need for cyclepaths along school routes. Most interesting of all is that the child was (obviously) able to get to school by bicycle (albeit on an empty stomach at times), negotiating traffic etc.. Secondly, the child (with his mother's advice perhaps) continued to cycle to school after being told not to by the school, placing his bike in various 'safe havens': one of them was the 'Scrappies' - a car breakers yard. Presumably, the child had to negotiate this arrangement with the adults in the yard. Here we see how new cultures of care, and the institutionalised rules that give them expression operate to make life more secure for children while also taking away possible opportunity for self-organisation and self-care. Perhaps our need as adults to care for children blinds us from making a larger critique of societal structures that debilitate children from 'doing their own thing' - experiencing life on their own terms outside of the institutions of care and education.

Introduction to Part 2

Children's Exclusion from Participation over Time

The first part of this section of the thesis sets out to explore the influences of discourses from education, technology, the market and legislation of cultures of childhood. The first and main hypothesis here is that the influences mentioned have had a mainly divisive effect on children's experiences of participation in the many cultural practices. Most notable are the disappearance of children from the workplace and the appearance of children in schools, and institutionalised care-giving settings outside of the close-knit settings of community and extended family. By contrast today, the average child has one sibling, and only a few cousins. S/he is expected to learn the ways of the world among a class of children all of the same age; the nearest role models are found in professionals: teachers, 'qualified' baby-sitters, and other 'care-givers'. Opportunities for safe play areas are reduced by traffic's invasion of the street. This aspect of the story supports the view that children have been increasingly separated from adults in the recent past and distanced from kin-based relationships by a professionalisation of care.

Children's Inclusion in Participation

Another, almost opposite view is also portrayed by the literature and by casual observation which will act as a counterpoint to the totalising effect of the argument above. The second, more peripheral hypothesis is that adults and children have become closer together due to a variety of influences. An example is the influence of technologically mediated communication, and technology's influence on our relationship with our local environments. Adult culture moves to share the experiences of child culture because of our shared experiences of anomie associated with living in a late modern (postmodern) society in the West. Specifically chosen examples demonstrate the point. Adults and children share the time-space distanciation brought about by technology in, for example, how we are entertained and fed. Technology mediates our food production and consumption, and our message production and consumption through the ready made meal and the advertising message. Localities are losing traditional distinctiveness because of an embrace of the corporate, the massified and the globalised. Global messages cut across these local spaces. New opportunities for a different kind of subjectivity are enabled by participation in more virtual communities (through the Internet, within the fantasy worlds of the *Spice Girls*, or the New World soaps). Cyberkids and cyberadults are given a more level playing field in these

places. Other examples of children's re-inclusion into the adult world include

Recent Counter-cultural and Other Responses

A more recent influence that supports greater participation by children in adult life is new thinking about children and the nature of the child. Coming mainly from women's activism in advancing children's rights are arguments for children's right to be heard, to have a say in matters affecting him/her. These movements seek to reintroduce children into the adult worlds they have been excluded from over time. While new forms of technology gives opportunities for children's participation in the 'virtual' or distant, a counter movement is recognisable. There is also a rise in interest in the locally near and locally distinct. These interests take the form of ecological movements, neighbourhood activists in community development circles, new interest groups in education from the world of the non-governmental organisations (like WWF and the National Parent's Council), innovative Local Authorities, and child-advocacy groups. The work of these movements (some of which can be termed 'counter-cultural') in encouraging children's participation in environmental change and decision making is analysed in more detail in Part 3. The effects of some movements is to try to reinclude children in a participative way or to seek to realign children *with* adults by accepting that they need not be treated that differently. Other effects are the attempts to dissolve or dilute the effects of the term 'minor' by increasing participation by bringing about the recognition of new children's rights.

Chapter 1

THE SPATIALISATION OF CHILDREN'S EXCLUSION

Researching the History of Childhood

Various approaches to the history of childhood recognise opposing trends. First there is a recognition that adult and child cultures are different but that they once were less distinct. Hence, these historians narrate the separation of the child from the adult world over time since the mediaeval period. The other, more recent story refers to how children's cultures are recently being reincorporated into adult cultures, or possibly that adult cultures and child cultures are less distinct. Cunningham (1995) traces out the discourses that supported the idea of fusion of children into adult life and those that narrate a separation of the two. We can look now in more detail at these arguments, looking specifically at the slice of the story that pertains to the participation of children in adults' worlds through various forms of active citizenship, participation in decision making, or through making contributions by other means to the mainstream culture or through self-initiated projects. The dualism operating in much of this historical narrative is that there have been times or are times when adult's cultures are constructed as divergent from a supposedly different and discreet child culture. The construction of children's participation over time could provide a topic for a piece of research in itself. It would be a 'story' worth the telling should the evidence be easily found. It is beyond the scope of this research to do this historical aspect of the context of children's participation much comprehensive justice. As such, then, my comments about children's participation in social life are supportive of this thesis rather than central to it. But let us now turn our attention to the historical narration of children's participation in their local societies and environment as a way of attempting to introduce the action research, and analysis aspects of the research.

History of Childhood

de Mause (1974) showed how childhood could be understood as radically different in different societies at different times. For example, in the nineteenth century children were held fully accountable for their criminal actions and were punished for them accordingly. The cultural specificity of any his-story runs contrary to the desire to tell *any* story. But,

crucially, my wish is to do a *different* history of childhood. This can be understood as an attempt to rewrite / reread different histories of childhood, to recover some unnoticed aspects that may have been glossed in other volumes and neglected by the 'great works' of historical analysis in the same way as women's history has been elided in mainstream historical analyses. We must keep at least a subconscious attention on Foucault, however. A 'genealogy' of children's participation will inexorably be politically motivated. There's no getting away from the influences of power in the historical generation of historically inspired texts. A Foucauldian history/genealogy will analyse the forces that delineated how and when children could decide things and what and to what extent they could decide. It's a history of the formation of different 'child'-subjectivities or child-subjectifications. By the same token, historians cannot deny the embodied nature of the people they write about nor can they deny the embodied and motivated features of their positions as authors. Consequently, we need to advise against seeing children at all as 'real' people or children as a social group because of the fictive nature of the narratives historians write wherein children are cloaked in different guises at different times. There is no 'one' history.

History of Integration - Adults and Children in Shared Spaces

The fictional meta-context of many writers is easy to follow. I will show how there is a general agreement among many authors that the existence of a juvenile world did not exist until before modern times. Even since then, it is accepted that the period we now term 'childhood' is an invention of rich developed, industrialised nations. In mediaeval times, by contrast, it is accepted that children from the age of seven or earlier were integrated into the 'adult world' without any transitional phase. They did much the same work, and wore the same clothes. Child-specific toys and clothing were unheard of. Games and songs were shared by children and adults alike. In 'traditional' societies adults and children engaged in communal sporting activities and work outdoors. One theory is that it was with the development of enclosures that children became excluded from adult life (Echberg, 1998, chapter 3). Examples include how river swimming gets placed within the swimming pool. While at one time archery, skating, wrestling, running, cross country riding were all popular among all classes and ages, in modern times they get enclosed in spaces of all kinds, become discreet occupational pastimes of certain classes and ages or they die out altogether as pastimes. Once, right across Europe, market fairs were the venues for stone-throwing, snowball fights, and weight-lifting all in the open air. Echberg's (1998) narrative of the

enclosure of sport in halls, all forms of athleticism in gymnasia, and riding into riding schools, is paralleled with the enclosure of work into the factories, and the enclosure of learning by outdoor apprenticeship from the farms into the schools. Noticeably, subsequent 'green waves' sought to bring people back into the outdoors in the early eighteen hundreds and later in the early nineteen hundreds according to Echberg (1998, pp51-56). The significance of this is brought home in my discussion of more recent movements to create an outdoor aspect to civic life, schooling, and community celebration (See Chapters 16 and 17).

Of course, the view that children were once regarded with a fair amount of ambivalence rather than separated out as a distinct social group creates much argument among historians about the motivations of adults and their sentiment towards children at this time. However, evidence is largely lacking about how much of a say children had in their own lives and in community life generally. We can say little about what social rituals or 'rites of passage' were practised as these young children became active participants in the world of work and even less about the quality of this participation and if it could be construed as 'good citizenship'. Aries' ideas point to the inauguration of a culture of 'upbringing' only after the 17th century, when parents were given more and more responsibility for their children's welfare and when this role brought on the advent of a caring loving aspect to parent-child relationships. He, unlike de Mause, argues that children had been previously regarded with varying amounts of indifference which later was changed into a privileged status in the nineteenth century especially in wealthier households. Sharar's (1984) *Childhood in the Middle Ages* presents evidence that agrees with Aries on the issue of children's position in society. Because of the sharing of living space, the part played by neighbours in child care, and the accepted part played by children in mediaeval carnivalesque processions (pp179-182), we can place the child as an active and 'present' member of society in mediaeval times (pp162-224). But one's summative sense is that people were as caring as they were ambivalent towards children generally in the mediaeval age (Cunningham, 1995, pp36-37).

Work and Play - then and today
Comenius [1592 - 1670] was perhaps the first person to see the importance of play in education and that playgrounds offering cheerful playtime were essential to a well-ordered school. This has probably to do with the increasing numbers of children going to school in

the 17th Century. Seeing educational value in play of itself was perhaps not necessary up until this time. Reasons for this are not easy to pin down. While we do know that children were often married at an early age in the Middle Ages, we cannot be as sure as some authors that this time provided as harsh a childhood as we might think. We can say that the difference between childhood and adulthood was less defined (if defined at all). Adults and children were thought of more on equal terms and , notwithstanding the difficulties faced because of the period in history in which they lived (due to a lack of health care for example) we could argue that this was a time of 'emancipated childhood' and 'playful adulthood'. Dressing up, playing blind man's bluff were commonplace for all: adults and children alike. Festivals were celebrated by the whole community as Bruegel's picture *The Battle Between Carnival and Lent* shows. In Europe some festivals survive that allow for whole-family participation. These days reposition the celebratory and festival nature of play and its force as a bond between people in a community. The Bakhtinian sense of the carnivalesque unites the adult and the child in profanity; there is no distinction between performers and spectators. Contact between people is free and familiar; the clown is elevated and the lofty debased. How often have we read modern theorists exclude these performative, adult-child aspects of play in community life in placing the 'emotional, physical, and intellectual' benefits of play to the 'development' of the child. Space was shared: workspaces were for all from aged seven upwards; playspaces and workspaces in the street were likewise shared[1] . Work happened mostly in and around the home. The way spaces were used was unaffected by industrialisation. The shared space of adults and children was a direct result of the kinds of processes of production and labour. Only some children were apprenticed to work away from home.

We can spot easy comparisons between the feminist's calls for greater participation and emancipation with present-day calls for greater participation of children in decision-making. What 'child liberationist' would fail to look back and see the Middle Ages as a 'golden age' for children's involvement in their own determination? But modern Western discourses about child safety, the importance of individual rights, theories about the

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1 Salusbury (1939) records how one local authority began to consider the 'safety of the children in the highway' (p64) where they regulated how horses could approach the river for a drink. In Worcester in the late 1400s the authorities designated places where cattle might stand so that they could protect children passing through the streets. Nowadays, we see how spaces are so much more regulated; there are no pigs on the street and dogs are leashed or taken to the dog pound. Processions, street entertainment, and street sports are also documented widely in Mediaeval times.

psychological and motor development of the child, and adult fears surrounding children's work can cloak from sight the politically engaged and communitarian nature of childhood at this time. Indeed, recent evidence has shown that children today continue to *want to work.* But the statistics have been read as a further 'problematisation' of children, focussing on the prevalence of accidents, the low pay aspects of child labour and the absence of employment benefits for children (Children UK, 1998). The down-side of child labour is so completely similar to women's experience of work that the absence of a feminist reading of this kind is easily understood. The kind of work children do (in comparison to adults), the amount of time they spend working both in the home and in the school that is not regarded as work and is unpaid, the unsociable hours and the health and safety aspects of working conditions have all been issues for women's work in the past. However, the response of the wider community to children's participation is not to emancipate, create better conditions, enable greater participation. Instead of seeing children's desire to work as their eagerness to participate in family life and society, as keenness to be entrepreneurial and to learn about the world of work where they know they could be effective, we hear instead *from the educators,* that long hours spent working would effect their 'educational attainment' and *from the researchers* that they feel children are unprotected by the lack of enforcement of EU directives. The cries for greater participation of children are often founded on arguments the children once had opportunities to do so (as was seemingly the case in mediaeval times) but advocates of children's participation from the developed world have rarely called for children's reintegration into the work force. But new attitudes are emerging, however. Miller (1996) is perhaps an example of this. Usually, participation is constructed in ways that advances the *rights* of children to be heard and to self direct but yet to be protected from danger and abuse which is how children's work is most often described.

The academic world has begun to sit up and take notice, however. Increasing amounts of attention are being paid to the analysis of child labour. The journal *Childhood* (1999) has had a special volume dedicated to understanding child labour. Most of the articles discuss the need to combat child labour and do away with the modern 'child slave'. Yet, Boyden *et al.* (1998) have shown that the demand by people in the North to 'save' children from the vices of paid employment in developing countries may be seriously misguided. For many children in 'poorer' countries, paid labour is a means of survival. Secondly, their work shows that well-intentioned campaigns to 'rescue' child workers is often not what the

children want. We could suggest that children work because they see no option. but I find that to leave things at that is not to give a fuller picture. I imagine that for most adults today[2] , the underlying message is *still* that children need *liberating from work* if at all possible and will insist that work is only acceptable if accompanied by an educational framework so that schooling is part of the experience. Less popular is the more radical idea that children's work needs to be respected for what it is and may be an entirely worthwhile way to spend one's childhood or even the idea that schooling can get reconfigured as apprenticeship or on-the-job learning. Inversely, we can (and regularly do in secondary schools and further education in the West) reconfigure schooling as work-based or work-related in efforts to make it more meaningful and relevant.

Closer to home, in McKechnie and Hobbs' research (1999), we can note that an analysis of child labour in the UK hardly supports the notion that children mainly work 'out of necessity'. An alternative explanation is that children in the UK work for an increase in consumption ability. By having control over some aspect of the family budget, children can gain control over the kinds of consumables they can buy (e.g.s CDs, computer games and fashionable clothes). Miljeteig (1999) rightly summarises the state of play with regard to child labour in noticing that a new child-oriented perspective, driven by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, is gaining greater recognition.

> Working children should be seen as participants and partners in the fight against their economic exploitation rather than opponents. This should be a natural extension of the child-oriented perspective, although there are still some who would regard this as 'too radical' a position (Miljeteig, 1999, p8).

Neither have normative efforts to universalise children's experience and transcend cultural differences been successful. Hill *et al* (1998, p9) outline the problem of using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a means of determining universal values and limits for children's welfare and participation. While article 32 recognises the right of the child to be protected from exploitative work, other articles may support children's participation in the labour market in order to have a right to a healthy standard of living (Article 27). Now that people have begun to realise that how childhood is perceived and experienced has been different over time and in different cultures, more unique child-oriented narratives become

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2 See Neustatter (1999).

available to researchers and the readers in the field. With new perspectives comes new expectations for what children might be capable of. The re-narration of children's experiences of work is a case in point.

The following is a summary of the statistics derived from research carried out in North Tyneside. The survey covered over 1000 children ages 10-16 (O'Donnell and White, 1998). They show that over one in five children between the age of ten and sixteen have a part-time job, with one in three having worked during the last six months. About half do delivery jobs (with boys being three times more likely to be doing this work), a fifth work in shops, and the list of other jobs done by children being mainly hotel and catering (where the girls were more represented, better paid by the hour, though likely to work longer hours), selling door-to-door, farm work, and building construction. The average hours worked by the cohort that did regular work was 7.75 hours per week. The length of time children spend working, the prevalence of the desire to work, and the ways in which child labour is part of the financial structure of family life all show positive signs that children are already active participants in their world. The actively work to earn money to buy clothes, subsides their own entertainment and travel and presumably seek out employment in order to do so. One in ten children who had a part-time job was the only member of the household to be in employment. We may wonder if children's labour was better valued in Mediaeval times. Was there less chance that their work was less well paid than today? While most children worked for the money (66%) about a third had other motives. Would the results be the same for adults? What do we conclude about the contribution of children to the economic life of the family or about their seduction by consumerism and designer labels? What does our desire to enforce EU regulations about the age at which children can enter employment tell us about our exclusion of children from participation in significant aspects of cultural life? How have we managed to separate out work and play in such a way as to ghettoise children into educational institutions set-apart form the 'real' world of work? Children seem to wish to have a chance to be part of the action in the workplace, in the festivities of a community, in the playfulness of the adult world too. What impact would these desires have on schooling given the chance? What does our response to the statistics about child labour say about our controlling, disciplining attitude, our desire to put children 'in their place' - a place of controlled timetables, disciplined subject areas, age-specific peer groups, away (we hoped) from all dangers? One could argue that in school, children's work is most undervalued

(much less than fifty pence per hour), that in schools, children's contributions are exploited by the negation of their potential as citizens, and that the dangers of being bullied, (the dangers of being physically beaten by teachers up until recently), and the danger that they will no longer see connections between their lives and the health of the community are greater than in many workplaces.

More and more the child-oriented perspective in the sociology of childhood gains ground and exposes the untenability of many of our concepts of what constitutes a healthy childhood. New research shows how children contribute usefully to family and community life. The conundrum of child labour in the West is perhaps the best example of our increasing difficulty in how childhood should be constructed. On the one hand we wish to keep ideas about children being different from adults because we wish to protect them and idealise the time spent away from adult concerns; on the other hand we wish to involve children in decision making and self-determination by means of a dissolution of this very difference between adults and children.

By localising and particularising children's experience to time and place we see that generalisations about childhood are unfounded. While Cunningham (1995) warns of over generalising the period which stretches over a few hundred years, we can usefully draw on such theorists as Hanawalt (1992) who looked at records of accident mortalities to derive some historical 'routes' of the ever-changing place of the child in society. She shows how from the ages eight to twelve in mediaeval times, children were 'independent from adults' and were engaged in work of some kind. Aries epitomises the general theoretical position that attempts to show how children have been separated out from adults since that time and have been institutionalised in relationships of care and education which are given weighty support from discourses of philanthropy, stage theorists in psychology and arguments that childhood should be a 'special time' in life. Influences from the view of the romantic ideal of childhood support this view that children are/need to be depoliticised 'in their own interest' as they have a need for a carefree life.

The view of Aries is that there has been and increase in the distance between adult and child. This is supportive of a move to exclude the child from adult cultures. de Mause's argument is the opposite: that children are now cared for better, that they are less likely to be killed,

abandoned, beaten etc. and as a result have been incorporated into life in a caring way whereas in the past their 'lot' was one of neglect. In our terms de Mause discusses a move to 'include' out of a desire for care and affection. But this is not the inclusion of children in participation we seek to expose in this volume. de Mause's narration of the included child is better imagined as a wrapping of children in a constraining embrace of care. Struggle as they might, children cannot now easily escape the institutionalisation of care and their concomitant *exclusion from participation* in may other aspects of adult life. If we can find examples of participation by children today we will be also finding children in an 'in-between' place: the space between smothering care and downright abuse and exposure to danger.

de Mause (1974) discusses the maltreatment of children in times before the nineteenth century using data on infanticide and abandonment to support his claims. The nightmare that was childhood is now over. Or is it? Other writers develop more complex class-related pictures that correctly, in my view, detract form de Mause's claims. Arguments about when and if parents have only recently begun to care in a loving way for their children had, until the 1980's, disregarded cultural factors of poverty, localised belief systems and social structures that meant that some children did large amounts of work and were abandoned, and abused in the past. Pollock (1983) and others have cogently argued that parents' care and affection for children not such a recent thing as de Mause would have us believe. Given the space, we could argue at some length that the process of early marriage, the inauguration of kings and queens at an early age and the tribal practices of listening to as much to children's dreams for decision making, also points to an elevated and incorporated nature of children into the political, cultural, and affective life as members of social groups. To do so would require a stepping outside of our own taken-for-granted assumptions about an innocent and carefree childhood. Do we wish we had such a childhood ourselves? Do we wish that our own children can look back on their early years with certain 'innocent' kinds of memories. Do these iconic models of child cultures blind us to the politics of adult-child relationships as they are? Do they blind us to the potential for involving children in more engaged ways that are possibly nearer to situations of risk? Have we considered the possibilities for change inspired by a replacement of old metaphors about innocent and healthy childhoods. The parallels for how women have redefined themselves and their position in society is easy to see. What, then are the barriers to reconceptualising childhood

culturally? What can we agree on historically?

What We Can Agree On

There is agreement on the nineteenth century watershed for the instatement of a culture of affection and child-centredness brought about by the decline of strict religiosity, women's emancipation and theories of child development. While Aries (1973) celebrated the seventeenth century for change in ideas about childhood, Cunningham (1995) places the time of increased sensitivity to children as the eighteenth century with the influences of Rousseau, Locke, and importantly, the influences of Wordsworthian romanticism. John Locke called for the child to be left as free as possible in their innocent folly so long as it can be accepted by the adults present. More importantly, Cunningham claims that romantic sentimentalism and Christian humanitarianism are responsible for this change along with the decline in the belief in original sin which led to the imagining of childhood as the 'best of times' in the later nineteenth century. The new idea of 'childhood' could be traced through the introduction of child-specific clothes and toys for the upper classes (Aries, 1973; Stone, 1979), child-specific places such as separate bedrooms in the home and separate places for learning in the school (Echberg, 1998, pp50-58). But the single most important influence out of all of these for Cunningham is the onset of schooling which removed children from the spaces of the labour market. The big story here is that children became disenfranchised from work through the period of the Industrial Revolution and became a social group onto themselves. Toys and sports and education, and their associated places designed specifically for children served to delineate them as a specific social group. Childhood as we know it was born.

The arrival of the institutional arrangements of the school[3] has had the biggest effect on how we view children today. The school system influenced children in the same way as the Industrial Revolution had separated work from home for adults. What younger children experienced work early were influenced by industry's advance more than the onset of

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[3] The school, for our purposes herein, becomes a rich site of struggle for redefinition of children's roles in community participation. In this volume, the many forces operational in the contest for children's identifications are to be exposed in the process of planning and changing some outdoor places. The school grounds, in particular, as a place extraneous, and incidental to the formalised, traditional curriculum, provides a backdrop, a picto-textual narrative, for a reading of the discourses operational in children's subjectifications today. These influences come in the guise of enhancing play value, the outdoor classroom, planning and design, partnership with local business, and the elusive nature of the cultural drama enacted by the children themselves in theses places daily. Bearing this in mind we can draw from the well of historical analysis to contextualise these influences.

schooling. If children were not to be found in factories they would be found in schools. With the onset of schooling since the seventeenth century and its concomitant effects we have valued children in a new way. In the twentieth century we regard children like we have never done before. The unread / unheard history of children is perhaps about the continuity of children's desire to work and be connected to their homes (and thereby symbolically, if not materially as well) their desire to contribute to societal organisation and change as effective citizens. Recent statistical analyses of children's work patterns today (fig ?) shows evidence to support this.

We can also find plenty of other evidence to suggest that parents were also unhappy about the expulsion of children from the fields. For example, the truancy of children around harvest time often happened with parental consent (Cunningham, 1995, pp79-106). The beginning of the regime of schooling brought about a lot of rioting by children too (Sutton-Smith, 1981, 1885). Since that time others have shown how children and youth have been to the forefront of many activities of social disorder (Gillis, 1981). Adams (1991) looked in depth at the evidence supporting the idea that children and young people have protested about their schooling persistently, if moderately, over the last hundred years; the resistance of children to schooling is perhaps the unexpressed and unreported characteristic of many pupils' attitudes to school. Adam's thesis is that the widespread protests by pupils has always been about the *basic* conditions of their schooling. The relationships between teachers and pupils have always been tinged (if not strongly characterised by) relations of control and domination or else relations similar to those between enemies. So, with the onset of schooling came the processes of discipline and punishment that effected parents as much as children. The family was 'schooled' too through a moralisation of society or in Elias's (1939) words through a 'civilising process'. The imposition of discourses of etiquette and manners were used as the semiotic carrier of his argument.

The idea that schooling was necessary came from the belief that a work force would need to be able to read. Less obvious was the need to find a place for the collections of children now left at home while parents went off to work in factories. The skill of reading became more important (perceptibly in any event) to survival with the onset of industrialisation. In Ireland, the learning of a new language was politically motivated by colonisers and was successfully secured in the cultural 'warp time' of a mere fifty years.

Schooling brought other effects. The opportunity for a child-minding service was also attractive as much to parents as employers who were in many instances glad to send their children to school (Cunningham, 1995, pp103-4). Crucially, the State became implicated in childrearing. It had to address the philanthropic desire to 'care for foundlings' as early as the middle of the 1800's. By then the beginnings of a welfare system were to be found in many countries.

Throughout the last few hundred years State inspired interventions were set in place one by one in order to achieve a number of things: a mobile work force, a disciplined citizenry, a body of people that could read, and a culture of 'happy childhood' free from the lives of adult 'pressures'. Reformers and philanthropists advanced numerous causes so that children would have to be cared for, taken off the streets, given access to nature, and separated from adults so that they can 'play'. Once the concept of childhood itself was accepted, other reformers like the Jesuits and the Puritans could call for greater attention to moral issues. Children were innocent but weak. We needed to protect their innocence and strengthen their weakness through regimes of discipline and control.

By the beginning of the 1900's the idea of the 'rights of the child' had taken root. Manners were one way in which children were delineated as being different from adults. Inversely, adults divorced themselves from being the same as the child by constructing new adult subjectifications. We can trace moves to capture the 'inner child' in the Romantics and today in certain brands of psychology. These moves are indicative of a recognition that either the adult cultures to which we are accustomed are defective or that we had in fact 'lost' something from an (imagined) 'original' in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Foucault, in his later work, acknowledged Derrida's criticisms that the beginnings of the rational 'discipline and punish' culture may not have been instigated at a recognisable point in time and that our desires for an imagined 'better original time' are flawed. But most historians, and I, have been careful not to fall into the same time trap.

Autobiographies - Adults' Reminiscences from 1700 - 1900
A nine year old girl remembers what work was like for her when employed on a farm. She was possibly taken off the streets as a pauper and ended up doing the kind of work usually

given to a boy of her age. Life was onerous. In 1843 she states:

> I was apprenticed in driving bullocks to field and fetching them again; cleaning
> out their houses, and bedding them up; washing potatoes and boiling them for
> the pigs; milking; in the filed leading the horses or bullocks to the plough. Then
> I was employed in mixing lime to spread, digging potatoes, pulling turnips, and
> anything that came to hand like a boy. I reaped a little, loaded pack horses; went
> out with the horses for furze. I got up at five or six, except on market mornings
> twice a week, and then at three. I went to bed at half past nine. I worked more in
> the fields than in the house (Stickland, 1973, p124).

Stickland's collection of 'children's voices' covers the period from 1700 -1914. Her collection shows the wide variety of types of work in agriculture and domestic industries experienced by children. In the late 1700's, even toddlers were encouraged to get involved in treading cotton wool before carding (p86). The main influence on children in the 1700's was the beginning of industrialisation.With the onset of industrialisation, the woollen industry took over from home-spun linen and became second only to agriculture as an employer. Children were found many other workplaces: in foundry works, pottery making factories, and in many forms of apprenticeship. Stickland describes the system of apprenticeship, which lasted for some seven hundred years, as an 'excellent method for passing on crafts and skills' (p35) but at worst leading to exploitation. The long hours and low wages paid to children helped set up the wealth of many early industrialists in the mid 1700's.

But we need to be aware that the voices of poorer children are easy to miss in written evidence from the period because they leave few personal records. Yet, We can say with some authority that the demarcation between children's and adult's worlds was not sharp especially for the poor (Stickland, 1973, from the preface). The irony is that it was out of necessity that children shared any responsibility for earning money than any desire to involve them in constructive participative employment for the better of their community or family. With money came schooling for the middle classes and access to a life of greater freedom from the difficulties of life. In time schooling became part and parcel of every child's life. By 1880 compulsory education was in place for children up to 14 years of age. Apprenticeship became squeezed into the later teenage years and is now found in early

adulthood. Stickland finds that children were still in employment before the age of 14 but see it as the result of 'feckless' parenting (Stickland, 1973, p192). Her own collection shows that some children in the late 1800's were keen to get out and about in the adult world:

> We also loved to join in the hay making at Grandpa's ... (Stickland, 1973, p194)

> At that time we could leave school at the age of thirteen and I was very eager to do so, and I begun to go round with milk with my father round the village which I liked very much in the summer, but it was very cold in the winter; there were no covered in vans then but I was always very well wrapped up (Stickland, 1973, p195).

> We did enjoy life down the mine. (Boy aged 14 recalling his time spent mining - in Stickland, 1973, p202)

Autobiographic material form a similar period is used in the next section to give another slice through time drawing on more personal histories. We need to be careful that the adult speaker retells a narrative that is not necessarily the only interpretation of things. Their reminiscences come at a later time and cultural setting. They may have 'bought into' the accepted ideal childhood and colour their stories appropriately, emphasising some sections more than others. These caveats apply to all history writing however. As always in this text: 'let the reader beware'.

Burnett's (1982) collection of autobiographies of childhood from 1820-1920 helps us notice that 'in general it seems that the extent of restraint increased in the middle class and the severity of punishment in the working class, though exceptions may immediately be cited. But children's happiness in the home bore no direct relationship to wealth or poverty, to possessions or the lack of them, to overcrowded or inadequate housing conditions.' (xvii). Indeed the happiest memories in the autobiographies come from large working class families:

> In many such households, 'family' extended into neighbouring houses where grandparents or other kin lived and into the nearby streets which served as an

extension of 'home' into the open air.' (Burnett, 1982, xvii)

'In such communities there was no lack of 'affect' for children by aunts, uncles, neighbours, shopkeepers and the numerous hawkers and peddlers who brought colour and excitement into the streets.' (Burnett, 1982, xviii)

This is not to say that economics had no part to play in the distinctions between different childhood memories. According to Burnett, it was mainly the poorest third of the population that experienced 'unwanted children, severe punishment, 'premature' (*his words*) entrance to work and familial relationships poisoned by the struggle for survival' (Burnett, 1982, p271). Modern norms inspire Burnett to see physical punishment as unfavourable and and early entrance into work as exploitative and we may be sure that many children and adults will still agree. However, while there were down sides to the experience of family and home by being poor, there were also down sides to being wealthy. Another reading (supported by some of Burnett's own findings) might conclude, from the child's participation point of view, that the middle classes had 'got it wrong' on some counts at least:

In wealthy families the care and education of children became entrusted to a succession of surrogates - nannies, governesses, tutors and boarding schools - which could virtually isolate a child from the outside world (Burnett, 1982, p168).

Since the nineteenth century we seem to have effected an expansion of 'policies of surrogacy' which seem to mimic the policies of isolation used by middle classes during that period. It is now politically incorrect to advocate child labour, which historically for many provided an opportunity for engagement in the social life of the community and was seen as the main way children would gain the skills and values to become a 'breadwinner'. Education, social welfare interventions, after school care, and a commercialisation of the public times and spaces children now access provide the expansion of a process of 'surrogacy' which began in nineteenth century Britain. Perhaps we have wrongly expected the education system to take on board the role of developing individual personality, and intellectual and emotional independence? Burnett's autobiographies lead him to note that parents and teachers saw education (in its early form) as being a preparation for a certain kind of work rather than a preparation for life, 'for producing efficient manageable workers and law-abiding citizens' (Burnett, 1982, p166). Have we placed all our eggs in the basket of an over-worked educational system (that has never provided many opportunities for self-

initiated work that was culturally significant to the child within his / her locale) and which now groans under the strain of being expected to produce literate, disciplined and controllable citizens at a time when the labour market calls for independent, creative thinkers. Even when the work-place was a predictable entity, school seemed to fail in its ability to prepare some:

> Once over the initial shock of work, many autobiographers found adolescence a happier, more exciting time than childhood, with opportunities to develop their personalities and pursue their own interests - for some in work, for others in self-education or leisure activities (Burnett, 1982, p51).

One way or another, the legalised expectation that children should go to school was enshrined in cultural practice and the majority of children in developed Western countries were placed into schools by 1900. A further look at the autobiographies gives us material for building a case for showing how children were excluded from the workplace. In the mid 1800's the need to provide spaces for play became an obvious one once the children were taken out of work and into school. This need is addressed in the later 1900's with the provision of country parks and public gardens.

> The playground was small and the pupils were forced out on the roads for most of their games, although there were plenty of suitable fields quite near the school. No one thought it worthwhile to provide a proper playing field for the children. No games at all were taught at school and no articles for games were supplied - not even a bat or cricket ball or football or hockey stick. (Memoirs of Charles Cooper b. 1872. Quoted in Burnett, J., 1982, p197)

While my own father's memories of science in the 1930's was a positive one (due to the skills of a very able teacher), Daisy complains about science's relevance to her early life as a child.

> We had no lessons on such subjects as Flowers or Fruit or Pet Animals - oh, no! But we had 'Science'! We learned about sand and glass and water and the 'power of cohesion' that keeps sand particles together in sandstone. (From the unpublished autobiography of Daisy Cowper, b. 1890. Quoted in Burnett, J. 1982, p200)

The idea that the child was to learn things that might be useful in a future time as an adult

was enshrined in most curricula early on. As a result, school was often dreary, engendered fear in the pupils and taught about subjects that bore little or no direct relationship to their home lives. Daisy mourns for the loss of an opportunity at school to teach her about pets or fruit which would have been much more interesting to her at aged seven. Other the story of discipline and control from her days in a public boarding school from the early 1900's:

> [...] from the moment of waking, our movements were governed by a strict time-table, designed so that those in charge of us might know what we were doing at any moment of the day (Kathleen Betterton, b. 1913. Quoted in Burnett, J. 1982, p213).

Kathleen gives us pause for thought about the child's ability and need for pause for thought:

> Our leisure time (the time when we might read a book or do what we liked 'within reason' as the grown ups say) hardly amounted to more than four hours a week. It was a mercy that we were sent early to bed for only between the cold but friendly sheets was it possible to think without interruption. (Burnett, 1982, p214).

With formal, compulsory, and particularly boarding schooling we can argue that the emancipatory nature of children's culture takes a backward turn. School was and is not an easy place; it can hardly be described as a successful workshop for democracy. Control is operationalised both over teachers, parents and children through the mechanisms of supervision (of children and adults), the wearing of uniforms, and through the imposition of curricula that occlude easy locally distinctive choices (whatever the intentions are). Whereas the child once contributed to family income the flow of goods is now from parent to child and dependency is now institutionalised. In these institutions of order and discipline the child could be 'brought up' and made ready for the outside world. At whatever point in history it occurred, we can say that things have not always been thus. Over time the shared aspects of child care, once a responsibility spread among many, is constricted to the point where parents are legally the primary carers but are becoming increasingly surrogate in their role. Parents are now supported by a huge apparatus of the State's services across the boundaries of health, education and welfare.. More recently, with the increased need to go out to work for both parents, and with the professionalisation of 'nanny services', children are found to be even further set apart from kin-relationships and experiences of the workplace. The school's role in providing an education, and now a venue for preschooling

and out-of-school care, have become features of a fairly recent part of human history. An early proponent of preschool systems was Maria Montessori.

1900 Onwards

Educationalists in the 1900's continue to give an account of how the child was seen as developmentally and essentially *different* from the adult: an idea we have very much with us today. Maria Montessori writes:

But he [the child] remains permanently alien to the social labour of the adult; his activity cannot be used in social production.

...

The child is thus essentially alien to this society of men

...

The fact is that the child is an extra-social being who is perpetually disturbing to the adult, even in the house of his parents. His incapacity for adaption is aggravated by the fact that he is active and cannot renounce his activity. Hence the need to make war on him; he must be taught not to interfere, not to disturb, till he is reduced to passivity. Or else he must be relegated to living in a place apart, which, if it is not the prison assigned to extra-social adults, is something corresponding, be its name nursery or school (Montessori, 1936, pp236-7).

Montessori's analysis of children's activity was to sustain (or at least accept the contemporary) ideas of difference between adults and children. Children's 'work' was separate: the adult did things that children can never do; the child's work was to 'become adult'. While both adult and child need each other to complete their 'work' the distinctions are glaringly obvious to her. Children's work is not dependent on 'external factors'. Montessori's philosophy is not the problem-oriented, environment-focussed Deweyan variety. She does accept that both adult and child act wilfully on the 'same' environment, a fact that could have been used to advance the idea that a shared space for lifelong learning is what was required. Notwithstanding her operational dualism between adult and child, that needs further exposition before pronouncing it merely a modern myth, Montessori's critique of traditional schooling was radical and well founded:

Their [children's] work lay in schools. They were shut up there, slaves, exposed to the enforced torments of society. The narrow chest that brought an acquired

predisposition to tuberculosis, came from long hours spent bending over desks,
learning to read and write. The spinal column was curved through the same enforced
position; eyes were short-sighted through the prolonged effort of trying to see
without sufficient light. The whole body was poisoned, as it were asphyxiated,
through long periods spent in small closed spaces (Montessori, 1936, p269).

Montessori's response to the jail atmosphere of schools as she saw them was not to
abandon the idea of a school and reintegrate children into society in a participative way. Her
irreconcilable, essentialist dualism of adult-child could not allow this. Her response is to
create a *different kind of school,* imaged for us by the *Children's House*. In the *Children's
House* Montessori founds a solution to the problem, as she saw it, that came with
industrialisation. Now women are working outside the home, 'she cannot do justice to her
family duties' (Boyd, 1917, p257).

> The only way of escape from the difficulties of the situation is to socialise the home
> by communising the work of the servant, the nurse, the teacher (Boyd, 1917, p257).

Expert teachers, nurses, and carers are what is needed for even the very young child. At best
the *Children's House* is a half-way house between the home and the school, retaining many
of the caring, nurturing aspects of the freedom of the home but with added advantages. Yet
the school is definitively set apart from the adult world of work. Montessori's *Children's
House* is still a children's gulag. 'Services' once found in the family are professionalised
by the State. Discourses about health and well-being in science, and the belief that
professionals can 'do it better' and 'know better' than the parent inspire the advent of
schooling of different kinds. The imperatives of production never allowed for a change in
the workplace to accommodate the child in a healthy participative way in mainstream cultural
life and in the labour force. The home, now fast emptying of caring adults, must also be
emptied of children from an even earlier age for their education and their safety.

Baker's Streets

One possible source of pictorial documentation of how spaces were becoming increasingly
ordered and managed by a professional class is Baker's *Street Photographs - Manchester
and Salford.* Baker (1989) took photographs of the 'slums' of Manchester and Salford
between 1960 and 1974. In these photographs one can read the narrative from two

perspectives. One is the story of how professional people (architects, town planners, the medical profession, economists, politicians) felt that the housing of the day was inadequate, that people would live in council high-rise flats instead of the close-knit back streets of the inner city. The slum clearances were brought about by a combination of forces: the need for packing more people into less space as cities needed larger work forces, the need for new housing to replace older ones, the need for more space for the increasing numbers of cars and so on. Baker's photographs show these places 'just before' and throughout their demolition. What they show, according to one possible narrative suggested by the editorial comment, is the effects of policy decisions, inspired by discourses from many professions, on the housing conditions of a particular class. With the change in housing came the loss of a particular space that is of interest to this discussion because it is outdoor and public and shared by many disparate groups that included adults and children, manual labourers and those that worked in and around the home, carers and those that are cared for: the street. Another aspect of the importance of Baker's work is that her photographs are evocative of a 'form of life' that may have been less easily available to other forms of documentation.

The Street - Shared, Public, Outdoor Space

Almost half of Baker's photographs are of doorsteps and the immediate pavement areas of these houses where the children and adults congregated, played and interacted. Some other simple statistics from the 120 or so shots demonstrates a different story about the experiences of children in these places. Almost three quarters of the photographs include children. Half of the photographs with children also show adults as well, mostly their mothers[4] . Baker's 'slice of life' indicates that children had access to and experience of a shared public space in the local street that included a cocktail of social interaction, housework, and other forms of labour. There are virtually no cars; (only one photograph shows a bus moving quickly at the end of a street). In this public space the boundary

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[4] Quite rightly, I have been questioned on why I do not provide a similar description and analysis of my own photographs in this thesis. By explanation I should help out here by reminding readers that I intentionally wish to leave some of this analysis through another layer of interpretation by the reader. I agree that my photographs are merely *my* 'slice of life' and this is exactly my point. Slices of life from *someone's perspective* are all that are available to us in the same way as selected transcriptions from interviews are specially chosen as synechdochically representative of life as *some* researcher sees it. The apparent difficulty with the 'framing up' of a relative truth by the inclusion of photographs is thus exactly my strategy in unsettling the reader into no false sense of there being 'a truth' to be found in this (or any text as I would see it). The problem lies, perhaps, in our inability to be as accepting of the relative truth of what we write and read in words as we are at accepting that it is possible to have multiple 'readings' of images. Had I the copyright to her photographs I have no doubt that I would have included some here.

between what is private and shared seems seamless in a way that is inconceivable today in most urban environments. In the street clothes are hung out to dry, pavements are sometimes scrubbed, children skip, play in make-shift paddling pools, they draw on the pavement, feed the pigeons or observe or interact with the adults who come and go. Mothers interact on the street while (presumably) keeping an eye on the young ones. Older children care for younger siblings. People carry their goods on carts or prams. People on bicycles stop for a chat on their way to work. The drama of the public street is not too dissimilar to the action in a mediaeval street in terms of the amount of activity. While the pigs, cattle and horses of earlier times are absent, dogs very much on the scene and are all left to roam off the leash. Furniture from inside the house makes its way onto the pavement. Children sit on kerbs, walls and doorsteps often with their adult carers. The ice-cream van comes along and creates a communal event for all. Older adults are visible in a way that has only recently disappeared: they sit outdoors, meet each other, and help with spinning the skipping rope for the children. There is only one photograph of a public play area.

A discussion of why this socio-economic group used their public space like this could be long and complex. It is not in question that the experience of living in a slum in the 1960s had many downsides in terms of health, and access to some amenities. (Leaking roofs and the smell of outside lavatories can hardly be desirable). Similarly, the forces that brought about the existence this community had are many and diverse. But these discussions are not the focus of my analysis which is this: a particular cultural and physical spatialisation of childhood (and adulthood) created opportunities for children's participation in the social, cultural and worklife of a community that blurred the boundaries between the public and the private, between adult and child. But decision makers of the day may have been caught up with a rationalisation of the living arrangements of these people that would reduce the quality of life as much as improve it. Not only was it necessary to leave behind their pets because they were not permitted in their new homes but, perhaps, they also left behind a public space in the cobbled car-free street that afforded a multiplicity of opportunities for interaction and exchange that was transgenerational, playful, and work-related. In these places, things that could not be learned in schools were taught, caught, and learned. It was probable that any deprivation experienced by the children of these areas was not being adequately responded to by the schooling system either. (See McMillan below). Baker's photo-documentary is further evidence that the research presented in this text into recent

developments in the design and change of the outdoor public spaces of school grounds and play parks is timely. In the light of her evidence, we may begin to formulate some possible explanations for the active involvement of children and adults in changing these environments. With even the most cursory historical analysis of the spatialisation of the outdoor public street, we could suggest that this new cultural movement is perhaps indicative of a desire by communities to reclaim some public space (Deleuze's reterritorialisation) through active participation in new forms of outdoor public cultural life.

Other Educationalists

Montessori is not the only educator to have grappled with the distance from the home and the workplace in their expression of policies and philosophies of education over the years. Others have advanced ideas that support a notion of 'spatialisation-as-oppression' or 'spatialisation as liberation' in their writings as I see them. Two other educators we shall now look at that spoke about the spatially intimate or the spatially significant openings between the different worlds of adults and children are Margaret McMillan and John Dewey.

Margaret McMillan

Margaret McMillan was born in 1860 in America to parents of Scottish descent. She is regarded as one of the great nursery school pioneers of the early nineteen hundreds. She wrote widely about early childhood education and was a practical innovator who set up her own nursery school and started a college for teacher training. She was dedicated to providing a preschool education for those that did not come from a privileged background. As manager of schools in Deptford in London she came across children who were diseased, dirty and undernourished. Bradburn (1976) notes that while there were some opportunities for leisure time for children in the area, for the most part any gaiety bore witness to human resilience and courage rather than to anything positive about the social life in Deptford. The schooling system was seen by her to be failing the children of Deptford. In the homes of about 60% of families there was no one at home with the children. McMillan's response was not to set up a creche but to provide an open-air nursery school and day centre that was different to other nurseries and went well beyond the concept of a creche. What was most distinctive was that parents and children were to be treated as a unit. Her aim was to reform the home through the action of setting up her school. McMillan's education was involved a

radical approach to dealing with the effects of disadvantage and poverty by engaging with the whole community. Her school was a special 'place' where a different discourse about childhood was spatialised . This, among other differences (see Bradburn, 1976, p54) set her apart form Montessori's view of the role of nursery education. McMillan was dedicated to providing a *nurturing* atmosphere for preschoolers that was outwardly like Montessori's. Like Montessori, an essential component of her solution was the way in which the environment was used to help the development of mind and body, the acquisition of a sense of personal hygiene, and the advancement of a healthy nervous and circulatory system. But the context for her work was radically different to Montessori's. For McMillan the treatment of families *within communities* was central to achieving similar aims. For her 'nurturing' was for all: adults and children. She recognised that adults would continue to want to learn and work outside the home. Her school would be a place where adults could come and learn too. The spaces she imagined as 'future schools' still await building even in the late twentieth century:

> They should build and plan so that children can be out safely in all weathers. All this does not mean that they need not plan to have shelter. It means just the opposite. They must think and plan for shelter and other things, as never before (Bradburn quoting McMillan, 1976, p76).

McMillan's open-air school provided a 'night camp' for those suffering from TB. During the day there were shelters for working under, and an outdoor garden-cum-outdoor-classroom (because most children had little or no garden space). There were herbs, flowers, a greenhouse, ponds, pools, fountains and animals. Most of her adaptions to the traditional school building were for the benefit of the child's health. On opening a school, 80% of the children had rickets but in one year there was hardly any trace of it (Bradburn, 1976, p93). But of course there were many other social and educational payoffs as well.

McMillan's work also exposes a distinction in how knowledge generation is theorised and how curricula get constructed. McMillan's localism is evident in her efforts at teacher training. The importance of a knowledge of the locality was most apparent. She required teachers to get to know the parents, the homes and the locales in which they worked. Education had a vital link with how local space was owned, controlled and organised and thought about in school. Alongside observations of children the nurseries, walks in the street

or country were organised for trainee teachers. Sometimes they were accompanied by a historian or geologist. The hope was that they would learn to 'see' better. Her training of teachers was transdisciplinary and imbued with a socially critical pragmatism. Her educational response was contingent on the situation of injustice, or environmental degradation she saw. McMillan said:

> Every teacher is a discoverer. Everyone is an inventor, an improver of methods, or he is a mere journeyman, not a master! (quoted in Bradburn, 1976, p132).

The continuation of a presence of a strong open-air aspect in some nursery education today reflects a possible continuation or link with the mindset of McMillan. But physical development and environmental education are given less prominence today. Walker (1977) states that the last twenty years have seen little progress in the uptake of a socially critical environmental education in schools and notices continued differentials among curricular changes, theories of social criticism, and the practices of teachers. The outdoor environment is less seen as a requirement for emotional, social and intellectual well-being. Teachers record that the scope for using the local environment for an active response to local or global issues is collapsed by constraints on teaching practice. Apple (1996) has documented the relationship between the context of curricular policy making and how teachers get 'positioned' in their implementation. We can notice the rise in interest in league-table mentality and standardisation of levels of attainment in 'core' curricula in the assessment of schools. Teachers 'caught in the middle' have very little time, energy, or space for commitment to any socially critical response to the socio-environmental problems on the doorsteps of their schools, let alone getting to know the intimate details of the environment surrounding a school or the lifestyles of the families that live there.

Some would say our children are being closeted in unhealthy atmospheres again as was the case in early forms of institutionalise schooling. Asthma is on a rapid increase. Others call for a reawakening of the importance of the outdoor space for ecological reasons. The combination of differing reasons about the importance of the outdoors means that school grounds and public spaces for recreation for children are again gaining prominence.

The rise in interest in school grounds development is apparent in school curricula in some schools and in a quiet cultural movement among other stakeholders in the community that

involves outside agencies, businesses, parents and others in effecting a change in the way these spaces get used and managed. A coalescence of discourses from ecology, the green movement, to anti-bullying campaigns, and the rise in interest in children's safety means that this quiet movement specialises education in the outdoors again. Parents are again finding that the informality of the school grounds is the place where their input can be easily accepted if their presence inside the building is regarded as inappropriate. A new move to recapture the nurturing of people within certain kinds of outdoor places in education is afoot. The focus in this thesis is on the rise in interest in the development of school grounds for a whole plethora of reasons: the need to deal with bullying, the need to teach the children games because they no longer know how to play, the planting up of native species to reinstate natural habitats and encourage wildlife and so on. Underneath each of these motivations lie different rhetorics of play (Sutton-Smith, 1997) and rhetorics of childhood and its place in wider society.

One reading of this movement could be that it could be just another symptom of adults' hegemony over children's spaces in the second half of this century. Sutton-Smith (1997, pp121-2) calls this move the 'domestication' of children through playgrounds, play equipment, organised sports, clubs (Scouts), and recreation (dancing, gymnastics) and the supervision of children at all times. We can see from history that adults have been inspired for different reasons and at different times to organise children's lives (spatially) for different reasons. At one point in history taking children into the workplace off the streets is seen as a good thing. Later, taking children out of work and into school is the practical solution for their care and welfare. All the while the question is 'where shall we place our children?'. Few ask children where they would like to be. Even in late modern times, our reasons for changing children's spaces may be centred on an adult understanding of 'what is best'.

Initially, in this slice of history, we have seen that in the past adults have at worst sought to use children as extra workers in abusive relationships or at best collaborate with them as contributing family members. Next came moves to civilise adults and children alike through new rules and order in manners, traffic control, property rights etc. This move is paralleled in educational circles with laws making schooling compulsory. The first move was to 'domesticate' children was accomplished by fencing them in within the school playground

(and the school itself). Perhaps the second move is to invade the school playground (one of the last remaining 'children's space') with motivations from rhetorics in ecology, the need for an 'outdoor classroom', the teaching of traditional games to children who are seen as lacking the ability to play and so on (see chapter 16 and Appendix F). The school grounds development movement may be viewed on the one hand as adults' efforts to reterritorialise one of children's last remaining private (if monitored and corralled) spaces. A more positive reading would see it as an effort to consolidate of the right of children to have privacy in reasonably secluded green spaces that are no longer easily accessed in other public places. A preferred reading would configure the place of the school grounds as a semi-public space (for the community of parents and others who feel a commitment to it) where children are participants in adults desires to consolidate their sense of community and future through an outdoor, spatially significant political activism. But while some actively try to include children as participants in planning and design, I will hope to show how few adults in schools would argue for children to be the main decision-makers in changing playgrounds (see Appendix D). Fuller treatment of this issue is found in the section dealing with this specific movement in the Scottish context (chapter 16 and Appendix F).

Summary Comments for Chapter 1
The Spatialisation Of Children's Participation
We cannot say for certain whether children's participation in cultural, economic, and social life was qualitatively or quantitatively better in the past than today but we can say it was common practice for children to engage in the economic and work life of societies in a much greater extent in past times. This is still the case in many cultures outside of the developed west. A more interesting question lies in deciding whether in spatially setting children apart in an effort to protect them from manipulative and abusive relationships (in the workplace, or in child care), we may have taken away their opportunities for participation in really meaningful cultural practices that once counted for a something in the survival and quality of life of a community. In doing so have we have taken away the opportunities for children's agency as well? We may have thrown out the active, participating (if sometimes over worked sometimes undernourished) baby with the dirty bath-water in our efforts as adults to school the child in places that set themselves apart form the rest of society. What is most apparent is that children have been the recipients of adults' decision making about their welfare, education, and participation in work and cultural practices. As modernisation takes hold,

more and more of children's own time is managed and timetabled especially of the well-off. Children's own culture is consigned to islands within an otherwise 'adult-controlled' institutional world: the locked bedroom, the school toilet, the back of the school huts, or the few remaining fields or woods where children can get free access (see Mechling quoted in Sutton-Smith, 1997, p117).

Perhaps one of the few remaining opportunities for children's participation is through consumerism and the world of the image as proffered by the market. Children's 'own play' is forced underground by the commercialisation and regulation of their more public life and is compounded by the loss of communal spaces (like the street or 'the commons') and the loss of easily accessible spaces for children to roam due to concerns about children's safety. This 'underground', hidden transcript of children's play tests that adult's world ability to allow its presence. A historical analysis of childhoods spaces shows that children have been a social group that have been 'placed' in different ways by different institutional arrangements over time. The territorialisation of all of children's spaces has nearly been accomplished. Historically, we can reinterpret social science's tropes that describe children's play as 'illicit, cruel, mockery, parody, satire, group hegemony, bullying' (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p126) in a new way. The fact that these explanations exist in social science gives weight to the 'power or identity rhetoric' of Sutton-Smith (1997, chapter 7) as an explanation for some of the ambiguity of children's play. Historically, we could say that play of these forms is the last recourse for subversion of adult control by children. It is indicative of the 'set apartness' (disjunction) of children's experience from adult's experience but it may show more than this. Unlike other forms of resistance, like public protests, strikes, or acts of violence, children may be reduced to expressing their sense of injustice or disagreement to adult's hegemonic desires for control of their spaces by engaging in illicit forms of play (behind school huts) and through hidden acts of subversion (on the Internet).

Chapter 2

THE SPATIALISATION OF CHILDREN'S INCLUSION

Contemporary and Popular Culture

The century of the child is therefore ending in ways unforeseen at its commencement. The essence of the vision of childhood at the beginning of the century was the powerlessness of children, their dependence; good parenting consisted of preserving and prolonging this, in part at least by the exercise of parental authority. What has happened in the second half of the century is that parental authority has declined, and children have demanded and received an earlier access to the adult world; they have not been willing to accept the attempt to prolong childhood to the late teen years (Cunningham, 1997, p185).

In the latter part of the twentieth century there have been some arguments forwarded that support the idea that children are finding new opportunities for participation. Perceptible shifts in the nature of child-adult relations are the main evidence that point towards a re-inclusion of children into adult life. The changes that have been most influential have been

- the new agreement in the West that children should have a say in some issues,
- the advent of technologically mediated communication,
- the rise the shared interests in consumerism among adults and children, and
- changes in the structure and lifestyle of late-modern (postmodern) families.

Calls for Collaboration and Participation in Decision Making

Recently some public bodies have accepted that users of services have the right to be consulted about the services they receive. Calls for increased democracy among citizens is put forward as a partial solution to social exclusion for the poor, black people, the disabled and so on. Children are finding themselves lumped in with these 'others' in moves towards inclusive societies. In its strong form, efforts to include children in decision making result in the formation of the position of ombudsman for children's rights, as is the case in Norway. In the Scottish context, the coming of the new parliament gives added weight to calls to include children as participating citizens. A snapshot of the relevance of this thinking to one

local authority in Scotland is demonstrated by this newspaper article:

> Children should be at the heart of Scotland's new parliament according to Stirling
> Council. The Authority reaffirmed its backing for the Scotland for Children
> Campaign this week which aims to ensure young people's involvement. 'Children
> should be considered at every stage of the decision making process in the new
> Scottish Parliament', he [Children's Committee chairman, Tommy Brookes] said.
> 'Stirling [Council] remains the only UK authority to have a children's
> committee and we have produced a wide range of policies and plans to support
> children and families.' (Stirling Observer, 24 March, 1999, p1)

Consumerism

There have been many criticisms of consumerism as a lifestyle influence. With the tradition
of pocket money gaining prominence and the onset of television and the targeting of child
consumers, children gain an economic control over their lives often by manipulating their
parents for things they want. What access to adult worlds do children actually have on
issues that effect the ways in which their lives are led? Do they have any say in the making
of policies that will effect them? Do they get a chance to reflect on their own culture
reflexively in schools in ways that challenge unquestioned views on consumer culture? Can
they be expected to make reasonable decisions in the face of such an invasive consumer
culture? Are we left to wait until they are twenty something before we can expect a
responsible attitude to money and concomitant with this a responsibility for other aspects of
their world? Parents in the fifties and sixties, especially those who felt denied in their own
childhoods, often gave in to their children's wishes (Cunningham, p182). More recently, we
could say that the loss of the child's productive role in the family along with the
introduction of the structures of care and surrogacy have been replaced with a consumer role
for children. The project of protection of children from the adult world has 'turned sour' for
some with the commercialisation and sexualisation of their mediated worlds. The nature of
the working parent's lifestyle ensures that little contact between child and adult. The effects
of time and space distanciation noted by Giddens (1991) takes away the old opportunity for
apprenticeship for responsibility and survival. With this is the loss of any prolonged, direct
relationship with a local environment for food production, mining, or industrialised work.
New opportunities for connecting with the environment come only indirectly from
responses to environmental responsibility through recycling. Children must learn about

complex life-cycle process of production and degradation to make connections that were once obvious to a culture. Children who make these connections often take the lead in advising parents to make new consumer choices and to cut down on waste.

The influence of consumerism on children is a mainstream social issue that is largely ignored by curricular reform. One review of the markets influence on identification from a specific position comes to us from Walkerdine (1997). She helps us see the cracks in the discourses that presumes that consumer culture is all invasive in children's lives. She puts forward the child as inscribed but still having agency. This position is reminiscent of Benhabib's (1992) discussion of the subject: constituted by discourse but not necessarily determined by it. Hall's (1996) interpretation of Foucault gives us a similar process of identification which he calls subjectification. For Foucault we are not just docile bodies. The law disciplines, punishes, controls but there must be a corresponding response on the part of the subject. People are led to practice a hermeneutics of desire (Foucault, 1987, p5).

Girl Power

Walkerdine (1997) combined psychoanalysis and a brand of cultural theory with strong reflexivity to look at the social construction of girls in the late twentieth century. Her admission is that her own story inspired her work to set the records straight (p189). She also admits to using selected psychological theories as a Foucauldian 'tool kit' to give a different slant on things. Her own intruding emotions and doubts are present in her text which reflexively skips from her own past to the stories she reworks in an interpretation of female childhood. She sees the central image of the boy as the 'given' and the girl, particularly the working class girl, as 'Other'. The boy is rational, naughty, rule-breaking. The girl is a pathological child: irrational, good. She maintains that some aspects of popular consumer culture 'allows in' another version of 'the young girl': the subjectivity she describes is the seductress - a sexualised child that the broadsheet newspapers reject as 'abusive' and that the tabloids accept as 'glamourous'. For the working class child the conjuring of fantasies of the erotic and seductive young girl (through the 'Annie' story and 'Minipops', and more recently through the 'girl power' of the 'Spice Girls') is experienced as one if the few ways for a working class girl to generate a positive self image. Walkerdine suggests that consumption of these images for her was not exploitative. For her the concept of an innocent childhood far from the adult world is a projection for the bourgeois.

Similarly, education is designed to replace rebellious ambition with 'suitable' ambition and individuality. Walkerdine finds a complexity in the social production of little girls in all of this. She points to the possibility of much more repressed emotions in adults about the sexuality of children. 'Child Protection' becomes the protection *of adults* from their own hidden desires that are not just the reserve of a few 'perverts' (p182). If Walkerdine is right in saying that 'what counts as childhood today is the culturally specific practices of a few advanced industrial countries and that there are huge problems with their views of what childhood is when foisted on to Others", we can ask who else is 'Other' and who is doing the foisting. What blend of social and unconscious synergy brings about the fantasies that inscribe subjectivities for children? Taking a positional version of decentred self she can say that the child is not *socialised:* people are inscribed and created within the specific discursive practices they inhabit (Henriques *et al.,* 1994). This is the process of subjectification. It is historically specific and relative.

Walkerdine has shown that within the discursive processes of inscription, the spark of agency is sometimes kept alive and well. There is always the chance for the subversion, the reversal of subjectifications that are forced on one. We can be 'depicted' in different ways: its not always the other who does the drawing. Spaces for new subjectivities for children are found in unlikely places: the Internet, the school playground, the public play park, the music industry. This thesis continues on a journey to discover how some of these places are created. In what way can places be changed in ways that allow the agency of children to have an effect. Next, a look at the virtual space of subjectification: the internet.

Virtual and 'Real' Spaces
Some argue that a new cultural space on the internet might open up possibilities for new subjectivities. For children, that are somewhat more susceptible to many socially controlling regulations around age and physical presence, the nebulous anonymous space of the internet could have a liberating effect. There are reasons for worry. This new medium produces anxieties in adults about its potentially harmful effects and the further commercialisation of children's leisure time. There are doubtless effects on children's physical health due to the amount of time spent physically inactive in front of the screen. Yet not all effects may be so bad.

New opportunities for participation and political action are brought about by online discussions, mailing lists, fan club web sites and other cyberspaces. Playful new identities free of the child-body are possible too. Holmes (1997) exposed a new virtual politics that uses cyberspaces to give rise to altered identities. His book identifies a loss of agency as the result of the way in which cyberspace extends the body, alters our relations with others, and with ourselves. It is (albeit skeptically) argued that civic engagement will only possibly increase when virtual communities develop around physically based communities. However, Watson (see Jones, 1997, pp102-132) takes the other view that even virtual identifications can have positive effects. His study of an on-line fan club showed that the participants formed a community which created not only individual benefits for but also generated group strength that had effects on the record industry. Skeptics and enthusiasts seem set to play out the 'for and against' arguments about participation in cyberspaces in the same way in which people are divided on the efficacy of contemporary forms of democracy. We may well see an invigorated agency for those that are traditionally marginalised and we may include children in that. As with any space, the question of participation will be effected by access and control of the voices. Are children consigned to a seductive commercial world with the concomitant dangers of pornography and abuse while using the PC in their upper rooms, or will they find new avenues for increased political action and agency and virtual playspaces to replace lost outdoor ones? What risks, effects, and opportunities we may uncover in the move into the virtual remains to be seen.

A significant move for many children is from TV watching over to PC use. In terms of agency, control and cultural effects, we can regard the latter media as less controlling than the former in some ways: TV gives us a cultural diet that is constructed for us - we may pick and choose from a restricted offering and communication is one way; the Internet and computer-mediated technologies allows for a greater more targeted approach to communication which can be at least two-way. Schools, like those separated from other schools by large distances in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, are already getting connected for social and educational contact with many schools from all over the globe. Other networks support the continuation of disappearing and marginal language-use groups.

While significant changes are afoot we need to realistically acknowledge that for the

moment, television viewing is still a predominant activity in children's lives, surpassing all other activities hands down. A recent snapshot of American children's leisure time might give us an inkling of any trend towards increased time indoors. The findings of Wells and Blendinger (1997) indicate that watching television was by far the most prevalent activity outside school of a cohort of American fifth graders. When combined with watching videotapes and playing video games, television watching surpassed all other reasonable combination of activities. Yet the children's favourite activity was cited as playing outside. Once this finding is placed alongside the McKendrick's finding (1998a) that children's most favoured place for play is still the public playground or park, a clearer picture of children's continued preference for 'traditional' pastimes emerges. But preference is not the same as active choice. There are seductions at work by TV and PC and the outdoors is perceived as 'dangerous' by parents if not by children.

Cultural Influences and Changes in Children's 'Own Spaces'

The commercialisation of play coincides with moves to see children as yet another consumer group with access to their own or someone else's disposable income. There is a recognisable drive by parents to regulate where children play. At the same time there is an increase in technologically mediated sources of entertainment and communication. All of these influences affect the way in which children's time is spent. While children report an expressed preference for outdoor play, factors like weather, safety, parental permission, homework, financial factors, access to a car, the available number of daylight hours, can influence the actual choice of television over a more active pursuit. Children's cultures shift apace with these influences.

One of these culturally significant spaces that children see as their own is the school playground. In this space children are often involved in peer group discussions about television characters, films, and soap opera events. To effectively participate in their culture, children are encouraged to 'keep up' with the iconic, virtual, fictional, and mediated lives of far-distant 'famous' others. Songs are sung from the TV series or from the charts by groups of girls. Soccer results are used to note the demise or success of particular teams in the various league tables. But all the while, it has been in the playground that children have been able to give some free rein to a culture they can construct as their own. Even here toys, soccer cards, and other objects act as referents to happenings beyond the playground in the

worlds of TV, video, and the sports field. Unstructured playtime provides an opportunity for children to deal with some of the issues they are concerned about: teacher attitudes, parental controls, peer relations. It allows for physical action and association with others for lunch. Where inside the school the culture is controlled by adults, the outside culture is controlled by the children more. Research is coming on line that attests to the role children have in constructing their own cultures. Early work by Mead (1934) is complemented by Denzin (1977) to show how children organise themselves through their peer and symbolic interactions. Beresin (1993) shows that children organise themselves as a large community but in an environment that is framed by adults. It is children's proven ability to use available resources for their own social lives that is the significant outcome of this type of research. Hughes (1993a, 1993b) shows that children's play is a highly complex event that has significance well beyond the context of the immediate game itself. The local culture, ideas about fairness, gender roles and the children's own motivations for how power and participation get 'played out' through gaming is well documented.

The playground is also a significant place for what is not there as much as what is there: it is without the walls of the school that one finds the world of adult work, the world of food production in factories and farms, the world of crime, the law courts, the police station, the hospital, the shop. As is the case with adults, the process involved in maintaining a western lifestyle require a segregation, specialisation and massification of many of the activities normally associated with life: growing and preparing food, collecting fuel, building a home, curing and looking after the infirm. These cultural practices are the visible, normal everyday occurrences in the life of many children in poorer countries. Schooling has evacuated children from the experience of being involved with these culturally significant practices. Indeed, many adults have been separated form close-to-hand experiences of where our food, energy, and services come from due to massification, centralisation, industrialisation, professionalisation and the like. For our argument we must foreground the idea that in our efforts to protect the child and in the construction of a reality of a 'happy childhood', we disempower children. In school it is forbidden that a child even places a plaster on another child's wound. For the teachers, it is only allowed that one specially trained teacher can treat even minor wounds in a school. Similarly, cooking will often be done at a distance from small schools for lunch and in centralised kitchens. Construction and repair work on the school grounds is left to contractors even if the jobs are relatively easy or if the damage is

done by children themselves. Participation in school life is modelled by teachers who rarely lift a finger to paint a school wall, sweep a floor, or prepare a meal. In many schools, teachers are discouraged from lifting a finger to place a child in a seat or to comfort a child physically. The body is controlled by fear of the law or 'authority' of the union or the management. It is the teachers' union's job to designate specific time for teaching and breaks. Classroom activities are regulated by curricula that are generally viewed as prescriptive and which get delivered by texts that are rarely of the teacher's making. Children's own-cultures are left to be negotiated outside the classroom; inside the child's experience is often ignored in efforts to raise standards of measurable attainment. Distance is created between *the place* where teachers and children spend time: the staffroom and playground. The school's maintenance, upkeep, and care is significantly absent of all 'meaningful participation by children or teachers. The cultural significance of what is work is demonstrated by the consignment of the majority of children's work to paper, 'works of art' to be displayed on the wall or brought home, or the practice of mathematical skills using mostly abstract problems, letters to 'imaginary friends', or works of fiction that will never be read by anyone except the teacher. Of course, there are many 'innovative' curricula that try to enact things differently. In the main, however, the significance of work is down to one teacher's 'view' of it. The result is the creation of dependency by children on adults for all their food, the treatment of even minor wounds, the care of the building and the grounds, and even for getting across the road. Places (spatial practices) are used to create these dependencies.

However, others are working to change these spatial practices. Activists, from within and outwith the schools are keen to get children involved in planning, designing, maintaining, and caring for the school and its grounds: more culturally meaningful (or counter-culturally meaningful) curricula are constructed around decisions about the school's budget, the ordering of food, the surfacing of play areas, the installation of new artistic features, the growing of vegetables or crops that can be eaten or processed, the growing of orchards of rare local species of apples and so on. Only the most occasional influence on curricula seek to recapture these significant learning events into the life of the school even in miniature form. They are often left to specialist teachers who are labelled as 'innovative'. As a result, the time is gone when children were prepared for a predictable work life through the teaching of skills like needlework or carpentry. Today, if children bake or sew or do

gardening, it is rarely valued as a key life skill that will be useful for them in later life; in the 'throw away' culture of the ready-packaged meal, these older traditional skills and crafts are regarded as possible hobbies or fun activities. Our uncritiqued norms accept that we will continue to be distanced form the production of our own food and energy and that we will become less and less dependent on a variety of personal skills. As a result, children's baking only rarely impacts more than incidentally on the school menu - baking is only for fun; we make colourful biscuits or gingerbread men. Schools largely accept that children now need preparation for life by instruction on the use of computers.

'Post-familial' Family Life

A brief look at contemporary family life (in caricature) shows up the way the market forces have enabled a self-oriented space for choice for children and therefore an exclusion for community-based participation. It can also be viewed as a possible site for the increased emancipation of children's roles within a 'post-familial family' (BeckGernsheim, 1998).

Taking the latter view, we could argue that the child already is in a strong position of 'authority': negotiation is the name of the game. Where once children were enslaved to their parents, fostered out, or transported by to another State for to labour for the pioneers, now American parents are accused of being enslaved by their children. If family life is more democratic it is democratic under the influence of the multinational corporation, and technology. Certainly, some children can choose more or less what they eat, when they sleep, what clothes they wear - all choices unavailable to previous generations. Many create ritual activities around their needs: the visits to Macdonald's each week, the trips to the cinema to see the newest film offered by the Disney corporation. Control of TV viewing and the ability to use the video recorder is often children's privilege. Recently a five year old reported sneaking down to watch the 'dirty programmes' once his parents were asleep. Adults find the only way to get TV time for themselves is to give the children another TV. When negotiation fails, other methods are tried. It seems only a matter of time before children's cultures will gain the kind of independence that teenage culture has already gained. The main inhibitor is perhaps access to a car though there are negotiated solutions to this as well. We can presume that the service provided by parents of 'chauffeur' will continue to increase. In Hong Kong, parents pay people to act as drivers for their children in order to enable them to get to their clubs, leisure centres, and so on. The influence of the

multitude of 'soaps' from Britain, and the New World provides the detailed discussions for many children's peer groups. Computer games, videos, and the Internet take over where TV leaves off for some. Grandparents no longer live with the shrinking family. Children must get out of the home to find friends as family size shrinks to about 1.6 children per family. The increase in ready-made meals, and the need for both parents to go out to work means that the home is no longer a site of production: no more vegetable plots for weeding, no more bread for baking. And no more opportunities for children to help. Television programmes, holiday brochures, fashion designs, all target children (as much as adults) as a specific consumer group with disposable income. The traditional family bonded by solidarity is losing any monopoly it had. As the nuclear family is now exception rather than the rule the significance of family life is now dependent on the intermingling of new lifestyles. While most lifestyles are individually designed, some families are formed using unexpected bonds with ex-partners, step-fathers, clubs and societies, virtual communities and even with groups concerned for environment. With the demise of the nuclear family new opportunities for family commitment open up. Not all of these options are prepared to give sway to the market as the sole source of identification. New opportunities for children's participation in decision making and environmental change open up with increased variety in family structure, bonds, and commitments.

Compared to shift in family life, the choice offered by different schools is much more homogeneous. Even if schools were in a position to instil community values of cooperation, and shared participation they will have to face the difficulty of increased amounts of monitoring and surveillance. Academic achievement becomes the primary aim. It is in this scenario that children are sometimes encouraged to find a moral public space for participating in 'real' life decision making or participation in local environmental change by outsiders who seek a foothold in the realms of formal education.

Within this plot the spaces where children can have a say are probably fewer than we would like. When participation in planning and design *is* allowed or encouraged, it is, ironically, not about 'adult-concerns' like traffic control, employment, farming practices, or housing estate construction. Instead, the height of children's involvement is a cursory opportunity to try designing *play* environments. These are the very spaces that speak to children in taken for granted ways about where children should be placed. These 'spaces for play' tell them

that their lives are separate from the world of work and production. Play spaces for children only underscore a culture that constrains and controls children's involvement in multitude of social practices that make a difference to lifestyle. Where then are the openings for a more sustained, deep, and critical response to the lack of integration between home, community and school? Here the significance of school grounds as a public place for activities other than play becomes a potential site for a return of the political to childhood. Activities that involve children in local environmental change may fly in the face of dominant ideologies about children's place in society. Two images that inspire this ideology are 'The Problem Child' or 'The Child-to-be-Cared-For' which will be discussed in the next section.

Chapter 3.
RESPONSES

Summary of Chapters 1 and 2

We have seen how the advent of schooling, the exclusion of children from the workplace, the influences of technology, the media, and the change in family make-up, and other societal influences have affected opportunities for children's participation generally. Two counterpointed arguments have been aired: that children have been excluded from participation in the desire to educate and care for the child *and* that children have, more recently, found opportunities for new potential subjectivities that allow for agency in late-modern / post-modern times. We don't have to decide to agree of disagree with one of these positions. The tension of the two is a laudable 'non-position' available to this text. This is my 'utopia' - the author's rhetorical offering. Yet in my summary, to follow, I cannot help but come down in favour of one side; the text has set me up to favour some key images for how I see children's place in society today. I suggest that readers try to 'protect themselves' from agreeing uncritically with the opinions that you have heard and that follow.

Problem Children / Children-to-be Cared-For

As I suggested some key images present themselves as dominant in the analysis of child cultures today: they are 'The Problem Child' or 'The Child-to-be-Cared-For'. de Winter (1997) has done some meta-analysis of the history of childhood focussing on a history of how children and young people have been 'problematised' (1997, pp15-20). This happens in two ways: the macro level and the micro-social level. At the macro level of the government agency or department the process of *generalisation* of children's problems creates 'target groups' like 'ethnic minorities' which label children as 'at risk'. Children are tagged in falsely homogeneous groupings according to the results of the screening of large numbers of children both through departments of health and welfare of children and through departments of the education of these so-called disadvantaged groups. This 'lumping' of many into one group negates the life chances of individuals.

Secondly, the micro level re-interprets this macro understanding for all the individuals

lumped together by the State. While the general agreement in theory at least, is that problems have multi-dimensional causal factors including physical factors in the person, personal behaviour, social environment, physical environment, and the quality of the care system, de Winter notes that the common interpretation of problems is not so ecological. Usually the personal and familial factors are foregrounded when discussing children's problems and issues like housing and socio-economic status are often mentioned but largely ignored (p17). Individuals (or at least their families) are therefore held responsible for their fate and stigmatised with the label of 'problem' previously conferred on the class created by the macro problematisation. Macro sociological factors are personalised in the day-to-day interpretation of causation. The process of individualisation posits the problems of the young in intra- or inter-personal levels and leaves young people as easy targets for blame and being imagined as 'problems'. We have no accessible language in staff rooms for a complex explanation of the causation of behaviour. The 'client' of the school is 'the child'. resources are stretched enough in order to deal with the child. Contributory factors like housing, unemployment, domestic violence, and neglect are peripheral to the 'problem-child' that is present in the school. Teachers are rightly reticent to take on community development work, social work and legal issues though their awareness and acceptance of the increasing relevance of these issues to the 'job' of teaching is growing. Similarly, new initiatives are prepared to recognise the need for 'early interventions' and early detection systems for 'dealing with these problem children' who are classified as outwith the norm. In such cases the problem is relocated between parent and child. Larger complex social factors are outside of the remit of the average school.

Here we find evidence for assuming that discourses coalesce to problematise young people. This disables us from seeing beyond the 'problems of the young people today'. We can easily fail to envisage ways of encouraging their potential and it is also probable that children themselves will buy into this stigmatization and probably internalise the images of being 'a problem to be solved' in the ways in which identities are formed. Cultures of hopelessness along with a lack of trust in themselves and in adults pervade many teacher-pupil / child-adult interactions as a result. Regimes of power found in social policy initiatives of discipline and control label children and young people in ways that prevents any easy introduction of initiatives for active participation and citizenship. People who believe they are there to be 'adapted and treated' as problems are unlikely to see the

opportunities for engaging in making changes to their local environment even within the confines of the school grounds. Ideologies about curricular implementation using top-down models, the hierarchies controlling the maintenance of school grounds, and the legalisation of what counts as 'safe' all conspire against those seeking to change places that are local. The main context for the research is put succinctly by de Winter:

> We seemingly have to rediscover that serious communication with young people can be effected on matters which are important to them, and how to conduct that communication. This is of course a peculiar paradox: on the one hand a huge psycho-medical and educational apparatus has been created to guide children's individual development in the best way possible, on the other hand, the limits within which this development has to take place have become stricter and stricter. Children are increasingly well taken care of, but the mental sustenance seems to become more meagre and artificial. ... the possibilities for experiencing the world and life direct have gradually diminished with the growth of youthland. (pp147-148)

We often hear about children's lack of commitment to things these days. Acts of vandalism lead to an attitude among adults that children are lacking in care of their locale (and yet their often acclaimed 'sense of urgency' about global issues of an environmental nature). But if de Winter is right, then commitment has to be learned by a practice of participation. It is a thing that children and young people have to be raised to and challenged by.

The Future of the Child?
Firstly, this is not the place for a 'future directions' analysis. But a history of children's cultures of participation would not be complete without a suggestion of what the future may hold. Consider these couple of paragraphs a 'sorbet' between bigger courses. We shall return to future directions in a later section of this volume.

There are some interesting possibilities on line for the child of the future. Changes in demographic trends will bring new possible allies for children. There is the possibility that the 'Third Agers' (grandparents with fitness, time, disposable income on their hands) will request further involvement in the education of the young. The rise in influence of non-governmental organisations (and other 'Third-Sector' organisations and agencies) on school practice may increase bringing with it increased critique of curricula that fail to

address local and global issues of justice, ethics, environment, poverty, and skill acquisition that may be useful in ways other than measurable academic success. Teachers will have a role here too. The emancipation of children from constraining images and cultures of childhood seems to suggest that teachers in turn need an emancipation from the controlling mechanisms of imposed curricula. Parents' roles in increased cooperation with the management of schools reinstates them with another possibly vital role. Encouraging active participation by parents in the learning of life skills, from cooking, growing vegetables, to bricklaying, will rejuvinate the spaces for new mentor-type relationships of apprenticeship. Increased concern among both children and adults about environmental issues will continue to inform their reasoning for addressing local knowledge about local issues like the restoration of natural habitat. The activism of parents and other outside agencies in addressing school-based issues (school grounds) and the keenness of some local authorities to include children in evaluation and future planning (of public play areas) are the case studies chosen to 'evoke the scene' in this thesis.

A recontextualisation of children's position in society is captured by writers focusing on children's rights and children's participation. Having traced (retold) the story of a particular view of the history of childhood, other appendices and much of the main text moves into the arena of child activism and political action for children's participation. The child has had an interesting history. I have considered the validity of the story of children's exclusion for active citizenship. I have intimated that there are responses being made in a number of contexts to work in a counteractive way to involve children in local projects and in decision making. In the case-study analyses in the main volume of the thesis (Chapters 14-18), and in other Appendices, I look at approaches to addressing children's participation in environmental change and decision making that have been tried, that have had reported success, and that illumiate the perceived barriers to children's agency .