The Copenhagen Strategy

careers education and guidance OUT OF THE BOX

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The Copenhagen strategy is Bill's term for the thinking behind the 2006 International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance conference in Copenhagen. The organisers seek what they call a 'cross-over' strategy – a more exploratory way of thinking, drawing on more sources of ideas, and interested in a greater range of practice.

This monograph is a 'cross-over' document: it looks outside the literature of careers-education-and-guidance. It examines other aspects of economics, psychology and sociology. It draws on untapped areas of learning theory. It points to underlying philosophical positions. But most of all it calls on cultural theory – describing how we all absorb and act on ethnically acquired beliefs, values and expectations. That culture is, at the same time, social and psychological: it is part of a person's experience of upbringing and also deep in her or his sense of identity.

Seeing how that is so helps you in your own development work:

> taking on contemporary complexity – by using the cross-over strategy;
> looking wider – for more clues about what is going on, and what we can do about it;
> thinking again – re-shaping the use we make of research and the models we build;
> earning credibility – working out how to gain recognition, build trust and offer relevance;
> pushing boundaries – expanding experience, deepening trust, enabling living outcomes;
> keeping-up and moving-on – finding compass points for future progress.

The strategy equips us with a more complicated account of our work. But there is no value in complexity for its own sake. Complexity is valuable only if it helps you to see more ways of understanding what is going on, more ways of diagnosing what might be going wrong and more ways of working out how things can be made to go better.

We should only allow the Copenhagen strategy to complicate our lives in that useful way.

This monograph contains three supplementary panels:

1. **'cultural change in today's world'** – reviewing reports of changing attitudes to learning in contemporary society;
2. '***Signposter*** **poses issues for careers education and guidance'** - outlining a new and significant development in on-line profiling;
3. **'what LiRRiC does for careers education'** - setting out recent proposals for curriculum reform, made to the British Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Out of the Box develops an earlier argument, in ***Learning from Experience*** – available at:

www.hihohiho.com/underpinning/caffutures.pdf.

A PowerPoint to accompany this monograph is available at:

www.hihohiho.com/magazine/features/cafculture.ppt.

contents

the Copenhagen strategy

The Copenhagen strategy for careers-education-and-guidance looks outside the usual sources…

> *'…cross-over thinking faces the challenges of becoming cross-cultural, cross-national, multi-media, inclusive, multi-methodological and cross-theoretical.'*

This monograph does all of that. But it does not dismiss our existing literature, it adds to it - because we now face new questions.

But we have somehow allowed ourselves to get boxed in. For example, we are entitled to feel puzzled by the way careers-education-and-guidance is received by government. Policy people seem unimpressed by our claim to support economic well being (Killeen and others, 1992; Hughes and others, 2002). They ignore what appears to be close-to-a global consensus on how careers-education-and-guidance is best conducted (Watts and Sultana, 2006). And they seem not to care about our underlying question. Our underlying question is the best question in social administration: 'who gets to do what in society?'. It raises some of the most urgent and demanding social-policy issues that any society has to face. You would think it would compel policy attention.

But no: in the UK education-for-citizenship gets the headlines; we've had trouble keeping the word 'guidance' on the policy agenda; and the phrase 'careers education' appears only three times in three-hundred paragraphs of the policy paper which will shape our work for the foreseeable future.

The argument here is that policy is looking for something more than we are offering. The policy paper – *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005) – has attracted world-wide approval. It uses the word 'reform' forty-six times. What kind of reform? *Youth Matters* locates us in a frame in which informal help of neighbourhood based voluntary mentors may very well count for just as much as the expertise of us careers-education-and-guidance professionals.

This monograph argues that there has been a cultural shift in UK society that policy has caught up with but which careers-education-and-guidance needs still usefully to understand. It argues that the Copenhagen strategy will help us to understand that – with more ways of:

- describing what is going on;
- diagnosing what might be going wrong;
- working out how things can be made to go better.

You can see that this going to make our lives more complicated. But complexity has survival value. A wider repertoire for action gives our species its finger-hold on survival. Evolution is always in the direction of complexity. The higher we climb in the food chain the greater the complexity we must take on. And, in this respect, what is good for the species is also good for careers-education-and-guidance.

The monograph argues that there has been a technology-driven shift in cultural attitudes. It wonders whether we are becoming remote from too many of the people who most need our help. And it argues that our survival may depend on finding new ways of re-connecting our expertise to their experience.

looking wider

The policy frame has itself got wider. UK policy is increasingly interested in the social-and-cultural life of the people. It knows that economic indicators do not correlate with indicators of well-being; indeed, most indicators of well-being correlate negatively with economic advancement (Layard, 2005). Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt (2006) reviews evidence to show that 'happiness' is more commonly reported where people feel good about their relationships with others, and with their work, and with some sense of 'completion' that comes from feeling effectively connected to what is going on outside themselves. The following pages of this monograph (panel 1, page 3) locate these concerns in an account of contemporary cultural change.

Governments are already interested in how such considerations for well-being figure in what people do about work. The UK government looks for indicators in what people gain from information technology. *Youth Matters* makes that aspect of cultural change a starting point:

> *'The internet, mobile phones, digital TV and games consoles have transformed the way young people use their leisure time.*
> *Texting and chat rooms are for many an essential means of communication.*
> *The web is today's newspaper, gossip column and encyclopaedia all rolled into one' (para 44).*

Google, Wikipedia and MySpace are not just toys; iPod, camera-phone and game-box are not just fun; *East Enders*, *Big Brother* and gossip are not just pass-times. The networks, their artifacts and the stories they tell frame beliefs, values and expectations. That is a culture; and culture always carries messages about 'who we are', and 'who can be allowed to have a say in our lives'. These are cultural facts, but they have careers-education-and-guidance consequences.

The general shape and structure of what is now happening is not in dispute:

- There is a massive expansion in how people find out what they need to know – including how they gather information and impressions of working life.
- That access itself develops self-propelled ways in which people make up their own minds about what they will do – they can make friends, organise their lives and advertise their employability on the net.
- And the resulting networks are colonised by groups seeking to influence what people do – there is a growing number of interest out there, urging action on the basis of social, ethnic and commercial allegiances.

Cultural change is important to our work because it changes the way people learn and how they influence each other. And we are barely beyond the beginning of that trend. We should not underestimate it.

There is little dispute about the basic facts; but different commentators point to different features. You will find an account of how that is so in panel one (following page). This is work in progress: we urgently need more research on what is going on in our students' and clients' lives; and we need more development work on how to work with those changes.

On the Copenhagen strategy: among our most useful cross-over partners in this work are our students and learners. There are things that they know about these changes that the experts don't yet know.

panel one
cultural change in today's world

Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2000) characterises the contemporary cultural impact as 'liquid modernity' – so called because it is hard-to-pin-down. This analysis draws out implications for careers work. Its seven headings are not, in Zygmunt Bauman's terms, watertight. It is in the nature of the reality that they cannot be – everything flows into everything else.

seeking

But Zygmunt Baumann does point to discernable flows. Some are about what people seek and are especially significant for careers work:

> shifts of interest - away from how things are produced (less interest in working) and towards how they are consumed (more interest in shopping) (p.151);
> an intensifying search for immediate gratification (pp.155ff);
> a loss of confidence in traditional authorities – experts and elites are distrusted (pp.165ff).

Much of what is nowadays said about personal well-being belongs to these changes of belief and values. They are expressed as a need to establish 'work-life balance'.

They are changing the culture in which careers-education-and-guidance must find its place. In our terms they speak of a shift from intrinsic to extrinsic interests: people are becoming less interested in seeking fulfilment in the hands-on performance of working life, and more interested in getting enough money and having enough time for living.

feeling

Zygmunt Bauman attributes all of this to diffuse feelings of unease that people have about what is happening in and around their lives. He points (pp.160ff) to what people increasingly feel is the precariousness of their position – in the environment, in their communities and at work.

Richard Sennett (2004) sees the greater part of that unease in terms of loss of self-respect. People sense that the familiar but unspoken ways of thinking and feeling are being sidelined – are thought to be no more use for working out what is happening, or knowing what to do. This is not a world that they can comfortably inhabit. He attributes this sense of loss to what he calls 'a modern realm'...

...with its ever changing, short transactions,
which wants to rescue people from their false sense of security.
The new institutional regime puts a particular emphasis on breaking ingrained habits,
even if these have served us perfectly well in the past.' (pp.235-6)

Sociologist Anthony Giddens (1994) takes a rosier view. He also links changing attitudes to contemporary anxiety. But those attitudes, he claims, support a self-propelled strategy for dealing with risk. It is a rejection of dependence on others, including the state, in favour of...

'..an inner confidence which comes from self respect... in a constant flow of experience' (p.192).

Careers-education-and-guidance needs to appreciate which of its users have a Sennett-type anxiety and which a Giddens-type confidence.

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reflecting

Much of what is happening in our culture has to do with the uses we make of continually up-grading information technology – much of it associated with the internet, mobile phones and computer-based games. Neuroscientist Susan Greenfield (2006) looks inward – wondering about the impact on people's minds. With game-boxes in mind, she suggests that the impact may run deeper than we have yet appreciated...

'...sounds and sights of a fast-paced, fast-moving, multimedia presentation displacing any time for reflection.'

Advertising people call this state-of-mind 'continuous partial attention' – a state of perpetually-shifting and quickly-scanning search for immediacy. Like Susan Greenfield advertisers attribute it to the habitual use of the net, where people learn instantly to scan each source and then move on to the next - fast. With the advertisers, you might call it a 'just-do-it' culture. Can careers education really be that fast, and genuinely support that kind of impulse?

Susan Greenfield is looking inwards, at changing ways of thinking. Policy commentator David Goodhart (2006) looks outward, at how things work out in a social world. He finds the same kind of preoccupation with immediacy. He points to how the internet's multiplicity of influences moves people away from taking part in a shared citizenship, and draws them instead towards detached individualism. If he is right people will look upon being a worker with much the same individualistic focus that they look at any other consumer preference – ways of realising their own immediate purposes.

People also act in group. But, when they do, David Goodhart notes that they do so in limited alliances.

'A sense of national purpose has been replaced by the idea of individual self-actualisation - or by a narrower group identity' (pp.32-33).

If Susan Greenfield and David Goodhart are right people will be impatient with any complexity that needs to be worked out with other people - and their troublesome points-of-view. If they seek alliances they will do so with groups of people who think and feel as they do. The internet is good at helping them find 'people-like-me'.

It all means that they can engage in fast-thinking, quick-decision-making for focused action – without having to worry about wider considerations or more-complicated negotiations. For such people focused instinct and intuition seem more useful than prolonged contemplation.

There is impatience with any greater complexity – 'it's as simple as that!'.

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talking

It is never 'as simple as that'. Few people can inhabit an encapsulated world indefinitely. Even in a 'people-like-me' group, there will be different points-of-view. In a family, there will be disagreements. In neighbourhoods, more than that.

The consequence are rarely a knock-down-drag-out fight. But social observer Nick Barham (2004) notices another tactic. He reports on social behaviour among young men and women, and – in particular - how that interacts with information technologies. He notices flexibility and tentativeness in how young people use texting and blogging to assemble accounts of what is going on:

'Kids have several virtual personalities... passports to different behaviours.'

And that process of trying-out personalities gives their talk its tentative quality

'The fluidity is expressed by two favourite phrases:... "like" and "sort of".
They acknowledge the impossibility of knowing anything completely,
or of getting any closer than an approximation.
Everything is metaphor. Nothing is real' (pp.206 & 288-9).

Literary academic Terry Eagleton, rather grumpily, sees that flexibility and tentativeness as...

'...centre-less, hedonistic, self-inventing, ceaselessly adaptive...'

This 'post-modern' way, he says...

'...fares splendidly in the disco and supermarket,
though not quite so well in the school, courtroom or chapel' (p.190).

He is pointing to the impatience with complexity that Susan Greenfield and David Goodhart suggest. But Terry Eagleton locates the cultural shift in an historical perspective. His assessment is set in a carefully developed account of the changing ways in which people think, talk and write. And he draws a contrast between past and emerging cultures.

So we have two ways of explaining cultural change: the impact of risk and associated anxiety; and the unfolding of historical influences. The one interpretation does not exclude the other. But the historical interpretation allows us to understand what is happening as a long process of eroding deference – people are becoming progressively less impressed by authority.

That historical perceptive offers careers-education-and-guidance a further handle on understanding what is happening, and what to do about it. It gives us another appreciation of dynamics of doubt and may suggest another way of working with it.

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believing

Both theologian Jonathan Sacks (1997) and philosopher Stephen Law (2006) make the historical link. They see what is happening now as an outworking of the eighteenth-century enlightenment. It was a period in which the rejection of arbitrary authority was at issue. In its day the suspects were crown and mitre: monarchy and religion came under critical scrutiny.

Jonathan Sacks regrets the way in which that scepticism has undermined tradition. Stephen Law asserts its valuing of independent thought.

Sociologist Frank Furedi (2004), without much enthusiasm, speaks of the contemporary inheritors of that scepticism. But, like Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Baumann, Frank Furedi attributes the state-of-mind to contemporary anxiety:

'Today the very possibility of knowing has been called into question
by people who claim that the world has become too complex to understand...
The sense of powerlessness with which change is perceived
has weakened people's belief in the possibility of knowing what lies ahead' (pp.54-59).

Philosopher Onora O'Neill offers a more measured view. She is particular concerned with the impact on belief of information technologies. Her BBC Reith Lecture (2002) speaks of a 'crisis of trust'...

'New information technologies are ideal for spreading reliable information,
but they dislocate our ordinary ways of judging one another's claims
and deciding where to place our trust.'

And she points directly at where we need to get to work. People need to be able to judge the reliability of other people's claims. In careers-work terms that means that our students and clients need to know who can be allowed to have a say in their lives.

There is an issue about how we best do that. More than one understanding of what is happening gives us more than one strategy for dealing with it. We must ask ourselves whether working with prevalent distrust is best managed by imposing standards on the providers of information, or by enabling users to work out for themselves which providers are most to be trusted.

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associating

Talk of group-formation - based on people-like-me preferences, tentativeness, and who to trust - all of this evokes what careers workers have called 'peer-group pressure'. It is still there, but it is changing.

> Friendship is a deeply embedded feature of the human condition declared in what seems to be an endless range of ways. In contemporary society the development of friendship groups is increasingly conducted through the informal use of the net (Mark Vernon, 2005).
> Much of friendship is conducted through the tittle-tattle of gossip about social events and 'people we know'. The need to do that is deep in the species and has survival value. It is a growing, not a declining, feature of contemporary life (Robin Dunbar, 2004).
> But there is variability. Although friendship has a persistent value - from cohort to cohort and throughout each life - friendship shows itself differently in different cultures (Liz Spencer and Ray Pahl, 2006).

Philosopher Michael Kenny (2004) suggests what might underlie what is reported here. He agrees with David Goodhart that we are dealing with group-based behaviour. And, like Jonathan Sacks, he sees what people are doing now as an extension of an enlightenment insistence on thinking responsibility rather than deferential compliance.

But that erosion of deference, he argues, has long-since moved on from doubts about the authority of church and throne. We have since passed through a period of questioning a white, male, middle-class hegemony. More recently, new allegiances have usurped previous allegiance - whether to crown or men-in-dark-suits. Michael Kenny is speaking of what was once called 'identity politics'. In that politics people owned allegiance to 'people-like-us' – and 'like us' was defined in terms of class, gender and race.

There is something deep here. For a time the dominant belief was that all such allegiances can be assimilating into a shared 'melting-pot'. But researchers into multicultural societies agree that, despite that dominant community interest, there has been no melting pot. To a greater or lesser extent people want to hold to their own way of seeing and doing things – their own ethnicity and its culture (Banks, 2006).

And Michael Kenny argues that the identity politics, which was defined by allegiances to class, gender and race, has itself since moved on. He traces a multiplicity of contemporary allegiances...

'...a new kind of politics founded on social identity...
in a host of movements, groups and cultural communities...
whose influence, appeal and impact appear to be growing.' (p.1).

Allegiances are becoming more varied and more specific.

Information technology helps us to watch how this is happening. Intelligent internet search engines can show us how these more sharply-focussed groups form. The technology monitors the use of the net in terms of both preferences and frequencies. Media analyst Chris Anderson (2005) points to how the frequency data shows that support for majority preferences is diminishing: most people hold to minority interests.

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The search-engine data reveal a growing range of allegiances – for example based on shopping, sport, ethnic and religious preferences. Indeed, minority preferences are proliferating to the point where what David Goodhart calls 'fragmentation' represents a clutter of niche markets which it is impossible for advertisers to ignore. It means that sales people can make customised suggestions on products based on preferences shown by 'people-like-you'. This statistical shift, away from majority and towards minority interests in the frequency patterns, is known as 'the long tail'.

There are common-place examples. A 40 year-old British 'hit-music' tv-show is off the air – because there is no longer a single and shared chart to top. And, in chatting around the water cooler, it is rarely reasonable to expect that most people will have watched the same tv programme last evening. Indeed domestic entertainment will soon be driven by a technology which manages the hardware according to the owner's shopping or other preferences, sporting or other commitments, ethnic or other kinships, religious or other values.

We share little cultural joint property - whether in shared experiences, grand narratives, or BBC values. People know what they and people-like-them want - and they may feel that this is all that they need to know.

A careers-work professional might, however, think that there is an important difference between 'want to know' and 'need to know'.

reasoning

In identity politics the group manifests some important part of 'who I am' – whether black, a woman, born-again, Arsenal, or Gucci - or some combination thereof. In extreme cases people do not really own such allegiances – they sport them. But, in critical moments, the self acts for the group – brothers, sisters, ummah, tribe or crew. It is all experienced locally; though the technology allows that such groups also form on a world-wide basis.

It makes a difference to what people feel it is good to do: and that impacts career management as much as it affects anything. The term 'peer-group pressure' does little justice to the sometimes gross but often subtle influences of these dynamics.

Economist Amartya Sen (2006) examines contemporary ethnic and religious allegiances. He sees people being cajoled into group membership. Like Michael Kenny and Jonathan Sacks he links what is happening to enlightenment thinking. But like Stephen Law he sees enlightenment thinking not just as the explanation of what is happening but as the basis for how it can best be managed.

'I am not opposed to multiculturalism. But I am opposed to the way it has been interpreted.
There are basically two distinct approaches to multiculturalism.
One concentrates on the promotion of diversity as a value in itself.
The other focuses on the freedom of reason and decision making and celebrates cultural diversity to the extent that it is freely chosen (p. 48).

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Young men and women can derive much of their identity from such allegiances. But, argues Amartya Sen, they can be drawn in on terms which actually harm their interests. And people do not always initiate membership, sometimes they are claimed by the group. A commitment to 'people-like-us' is an easy choice; but membership of a group thought of as 'our people' is a demanding obligation.

Amartya Sen argues that group allegiance damages people when they are made...

'... to (1) ignore the relevance of all other affiliations and associations, and (2) redefine the demands of the "sole" identity in a particularly belligerent form.' (p. 36).

He is thinking of religious and ethnic allegiances. He is particularly concerned about people who have what he calls multiple identities – say as 'Hindu', 'son', 'professional' and 'Bangladeshi'[1]. But they are made to feel that their life must be ruled by only one.

All careers workers come across such affiliations in neighbourhoods – in both inner city and leafy suburb. This has often been where class- and race-based commitments to 'our people' are made. It is also where they are compelling and damaging on the basis of much the same dynamics that Amartya Sen suggests. Some of the damage is to career chances. Families can damage their own children's chances – and those of other people.

Like careers workers Amartya Sen wants to understand what damage a person's past might be doing to her or his future. His two-fold diagnoses drives him to advocate, the 'freedom of reason' to make freely-chosen commitments.

Careers workers share in this. The way we understand what is going on influences the way we decide to manage it.

We should be asking our students and clients about what is going on in all of these areas. But the analysis in panel one is actually based on the work of cultural theorists (like Terry Eagleton, 2003), economists (like Amartya Sen, 2006), philosophers (like Onora O'Neill, 2002), sociologists (like Zygmunt Bauman, 2000) and theologians (like Jonathan Sacks, 1997).

This is the Copenhagen Strategy – panel one carries no reference to the literature of careers-education-and-guidance. Yet it is crucial to our understanding our own puzzlements - to what might be going wrong and to what me must be able to do about it

There have been three waves of change stemming from globalisation - economic, cultural and environmental. All have an impact on how people think about their work. Careers education and guidance has been quick to respond to the economic impact. But we are here looking at a second-wave cultural impact. Cultural beliefs, values and expectations influence what people do. We have been ready to adjust to changing economy; I find it hard to see how we can reasonably ignore cultural change.

[1] The term 'multiple identities' is increasingly used in this way. But it is a moot point whether we are talking about 'identities' or 'roles'. Certainly, Amartya Sen's examples - 'son', 'Bangladeshi" and so on - are more roles than identities.

thinking again

If people are changing the ways they learn, then we must think again about how we help.

A dominant statement of helping aims, world wide, has been the DOTS analysis [2] . It has worked well. But it works best with people who are used to processing information, are in a position to draw on a range of experience, think systematically in linking idea to idea, are practised in speaking up for themselves - and asking pushy questions. We like them; they think like us.

The table (below) compares their (the 'alphas') learning needs with the needs of other people (the 'omegas') - who are not like them [3]. The 'alphas' can learn through DOTS. The 'omegas' are members of a different culture - contrasted in panel one.

But life is more complicated than two columns can accommodate. To use Zygmunt Bauman's metaphor of liquidity, there are no watertight compartments here. The challenge to careers-education-and-guidance is to understand how the currents and vortices of contemporary culture flow for your students and clients. You'll hear all these calls for help from all parts of that river.

table
calls for help

people...	**'alphas'**	**'omegas'**
...seeking	...fulfilment in work	...well-being in life
...feeling	...confident in how things are	...a need for greater respect
...reflecting	...on the wider story	...with impatience for complexity
...thinking & talking	...with assurance & fluently	...tentatively & unsure
...believing	...in expertise	...distrustfully of elites
...associating	...as a matter of upbringing	...as a matter of 'choice'
...reasoning	...on abstract possibilities	...on concrete experiences

The word 'choice' has been put in quotes. There is a question whether choices – whether made in an 'alpha' upbringing or in an 'omega' group – can be entirely free-standing. Because all choices are made in a cultural framework. The question is, then, where - in this culturally-shaped process - the most significant career-development moves are made. Is it – as we may like to assume – later, when career opportunities present themselves; or is it earlier, as ties with family, friends and other groups are forged?

[2] DOTS frames the aims of career learning around learning concerning 'opportunities', 'self', 'decisions' and 'transitions'. The calls for help might be – 'I need to know about the offers and demands of working life', '...to be clear about what I can do for work and what I seek in work', '...to be able to make up my mind what I am going to do about that', '...and to be sure that I will be able to manage what that will then involve'.

[3] No hierarchy here: an 'alpha' is neither a greater nor a lesser being than an 'omega'.

However this works out, our credibility increasingly stands or falls on how accurately we understand those attachments, alliances and allegiances which underlay all choice. In this respect, it would not be reasonable to assume that the 'omegas' are in a minority.

There is here one of the biggest issues facing contemporary careers-education-and-guidance. Working with contemporary culture means starting with its habits-of-mind. But it is part of our professionalism to enable the possibility of change-of-mind. That means not just gaining credibility but pushing at its boundaries.

This is work in progress: it needs more research and development. We need a new analysis of learning aims (see pages 21,22,23 & 25, notes). But before we move on, panel one points to three focuses for new thinking:

1. practice-based evidence;
2. how careers now work;
3. the people who most need help.

1. practice-based evidence

The most important part of any research is the formulation of a research question. Research questions point to what it is worth knowing. We have, for example, been working with underlying questions about the economic usefulness of careers-education-and-guidance - 'does it work?' and 'is it valuable?'. It leads to what is sometimes called 'impact research'.

Answers to research questions give us indicators for what should be effective and worthwhile products of our work. In the case of impact questions the indicators include 'employability', 'competitiveness' and 'career-management skill' (see, for example, *Blueprints*, 2006).

But the way we ask questions is driven by our purposes. The purpose of much impact research is to help our work look good to policy makers. (My late colleague John Killeen's findings on economic benefits were, however, more-subtly stated.) We are not alone in using research for promotional purposes: there is widespread concern about how the search for advantageous findings has actually distorted research in a number of fields (Philo and Miller, 2001).

But 'does it work?' and 'is it valuable?' are not the only kinds of questions that research can pose. An answer along the lines 'guidance is a good thing and there should be more of it' is not much use for practical purposes. We need to know things in more detail – where and how careers-education-and-guidance works well and not so well. This is not impact but diagnostic research. It shows that what we do works well when it is organised in some ways, but not in others; with some clients, but not others; on the basis of some of things we do, but not others. There is more. The diagnostic research question is always more complicated, and its indicators are usefully multivariate – pointing in different directions to what can be done to improve the work.

Diagnostic research is for practical rather than promotional purposes. For diagnostic purpose we need to work out what's going on, what's going wrong and how it can be made to go better. It will always conclude that sometimes careers-education-and-guidance works well and sometimes not. It will never support the conclusion that 'guidance is, invariably, a good thing'.

Panel one (page 3) points to where other indicators for diagnostic research might be found. They are in the cultural setting for our work. It might suggest that careers-education-and-guidance may have been useful in the past, but less so in the present; that it can work better in some cultural contexts, but not in others. The research questions would diagnose the effects of beliefs, values and expectations. Its indicators would be as much about learning for life-work balance as for employability (Career-learning Network, CLN 2005a).

Such research is being undertaken. Jenny Bimrose and her colleagues (2004) are asking questions which can reach into background, motivation and programme features of help. There are other research reports which suggest that guidance works differently with different people (MORI, 2005).

Diagnostic research must be framed in terms of what people can do about it. The British National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling, from its foundation in 1975, worked like this: what was found in research was used in development. The DOTS analysis (page 10, note) was one of its more influential products. It was used to suggest what sort of aims were important, how a programme could be assessed, and what action could be taken to improve it. Because NICEC was a networking organisation these ways of working could be developed with practitioners - they influenced further developments. There was a community of research-and-development. The British National Guidance Research Forum offers promise of such a contemporary community (www.guidance-research.org).

We need to re-think our position on research. The dominance of the promotional agenda for research, in our field and others, has damaged the relationships between research and development. More recent calls for 'evidence-based practice' will need more usefully multivariate research. We will need to be patient with the complexity. If we are to have evidence-based practice we are going to need practice-based evidence.

2. how careers now work

We have long-since known that social background influences career development. Social-class, race and gender have figured in our attempts to describe its dynamics.

In careers work it is Paul Willis (1977) who has blazed the trail towards an understanding of such underlying allegiances. He makes authentic contact with a group of psychologically different young men, bound together by shared cultural identity. Paul Willis refers to them as 'the lads'; and they speak of themselves as over-against other groups – particularly the 'ear'oles', so-called for their teacher-compliant behaviour.

The lads' allegiances were enmeshed in group-, family- and social-class-memberships. That such friends-and-family are influential in career development is a commonplace. But panel one points to how contemporary technologies are changing the structures and dynamics of group allegiances. They work through mobile phones, media products and the net. Michael Kenny points to how, as a consequence, group identity is becoming differently focussed. People combine, not so much on the basis of class, race and gender, but on the basis of preferences held by 'people-like-us'. The range of allegiances is increasingly fragmented – based on consumer and other preferences, sporting and other commitments, ethnic and other kinships, religious and other values. Each provides icons – the clenched fist of class- or race-solidarity now being replaced by a David Beckham tattoo or a Gucci logo. Such cultures frame habits-of-mind, through which members express their shared beliefs, values and expectations.

The story has changed since Paul Willis did his research. His 'lads' and 'ear'oles' might now be called 'chavs' and 'boffs'. Group terms are also more varied, not just 'gangs' but 'posses' and 'crews'. But, like the 'lads', group members tell stories that celebrate the beliefs, values and expectations of the group.

Membership, then and now, is highly prized – and not just because it speaks of people-like-us. It is prized also because groups offer protection – 'we will act to defend our own!'.

Such a culture is inhabited. It provides explanations of how things got to be the way they are, what is proper, and who can be allowed to do what. That inhabitance forms habits-of-mind. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1973) compresses the two ideas, inhabitance and habits, into a powerful single term - *'habitus'* (pp.97-98). *Habitus* speaks of how what we assume, value and respect is rooted in group membership – whether family, neighbourhood or 'people-like-us'.

Habitus is a powerful idea for understanding how Paul Willis's lads' choices were made within a cultural frame. Bourdieu's point is that all groups establish such frames, and those habits-of-mind can entrap. Amartya Sen goes further. He points to how people are recruited by groups that claim to speak for an ethnicity. He is thinking of global religious interests; but it happens in leafy suburbs and inner-city ghetto. Across the decades, sociologist Paul Willis and economist Amartya Sen agree: cultures can entrap people into doing things that are not in their own interests.

Easy talk of 'peer-group pressure' does less than justice to the depth and dynamics of all this. Memoirist Bernard Hare (2006) offers more than few leads by telling the story of the Leeds-based 'shed crew' – pretty-well wholly in cultural terms. But we have not done enough recent work on understanding and knowing what to do about *habitus*.

3. the people who most need help

Vocational guidance got its start, in the 1900s US, as a way of re-locating migrants into a fast-expanding economy (Shertzer and Stone, 1966). At about the same time the UK set up labour exchanges to help rural workers find places in an urban economy (Peck, 2004). The first UK juvenile employment bureaux (forerunners of the current Connexions Services) were set up in 1911.

We worked first with those who most needed our help. That is how helping professions learn. In UK careers-education-and-guidance work which began with the most needy, later became part of general provision. Classroom-based careers-education was at first only provided for students not selected as high flyers; work experience was first offered to non-academics; and recording achievement (a forerunner of progress files and personal-development learning) was first offered to non-examinees.

And so, we have found in our work with the most vulnerable ways of helping the rest. Knowing what to do about the sharper pain helps us to know what to do about the duller ache.

This has to do with our basic question – 'who gets to do what in society?' Careers-education-and-guidance is, at its heart, a way of making access to opportunity fair. It brings the sociological idea of stratification to centre-stage in our work. Stratification indicates the extent to which some groups in society – until recently identified by race, gender and social class – experience distorted career development. We are not talking here just about wealth and poverty, nor even about ethnic and cultural diversity. Stratification means that social origin arbitrarily predicts career destiny. All societies are stratified in these terms. And it is unfair.

Some of the stratifying barriers to career development are being dismantled. For reasons to do with the changing labour markets, more people from working-class backgrounds are now able to make their way in work that would have been inaccessible to their parents and grandparents. There is a structured-in social mobility here {Goldthorpe, 2005). Some of Paul Willis' lads might well have now found their way into high-paid financial-sector jobs

Panel one shows how and why the broadly-drawn classifications of social-class, race and gender no longer apply. The 'omega' groups, in the ensuing table are, harder to pin down than Willis's lads. We need to get to know the 'omega' groups better. We need to strengthen our credibility with them because they need us. But we also need them – because understanding those in most need will enable us to help them, and the rest. The excluded are among our most useful teachers.

earning credibility

The panel-one trends have consequences in people's working lives. They show (page 3) more going on than conventional labour-market information can portray. Labour-market information can convey some sense of how labour economies work. But work is also incorporated into a life. And, in order to take account of that, we need a distinction between labour-market information and labour-market experience. If the analysis in the table (page 10) has any validity we will find that people need to juggle more factors than labour-market information can tell.

There is a literature of labour-market experience and it conforms that expectation. There are people at work…

> whose culture is de-valued (Chris Warhurst & Dennis Nickson, 2001);
> whose insecurities cause them to be rejected (Richard Wilkinson, 2005);
> whose valuable experiences are sidelined (Richard Sennett, 1998);
> who seek to re-balance work with well being (Madeleine Bunting, 2004);
> whose self-assurance entraps (Colin Lindsey and Ronald McQuaid, 2004);
> whose allegiances make work the problem (Nick Davies, 1998).

If we are to be credible, we need to understand this experience. Earning that credibility presents three sets of challenges to our work:

1. linking to experience – so that people can see that what is on offer is 'about my life?';
2. trusted – so that 'I can see why you say what you say?';
3. and relevant – so that 'I know what I can do about this?'.

In examining each, we find that establishing credibility is not a simple matter. And so we will need, later in this monograph, to return to each of these three challenges – to see how they are met. Because they must be met, not just by gaining credibility, but by meeting deeper and more-pressing needs.

1. linking to experience

People need to know that they will be able to link what they learn to their life. If they are not able to make that link then they will not think it worth investing their time and energy in us.

In panel one, Zygmunt Bauman is among those who point to how people increasingly favour experience over expertise. There is, in contemporary culture, a tension between learning from experience and learning from expertise. Experience feels recognisable, accessible and checkable; expertise seems contrived, complicated, and remote (Bill Law, 2006a). The hypothesis, then, is that people are more comfortable with experience. They find it more credible.

A finding consistent with this hypothesis comes from researcher Sara Bosley (2004). She finds that learners show a particular interest in the help they get from working-people they actually meet. There are two valued aspects here: (i) they accord credibility to the other person's 'insider knowledge', based on direct-and-personal experience; and (ii) they value the contact for the way in which what that other person says 'resonates' with their own experience.

Sara Bosley's work re-examines and updates community-interaction theory (Bill Law, 1981) which points to the influences on career management of person-to-person feedback and modelling. That earlier work has been significantly extended by Phil Hodkinson and his colleagues (1996). This new work draws on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of '*habitus*' – habits-of-mind rooted in an inhabited culture.

We have not done enough on working out how ideas of group-based *habitus* can best be used in careers-education-and-guidance. There is an issue: *habitus* engenders habits-

of-mind; while careers-education-and-guidance must assume the possibility of change-of-mind. And so, while careers-education-and-guidance programmes can seek credibility by appealing to experience, it runs the risk of entrenching *habitus*.

The power of *habitus* can be sensed in the formation of stereotypes – culturally-acquired but deeply-internalised ways of thinking, feeling and doing. And massively damaging to career development - the person's own and other peoples'.

If, on such matters, we are interested as much in change-of-mind as we are in habits-of-mind, then we need to think again about what happens between the time when our students and clients approach us and the time when they move on. Credibility is a necessary starting-point for our work; but not a sufficient end-point.

2. needing trust

Onora O'Neill (2002) links the consequences of contemporary cultural change to an erosion of deference – people are becoming more distrustful. It is global technologies, she argues, that have led to that crisis of trust. She is particularly interested in the media and politics - widely targets for people's scepticism.

Panel one would support a more-radical conclusion. People look askance not just at the pronouncements of journos and politicos, but at the commercial world and scientists, and even at people who are supposed to be helping – like social workers, probation officers and medics. All seem increasingly to invite suspicion.

Are careers workers on that list? The findings of the MORI user-attitude enquiry suggest that there are significant groups who are unconvinced about us. The MORI report links its findings to earlier work indicating an unwillingness to approach careers workers. That holding-back is based on a broad raft of doubts about us. People are reluctant to confide in strangers, they have difficulty in seeing the service as relevant to their lives, they prefer informal help, and they experience anxiety about what might be brought up (A Blair and others, 1993; D Sims, 1997; and J Wilson and H Jackson, 1998). All of these findings resonate with the analysis in panel one.

In a related field, there are persistent claims that cultural factors feature in people's reluctance to consult counsellors (Paul Wilkins, 2006). We may be puzzled by it. But we would be foolish to disregard it - we need to know more about who these people are, and what we do that causes them to doubt us.

The MORI study helps (it is what good diagnostic research must be - usefully multivariate). By correlating its findings with social background MORI is able to say more about who has these doubts. It does this in crude terms of social-class: people who are more likely to voice reservations about guidance workers are more likely to be in middle-to-low income and disadvantaged groups.

But the MORI enquiry cannot show frequencies. And we would need the frequencies in order to understand how prevalent is this unease. The changing demography of labour markets suggest that the unease may be highly prevalent. In panel one Chris Anderson points to the 'long tail' of fragmented local groups. There may be a number of groups who most doubt our ability to help. We cannot assume that, together, these various cultural sub-groups are in a minority. And they may well be the groups that most need of our help.

Establishing credibility by calling on user experience is a good starting point. But, if we mean to reach a good resolution, we need to establish trust with the people who find it hardest to accord trust. There is more than one way of doing that. And some ways are more securely founded than others

3. seeking relevance

We are tracing how credibility grapples with the questions that our clients and students ask about us:

'has what these experts offer anything to do with my experience?',...

...and, even if it does,...

'can I trust them enough to allow them to have a say in my life?',

...and, even if I could,...

'is what they suggest likely to be useful
so that I could do something about it?'.

No issue for our credibility is more pressing that the last. It is about relevance. If learning is relevant, it is useful - a person knows what to do with it. That means that the student or client can see a point in that learning, so that that the learning will be transferred from where it is learned to be where it will be used. One of the reasons why relevance is such an issue is because getting that transfer-of-learning is hard to do.

First of all, reaching a learning outcome does not mean that relevance has been achieved. Learning is transferred not when it is assessed in a classroom or recorded in a consulting room. Transfer-of-learning points beyond a learning outcome to a living outcome. Learning is transferred when it is used in a life.

In careers-education-and-guidance we might easily assume that life to be: (1) at your work-table, putting together a job application; or (2) in your job interview, trying to look as good as you can. But learning for career is just as likely to be needed: (3) in your living room, trying to persuade your family that it is going to be worth everyone's sacrifice; or (4) hanging with your friends, explaining why you are not going to college with them. Indeed, if the learning can't transfer to scenario three and four, then it may never be put to the test in scenario one or two.

Transfer-of-learning is an absolute requirement of careers work: if what people learn with us does not make a difference to what they do in their lives, then what we do is not working. But panel one suggests that what people do about career is increasingly understood as part of their general well-being – it is expressed as a search for work-life balance. The four scenarios move in that direction – involving domestic and neighbourhood as well as work-related roles. And, as we shall see (page 24), they can move further. Life-role occupancy being what it is, there are many more than four scenarios into which career-learning must be capable of transfer.

Credibility means acknowledging the importance of such beliefs and values in the way people manage working life. Careers education and guidance will earn credibility where it can engage in these terms. There is a programme which seeks to do so. *Signposter*, is an on-line personal development planning tool. Its use of contemporary information technology might have been developed in direct response to the paragraph in *Youth Matters*, about mobile phones and the internet, quoted at the beginning of this monograph. It melds the procedures of career-guidance and web-logging, and it locates both in contemporary culture.

Signposter relies on achieving credibility with users. And, by making that the central strategy, it raises some of the most pressing issues now facing careers education and guidance (see panel two, following page).

panel two

Signposter *poses issues for careers education and guidance*

Signposter is an on-line portfolio, applying up-to-date information technology to career-management needs. It is a significant not just for its state-of-the-art technologies but for the way they bring into focus some of the most pressing issues now facing careers-education-and-guidance.

framework

This free-access on-line programme invites users to develop an account of themselves and their working-life intentions. Some of the early features listed below will be familiar; but, in some key respects, *Signposter* is taking a distinctive approach to this work.

1. Like any useful portfolio, *Signposter* incorporates several self-assessment and preference schedules (respectively asking 'what-can-I-do?' and 'what-do-I-want?' questions).
2. On the basis of the answers, and basic personal information, an advanced search technology seeks education-, training- and working-opportunities – drawing on a range of data bases.
3. But unlike most conventional portfolios *Signposter* can ask about a wider range of social-and-cultural preferences - including movies, music, sport and recreation.
4. Intelligent search technology can do more: it can suggest what 'people-like-you' find interesting and worthwhile – in response to the schedules, but also to social-and-cultural preferences.
5. There is no ready-made agenda here. Users can contain or extend what they do - to any range-of-responses that they find congenial and useful. They can also experiment with their answers - trying out a range of possible-selves-in-possible-futures scenarios.
6. But there is here a way of seeing career intentions in relation to user's membership of social groups of like-minded people. It can therefore relate career-management intentions to social-and-cultural identity.

In all of these ways users can work with a multi-dimensional framework. They can develop from this a scores-words-and-pictures account of each-their-own approach to working life. But it is the wider-than-usual range of ways of talking about career management that gives the programme its distinctive dynamics.

dynamics

The distinctiveness is in how Signposter expands conventional questioning: what people say about career intentions can be understood in its social-and-cultural context. Abilities and preferences are linked to social and cultural contexts. All can be related to what that person means to do about working life.

As an account emerges, the user can progressively control its release onto the *Signposter* website. This account constructed only from those elements which the user is prepared for others to see. On the basis of these accounts the user is positioning her or himself for negotiations with people who visit the site in search of recruits. This is one of the main incentives for using the site – to attract other people's interest.

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There are parallels with the web-logging sites *MySpace* and *Bebo*. But *Signposter* can go further: its profiling and data-linking characteristics reach deeper and wider than these popular web-logging site.

However, like these other sites, *Signposter's* credibility depends on the extent to which the accounts that it produces – narratives – recognisably reflect users' experience. Young men and women tell each other about the sites; and they talk to each other about what the stories on the sites say. Web-logging is a series of social-and-cultural events. Because of the way in which it can reach beyond conventional questioning, *Signposter's* user-credibility index is likely to be high.

To the extent that *Signposter* is used in this way it is probable that teachers and advisers will find out about it from their clients and students – rather than clients and students being told about it by their teachers and advisers. There is no higher indicator of credibility.

potential

It is a design feature of such programmes that they are expandable. For example, as more flexible and more comprehensive data-bases come on-line, they will be linked to *Signposter*.

There are also possibilities for expanding the *Signposter* framework for questions. There is a great deal of potential for its use of more personal-construct-based questioning techniques, and more uses of narrative methods, in developing accounts. And links to social-and-cultural contexts can be expanded by drawing on more of the artefacts of a constantly upgrading mp3, dvd-, gamebox-, mobile-, blogging-informed culture.

But there is a new threshold here. Until now it has been possible to use information technology to replicate the way in which careers-education-and-guidance has conventionally acted. Spreadsheets and data-bases are efficient ways of organising answers to questions and matching them to labour-market information. But the more broadly-based intelligent search-and-report technology used in *Signposter* requires that we resolve deeper issues – not just for this technology, but for careers-education-and-guidance itself.

issues

1. risks of reinforcement, possibilities for change

The *Signposter* design acknowledges that useful learning is both multi-dimensional and socially-and-emotionally layered. It therefore introduces users to a wider-than-usual range of ways-of-thinking. There are issues about why a student's or client's answers are given to its questions; how one element might link to another; and what would happen if the thinking were re-organised. Managing this kind of complexity gives people more ways of understanding what is going on, and more ways of working out what to do about them. It enables the user as agent rather than dependent. And, in doing so, it moves beyond habits-of-mind, to make change-of-mind a possibility.

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But, despite its potentiality for this kind of layered thinking, the *Signposter* site can be used in a simple 'tell-me-what-to-do' mode. If the question is that impatient with complexity, then the programme will not disappoint: it will answer the question in the user's own – possibly habitual - terms.

More importantly, it would be hiding its own complexity from the user. (Other profiling-programs already do this). To hide the complexity casts the user in the role of 'dependent' rather than 'agent'. An 'agent' needs not only to know what is being suggested, but why it is being suggested. And he or she is able to subject what is being suggested to reflective scrutiny.

Useful learning surprises learners, it does not just reinforce existing habits-of-mind. In this way useful learning holds up the possibility of change-of-mind.

2. importance of credibility, need to push the boundaries

The stories *Signposter* generates seem likely to be recognisably about the lives that its users live. Such credibility is an essential basis for help: if users have no belief in a programme they will not come to it, talk about it, or – in any effective way - use it. Neither will they return to it.

But credibility is not a sufficient basis for help. User engagement in *Signposter* is, at least in part, culturally derived: users re-express what experience seems to have taught them. *Signposter* invites users to draw on that experience. And, in particular, it invites them to see themselves as members of a virtual community – 'people like you' sharing beliefs, values, expectations, preferences and hopes. What we know of how cultural affiliations and allegiances develop indicates that this sharing is likely to be with people having a similar age-related, ethnic and cultural habits-of-mind. It is those shared habits-of-mind that feel credible.

There are risks. Credibility filters out experiences and ideas which do not conform to expectations. These dynamics are all-the-more-powerful when they are shared with other people, to whom a user feels some likeness, attachment or allegiance. The feature of career-development which exposes the dangers here is the formation of stereotypes. Stereotypes are group-acquired and culturally-rooted habits-of-mind. They set boundaries around thinking and imagining possible-selves-in-possible-futures. They hamper career development.

It is the work of careers-education-and-guidance to push at the boundaries of such thinking. It does so by bringing users to the point where they will deal with questions along the lines 'what gave me the idea of doing that...?', 'how can I be sure about such feelings...?', and 'suppose I were to look at this in another way...?'. Getting users to ask questions like these pushes boundaries - and makes change-of-mind a possibility.

Maintaining credibility and pushing boundaries are in tension with one another. And, because *Signposter* works with such a wide and dynamic range of bases for action, it writes that issue large.

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3. value of expanded coverage, necessity of extended processes

Signposter is strong on coverage – it interleaves psychology-based ideas with experience-based stories, and socio-emotive motivations shared with other people. It draws all of this into a consideration of what needs to be known and talked about in career management.

Neither is *Signposter* weak on learning processes – helping people to learn from what they find. For example, it provides for questioning, trialing possible answers and noticing inconsistencies in what is said.

But no pre-programmed procedure can be as strong on process as contemporary career management needs it to be. There are three things that *Signposter* needs to do, if is to be capable of enabling change-of mind, instead of just reinforcing habits-of-mind. And those same three things will also enable users to see stereotypes and other culturally derived frames-of-thought in more reflective way. The three things are:

1. invite users into a wider range of experience;
2. enable people to know how to place trust, and
3. take users to where they can imagine how plans will work out in reality.

And so, when young men and women tell their teachers about *Signposter* then their teachers need to be ready both to acknowledge its framework, and to engage their students in a constructive probing of all it can do for them.

But this requires a more thorough use of process-driven learning methods. helping people to know about how they 'find out', 'sort out', 'check out' and 'work out' the basis for knowing what to do about career.

That help can only take the form of curriculum-led learning. In the case of *Signposter* this would mean engaging users in mapping the framework and what it can cover, talking about why such questions are important, considering what informs user responses, and thinking about how the framework can usefully be further questioned.

In this way curriculum enable users to work with any range of possible-selves-in-possible-futures – and to re-examine why any is such a good idea.

Find out more about *Signposter* at www.signposterprogramme.co.uk

Maintaining credibility and pushing boundaries are in tension with one another. It is a tension between my ideas and somebody else's, between my close-up experience and a more-distant expertise, between what is agreed by my people and what seems to have nothing to do with them. Dealing with those tensions is one of the most pressing issues for contemporary careers work. And, because *Signposter* works with such a wide and dynamic range of bases for action, it writes the issue large.

However, establishing credibility has longer-term implications for the position of careers-education-and-guidance. In the UK one of our perennial concerns is for the establishment of an all-age service. The more credible we become to our users the more they will return to us for help. The more they return to us for help, the more politicos will feel justified in supporting us. Our best hope of dealing with policy neglect is to increase our credibility with users.

But there are issues.

pushing boundaries

How to resolve them? There is some agreement about what is happening:

'New information technologies are ideal for spreading reliable information, but they dislocate our ordinary ways of judging one another's claims and deciding where to place our trust.'

In this respect Onora O'Neil (2002) speaks for most of the experts mentioned in panel one (page 3). But when it comes to what to do about it all, she stands apart from some of the others – notably Susan Greenfield.

Onora O'Neil wants tighter control of information-providers. She sees the resolution of the issues as 'out there' - in a strengthening of professional standards. Susan Greenfield looks 'in here' - to where we do our thinking. She urges the need for people to have time and space to...

'...pose appropriate and meaningful questions'.

Careers work is involved in that outward-inward issue. The outward strategy broadly corresponds with what is currently urged for guidance: tighter standards – for example to ensure the impartiality of information. By contrast, Susan Greenfield is supported in the inward strategy by Stephen Law, who draws on enlightenment thinking as a way of: enabling people to pose their own questions. It is an argument that issues of trust are best resolved by enabling people to learn how to learn [4].

The two strategies do not exclude each other. Stephen Law is clear about this: enlightenment values do not pull back from the expert communication of facts – nor even the handing down of culturally-rooted beliefs. But they do insist that people can independently scrutinise all. This means enabling our students and clients to sort things out for themselves - so that they can work out for what can be trusted. And who.

The O'Neill strategy urges well-founded coverage – something we must organise. The Greenfield strategy urges critical-thinking processes – something our students and clients must engage. It is not that we have neglected such processes: we speak of the importance of 'emotional intelligence', 'instrumental enrichment', 'learning circles', 'multiple intelligences' and 'neuro-linguistic programming'. All examine how people inwardly process what they think-and-feel.

But they all draw on assumptions about free-standing individuals. This is frontier psychology: it explains what people do as wholly self-responsible explorers. However, panel one says inward learning is never transacted in a cultural wilderness. And so, though thinking-and-feeling is a matter of what new information you can be assured is trustworthy, it is also a matter of what other people you trust. And that who is not just other individuals, it is groups. And that trust is not just for doing your own thing, it is for owning allegiance.

But culturally rooted habits-of-mind can entrap. And careers-education-and-guidance is heavily invested in change-of-mind. We therefore need a more broadly-based account of learning processes [5]. It suggests three strategies for enabling sustainable action:

1. broader experience – so that people have more to go on;
2. deeper trust - so that people take on board not just what they think-and-feel, but why;
3. wider relevance – so that people can see more than one way in which they can use their learning.

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[4] Ideas about the importance of processes for learning-to-learn have been built into a post-DOTS analysis of aims for our work. A significant element is referred to as 'processes – the learning verbs' (Career-learning Network, 2005).

[5] Stuart Maclure's and Peter Davies's (1991) survey of ideas about how leaning is linked to social action is useful. As is Sara Meadows' (1993) survey of the evidence on how children think as individuals and in a social context. Knud Illeris's more-recent (2002) collation of what is known about the tensions between cognitive, emotional and social influences is particularly useful.

1. broadening experience

To develop a point: in career-development the most telling example of entrapment by *habitus* is stereotypes. The point is worth developing: a stereotype is a form of *habitus* - a habit-of-mind, acquired from a cultural inhabitance. It may have been so deeply embedded over years that the believer can no longer remember why he believes what he believes…

'only men can do work like that';

or…

'work like that is not for people-like-us';

or…

'I'm not good enough to do work like that'.

They are stereotypes – of others, of work and of self. They can seem like God's own truth. But they are not.

Understanding how such *habitus* is formed helps us to know what to do about it. Such cultural influences are acquired from experience; and experience can only be conveyed through narration - story-telling. If we want to push at the boundaries of stereotypes we are going to need to introduce our students and learners to more stories (Bill Law, 2005b). The point applies to all culturally acquired habits-of-mind. To paraphrase *Youth Matters*, broadening experience means introducing students and clients to…

'new places to go, helpful people to meet, useful things to do'.

As *Youth Matters* itself urges, good mentoring is one of the resources. The mentor becomes part of the learner's network. The value of good mentoring is an implication of Sara Bosley's (2004) findings: if people find it congenial to act on the basis of insider information and personal resonance, then more sources and wider resonances will give them a wider repertoire to act on. Good mentoring pushes at the boundaries: it acknowledges starting-point *habitus*, and it offers sustainable alternatives for moving-on.

But it works through recounting experience rather than though setting out of analysis. In reviewing how people talk about why things happen, sociologist Charles Tilly (2006) contrasts 'stories' and 'codes'. Codes are specialised formulas for setting out how things go together – in what he calls 'X-to-Y matching'. Stories work differently - they recount experienced causes and effects.

This two-fold analysis is reflected in careers-education method. 'X-Y' matching codes appear in the information-based analyses incorporated into our worksheets, data bases, tick-lists and psychometrics. But narrated experience can do other useful things: it identifies points-of-view, locates events in a social context, recounts change-of-mind, and suggests how one thing leads to another.

In learning theory Sara Meadows' survey points precisely to the distinction between coded analysis and narrated experience. She surveys semantic and episodic memory (1993, pp.278-282). Semantic learning defines, analyses and lists what is known; it is how experts help us to know about things. Episodic learning is biographical: it is develops over time from direct-and-personal encounters with what is going on [6]. Semantic learning is sustained when embedded in episodic memory.

It is hard to see how any of this broadening of experience can be done except though the use of curriculum. (For an example of how that can work out in practice, see panel three, page 26.)

[6] Ideas about the power of habitus and the uses of episodic learning have also been built into the post-DOTS analysis of aims for our work. A significant element is referred to as 'the influences - inner life and other people' (Career-learning Network, 2005).

2. deepening trust

There is no argument here that narrated experience trumps coded expertise. As Charles Tilly insists, these are not superior and inferior ways of knowing, they are just different. Each offers its own perspectives on what a person might do.

And there is a lot to know. Learning for work-life action in the contemporary world is as demanding as learning for anything. The greater the complexity, and the greater the rate of change, then the stronger the case helping young men and women to learn how to learn.

Rate-of-change is the usual argument for learning-to-learn: whatever people learn today will soon be out-dated, they therefore need to know how to go on learning. But that is only part of the argument: learning-to-learn means knowing when you are under social and emotional pressure. It also means knowing how to deal with it. These are critical abilities for young people dealing with the sort of technologically-enhanced cultural pressures underlying the developments set out in panels one (page 3) and two (page 17). Freedom from pressure is not an option: where other people have an interest in what people do there will always be such pressures.

The Greenfield learning-to-learn strategy points careers-education-and-guidance towards helping students deal with that pressure. It is a programme for learning how to find things out, how to know whether you can believe them, how to check that out, and whether you need to know more. In psychology, it is called 'critical thinking'; in philosophy, 'epistemology' [7] .

Sarah Meadows calls it 'metacognition' – cognising cognisance. She summarises evidence to show that it is a combination of abilities - to plan, seek, check, monitor and adapt (1993, pp.78-81). An implication is to engage learners in a range of different views. The disagreements help students to identify the different things that are going on in different minds. It is called the learner's need for a 'theory of mind' – an understanding not only how I come to know, but how other people are seeing it differently.

In narrative terms it means taking a view of how other people see things, and whether third parties are influencing those other people, and whether there might be fourth parties having any say in that. In distorted form it is paranoia; but, as a species, we learn to use it well. It is a survival strategy: survival is more likely when you know who can be trusted.

All of this develops the Greenfield strategy, with its need for critical thinking advocated by Stephen Law. And, while gathering impartial information is always useful in any here-and-now situation, learning-to-learn is an acquisition with lifelong usefulness.

[7] In post-DOTS thinking it is called 'learning verbs' (Career-learning Network, 2005).

3. getting transfer-of-learning

Both vocational training and careers-education-and-guidance need to get transfer-of-learning; what is learned in one place must be used in another. Transferability gives learning its relevant credibility. But it is not an automatic effect of learning. The base-line requirement is that the classroom reminds students of their lives, so that their lives remind them of the classroom.

We know more about this. Sara Meadows' survey shows how to get transfer. It requires that, while students are still in the classroom, learning must be encoded to where it will be used. Encoding means establishing links between what people are learning and how they will use it. These markers need to be made in some depth and detail, so that students have a number of pointers for linking the learning to their lives (1993, pp.81-87).

It means that we need to talk in more than vague-and-general terms about what the learning will help people to do. And we can be more specific. A role analysis can get down to a lot of detail about what you will be doing. It offers three sets of pointers - being in a role means being: (1) in that setting, (2) with those people, (3) taking on that task.

In vocational training markers like this are not too hard to visualise. Trainees are pretty-well aware of what settings they will be in, in what relationships, and with what tasks. Careers education can resemble vocational training. And a start-up activity for any careers lesson might usefully be (for example) along these lines: 'as a job applicant...'

1. this is where you will be: '...in a selection interview...',
2. this is who else will be there: '...with a recruitment manager...',
3. and your task will be: '...to look good for that position'.

There are other job-applicant scenarios. All focus minds in terms which give learn credibility in the eyes of students. But pushing the boundaries means that education must do more. In education learning may be useful - but we cannot yet know all the settings where it will be useful, ...or with whom, ...or for what.

While training focuses such links, education must expand them – and move beyond easily-understood credibility. The four scenarios on page 16 illustrate the point. But they can be extended: career management must be transacted not just as student and worker, but as mother and citizen; not just with employers and colleagues, but with friends and family; and not just in making good applications, but in reconciling a working life with your own well-being and the well being of people important to you. And so career management is negotiated, not just in work-related roles, but in a whole further range of domestic, neighbourhood and citizen roles.

Ideal training would fit you for a role, but ideal education would help you to be ready for anything that any role throws up. Role thinking is comprehensive enough to accommodate all this: every decision, transition and moving-on is negotiated in role.

Where training credibly focuses down to a role, education exploratorily opens up to a life - pushing boundaries. There is a crucial implication here: where training will equip a person for any single role, education will ensure that no single role ever entirely captures you.

Panel one shows how Amartya Sen worries about role capture. He is thinking of roles in religious groups. But there are commercial, domestic, neighbourhood and political groups that also have an interest in bringing off role capture.

We can train for career management and we can educate for it. Take labour-market information. Understanding LMI in any exploratory depth and breadth requires an historical appreciation of change, a geographic appreciation of distribution, a

mathematical appreciation of probability, a scientific appreciation of cause and effect, a media-study appreciation of social pressure and a biographical appreciation of experience. There is no subject on any curriculum that need be left out of the possibilities for partnership here.

A focussed role analysis can be used at start-up for learning these appreciations. They would point to where, with whom and how you can use this mathematics, this science, this geography – and so on. But in order to get the breadth of usefulness that transfer of learning requires a follow-though stage must set up a wider range of role markers by discussing…

4. 'where else can you use this learning?…',
5. 'with whom?…',
6. 'taking on what?…'. [8]

This kind of multiple-role-marking will more deeply embed learning, will make it more likely that the learning will be seen as useful, and will more fully equip learners for managing one role in relation to others. These are all increasingly pressing preoccupations in contemporary life.

The links will not be recognised in an instant. They are expansive and need working through. And so it is hard to see how any of this can be done except in curriculum. But it will need more time and space than the current edge-of-timetable position of UK careers education usually provides.

Ways in which the such role-related transfer-of-learning can be made practicable are set out in proposals for curriculum reform currently under consideration by the British Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Part of that 'blue-sky' thinking is LiRRiC – a proposal for 'life-role relevance in curriculum'. A central feature is to get careers education off the edge of timetable. LiRRiC moves careers education from the margins to the mainstream.

[8] Ideas about the uses of role-analysis in making effective markers for transfer are also built into the post-DOTS analysis of aims for our work. A significant element is referred to as 'the coverage – opportunity, role and self' (Career-learning Network, 2005).

panel three
what LiRRiC does for careers education

LiRRiC radically reframes careers education. Instead of visualising a separate provision, it restructures careers education as an integral part of mainstream curriculum.

framework

There are three key elements.

1. LiRRiC is a whole-person and one-life concept – it links together what a school- or college-timetable separates:

   (a) recognising the usefulness of any part of the curriculum to students' lives – drawing on the living usefulness of all 'academic' learning;
   (b) valuing the authority of both expertise and experience – drawing on the usefulness of both professional expertise and community-based experience.

2. LiRRiC expands learning opportunities – it organises well-resourced learning events as-and-when they are required. This means that it can provide enough time, at the right time and in block-lengths to accommodate the active learning required. It also means that the most helpful human resources are engaged. Resources are made to fit the learning needs:

   (a) creating new spaces in timetable – several of these a year, some of a few hours, some of one-or-more days, some as a series over weeks;
   (b) involving teachers, advisers and community contacts who are in a position to help, able to help and can fire-up motivated learning.

3. LiRRiC needs a central organising idea to manage this complexity. That idea is life-role relevance:

   (a) enabling students to identify clear markers concerning the usefulness of what they learn in the classroom - to what they do in their lives;
   (b) making those markers on a work-life balanced basis - including worker, domestic, consumer neighbourhood and citizen roles.

A key term here is 'integration' – linking academic standards to life-role relevance, linking institution to community, and linking each life–role to others. Integration is a departure from fragmented and marginal careers education. It is also different from the loosely-diffused strategy of 'infusion'. Integration creates specific, carefully-resourced, and clearly-programmed learning events.

dynamics

These design features of LiRRiC take teachers, advisers, community partners and students into a learning journey. That journey needs to be appropriately planned and signposted.

continued/...

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at the planning stage

> investigate learning needs – what our students need to be able to do;
> work out the life roles – where in their lives they will recognise the usefulness of that learning;
> select academic teachers – people with useful expertise for this learning, and that are willing and able to help;
> select community-based helpers – people with appropriate experience for this learning, and that are willing and able to help;
> bring in community-based experts - such as appropriate guidance people;
> negotiate common-ground for the event – so that students and their helpers know what is happening, what they can get from it and who will be doing what;
> set up the event – to engage small-group, whole-group and individual learning activity engaging students with sources of expertise and sources of experience.

at delivery

> engage students in examining clear life-role markers - pointing to where, with whom and how this learning is useful;
> engage students and their helpers in a clearly mapped learning sequence - helping and being helped to examine, question, sort, probe, explain, try-out and adapt the learning for its usefulness.

at the follow-through

> engage students in anticipating where else in their lives they can see that they can use this learning – other work-life-balanced roles;
> engage students in recording learning outcomes and planning how they will learn more.

at the follow-up

> take on board students' reactions to this learning – for its relevance and its usefulness;
> identify where this learning can usefully be improved;
> begin work on the up-coming LiRRiC event.

potential

LiRRiC is based on what is known of how learning for action works. It also locates careers education more securely in contemporary culture – concerned as much with well-being as with employability.

It is also supported by experience in the field: events like this already feature in some careers education. And the British government's Technical and Vocational Education Initiative was at its most effective when it used life-role-relevant, locally-developed integrated programmes. LiRRiC makes these elements design features of all careers education.

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Wherever 'academics' are in a position to help and are willing to do so, LiRRiC involves these teachers in enabling students to find out what they need to know. Because that learning is linked to life LiRRiC will increase motivation for academic learning.

There is no contradiction between the standards maintained by academic curriculum and the relevance urged by LiRRiC: its life-role relevance needs the reliability and validity of high standards; and high standards are more likely to be reached where learning is motivated by students' wider appreciation of their usefulness.

Because LiRRiC works on an interface between academic standards and life-role relevance it becomes a vehicle for curriculum reform. Programme managers can identify where current curriculum coverage reflects, and fails to reflect, the learning needs of today's students.

issues

1. guidance, careers education

LiRRiC is, in part, a response to cultural shifts associated with contemporary economic and technological developments. These shifts are changing the way people deal with the pressures on their lives. Their increasing complexity require a reassessment of the relationship between (on the one hand) careers education and (on the other) guidance.

That partnership has never been settled. In the early days careers education was seen as a general preparation for the specific work to be done in a guidance. Over the decades careers educators have made various attempt to develop careers-education curriculum. But few of these attempts have been sustained, largely because of the limited scope there is in the way careers education is timetabled.

There will be no progress in careers education unless those limitations are dealt with. The LiRRiC strategy for creating adequate learning space is a necessary step in that task.

2. links, boundaries

LiRRiC expands the possibilities the partnership between careers education and guidance. Recent bilateral partnerships will be replaced by multilateral partnerships, involving guidance workers in operational cooperation, not just with careers educators, but - more extensively - with academic teachers, community-linked partners and other professionals.

The resulting organisation will be stronger on networking than on institutionalisation. An organisation strong on institutionalisation will be careful about maintaining boundaries, on roles, procedures, and the control of resources. An organisation strong on networking will be careful to remain open to influence from outside itself, the contribution of non-institution-based personnel, and the engagement of volunteered as well as designated resources.

continued/...

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All organisations comprise both networking and institutionalising tendencies; the former favour stability, the latter favour movement. Stability is important: some groups in the network will want to resist too much linking, seeing it as leading to a dilution of their own contribution.

There are issues here. They will need careful management.

3. institutional management, programme management

Conventional thinking about management tends to be hierarchical – managers setting the structure of roles, procedures and resources in which people work. LiRRiC management cannot be like that. LiRRiC is delivered not just by careers educators and professional careers advisers but by a multi-lateral partnerships of willing and able academics, community-based volunteers, and other-than-careers professionals.

It cannot therefore be managed in conventional terms. A LiRRiC programme-management team is managing less of a conventional institution more of a flexible network.

It will require special kinds of manager, able to think across conventional boundaries and ready to link together what institutions sometimes keep apart.

The ways in which local LiRRiC managers are selected and supported will prove critical to its success.

Find out more about *LiRRiC* www.hihohiho.com/underpinning/caflirric.pdf

The implementation of LiRRiC is not possible at a stroke. It will require a long period of implementation and learning from experience. But the lines of development set out in LiRRiC proposals have been welcome by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

'Education for personal and social development is most useful thought of as integral to the whole curriculum – not as a series of separate supplements to an "academic" main event...'

The reference to knowledge gained from other subjects is a plea for thinking outside the box – The Copenhagen strategy.

'...Indeed, leaning for personal and social development itself draws upon knowledge gained from "academic" subjects.'

keeping up and moving on

Careers-education-and-guidance has no clearly-bounded body of knowledge of its own; it imports from a range of disciplines. That is how we survive - by integrating all useful thinking. It is a decade-by-decade part of our history. The Copenhagen strategy extends and widens the process of keeping an eye on what is happening outside the box.

This monograph integrates further new thinking. Panel one (page 3) draws on emerging areas of economics, psychology, sociology; it uses recent contributions to political economy; and it introduces theology, philosophy and cultural theory into our thinking.

It is useful because it gives us more ways of knowing what is going on, of diagnosing what might be going wrong, and of working out what be made to go better. It is not that complexity is invariably a good thing; but evolutionary progress is always in the direction of complexity. We cannot work effectively except by facing up to the complexity contemporary realities (see Bill Law, 2005; following Daniel Dennett, 2003).

Furthermore, when it comes to working out new and useful things to do, we have long-since passed the point where the term 'careers-education-and-guidance' any longer fits. Much of what we do – and will be doing - is neither 'careers education' nor 'guidance'. That is why the Career-learning network, cited in this monograph, uses the more-generic term 'careers work'.

The word 'integration' crops up a lot in the current careers-work discourse: it is frequently used in *Youth Matters*, and it is a key concept for LiRRiC. But in these uses integration does not just refer to the discussion of other-than-careers ideas, it refers to forging parallel partnerships with other-than-careers help. Integration is not just a conceptual device, it is a programme-management tool. It is a central part of the LiRRiC strategy.

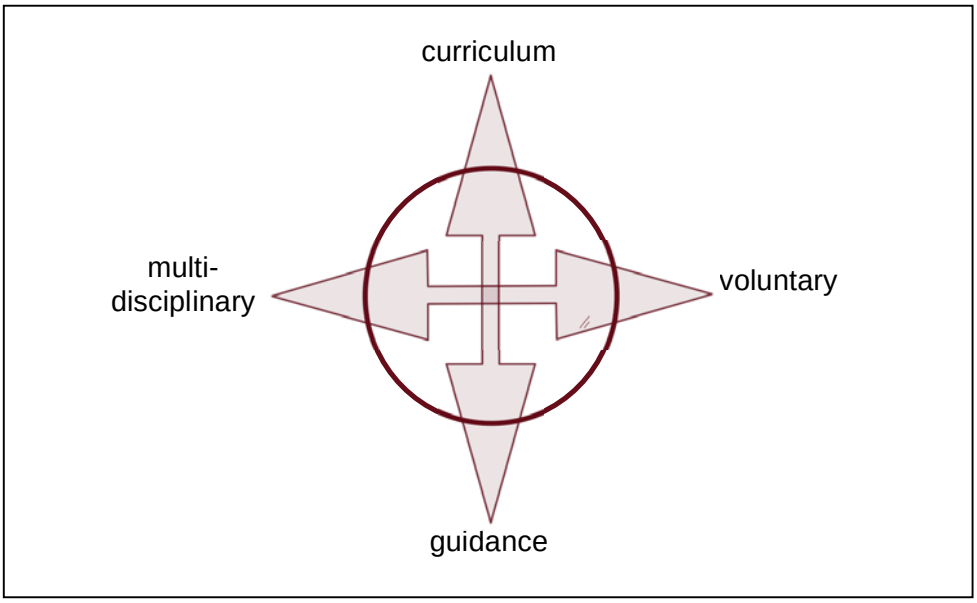
In practical terms integration requires working partnerships which include:

> both specialist-careers and other-than-careers;
> both expert-professionals and other-than-professional.

So in what direction do we move on? We need compass points. Careers-work policy commentator Tony Watts (2006) helps. He makes a useful distinction between two dimensions of integration: 'vertical' and 'horizontal'. Vertical integration is linear: it links specialists to specialist. People in guidance services work closely with people working on a specialist curriculum in schools and colleges. These are compass bearings walked by a coalition of specialists. It allows for the delivery of well-defined programmes - of both research and development. It also points to the extension of this specialist work into a life-long provision. It calls upon expert professionalism.

Horizontal integration doesn't stick to that line. It draws on multidisciplinary thinking and practice. It links to other-than-specialist and other-than-professional help. Social-work professionals and voluntary mentors feature in its networks. Its compass bearings point to other departments in any organisation, to other organisations in any community, and to other people in any neighbourhood. It values experience no less than expertise. And it enables clients and students to see career in the context of domestic, neighbourhood consumer and citizen roles. It is as concerned with work-life balance as with employability.

figure



The useful compass in the figure suggests the question 'who knows guidance who only guidance knows?'. But it also guards against losing our bearings. The dangers to left and right are dangers of enticements by diffuse ideas, inadequately linked to specific needs. That is why the LiRRiC proposal are for integration, not infusion. Infusion is a good way to get lost.

The danger on the linear bearing is entrenchment. A symptom of entrenchment is a guidance literature which only cites guidance literature. The Copenhagen strategy therefore says, though necessary, the linear bearing is not sufficient. The table on page 10 argues that it is not good enough to reply 'more of the same' to every contemporary call for help.

The left-and-right bearings may not be sufficient to the success of our work, but - in the contemporary world – they are necessary:

> looking wider – at into the social and cultural pressures on career;
> thinking again - about how, in the contemporary world, careers work;
> earning credibility - acknowledge habits-of-mind;
> pushing boundaries –to make change-of-mind a possibility.

To take a sideways looks at that sideways look: worrying about habits-of-mind, and opening up the possibility of change-of-mind, apply as much to us as to they do to our students and clients. Our puzzlements concerning our inability to gain credibility with significant audiences may have to do with our own clinging to habitual thinking – cultures we inhabit, allegiance to people like us, impatience with complicating intrusions. What is good for our students' and clients' career development will also prove good for our own.

None of this will undermine our professionalism, although it may cause us to rethink it. It will certainly cause us to think again about the relationship between:

> on the linear bearing - guidance and curriculum;
> on the lateral bearing - professional authorities and the authorities of experience;

But this is work in progress. The Copenhagen compass tells us only one thing for sure: the shortest distance between two points is not necessarily a straight line.

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