

Student voice and the community forum: Finding ways of ‘being heard’ at an alternative school for disenfranchised young people

Introduction

The active participation and involvement of young people in learning has the potential to facilitate a sense of connection to schooling, as well as better relationships with teachers and peers (OECD, 2013). An analysis of the results of the 2012 *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)* provides evidence of the importance of students’ connectedness to learning (OECD, 2013). By investigating students’ sense of belonging, it was noted that some young people in mainstream schooling felt like they were ‘outsiders’ in their school contexts or ‘left out of things’ (OECD, 2013, p. 53). A lack of connectedness and belonging can lead to alienation from learning:

Students tend to thrive when they form positive relationships with peers, feel part of a social group, and feel at ease at school. A lack of connectedness can adversely affect students’ perceptions of themselves, their satisfaction with life, and their willingness to learn and to put effort into their studies. (OECD, 2013, p. 51)

This is particularly relevant for young people who are economically and educationally marginalised.

Teese and Polesel (2003) suggest that marginalised young people often experience ‘multiple disadvantage’ that further disconnects them from schooling. This can include ‘poor language skills, fragmented family lives, poverty, low levels of parental education, lack of facilities, [and] leisure that is distracting rather than supportive of school’ (Teese & Polesel, 2003, p. 123). Additionally, schools play a role in ‘teach[ing] people different ways of seeing themselves and their place in the world’ thereby affecting a young person’s sense of connectedness (Hayes, 2012, p. 643). The OECD (2013) report found, ‘socio-economically disadvantaged students express a lower sense of belonging than socio-economically

1
2
3 advantaged students' (p. 177). Since being heard and feeling connected are particularly
4
5 challenging in relation to disadvantaged young people, this paper explores belonging and
6
7 student voice based on research in an alternative school. This alternative school, like many
8
9 others (see for example Hayes, 2012; Mills & McGregor, 2014), works with young people
10
11 who are marginalised, that is, isolated or excluded from mainstream education systems in
12
13 Australia.

14
15
16 As a clarificatory aside: this paper uses terminology such as 'alternative' and
17
18 'mainstream' that is the cause of much debate; first, because such terminology suggests a
19
20 binary relationship which in itself is problematic (MacLure, 2003); and secondly, as a
21
22 number of researchers argue (Aron & Zweig, 2003; Mills & McGregor, 2014) there is no
23
24 agreed-upon definition and much contestation regarding what constitutes 'alternative
25
26 education'. However, the nomenclature helps in this paper to identify the environment of the
27
28 school site as one that intended to disrupt and challenge default grammars of schooling
29
30 (Tyack & Tobin, 1994), and default modes of practice that 'prioritise surveillance and control
31
32 through organisational processes ... and disciplinary practices over pedagogical ones'
33
34 (Hayes, 2005, p. 609).

35
36
37
38 Young people who attend alternative schools often relate traumatic relationships and
39
40 experiences with mainstream schooling (McGregor & Mills, 2012), which they claim
41
42 contributed to their disconnectedness from schooling. A number of factors contribute to
43
44 students becoming a 'non-citizen' within the school environment, in particular, structural
45
46 obstacles such as inflexible school provision (Hayes, 2012). In this paper, we explore the
47
48 contribution of this obstacle to the creation of a 'culture of silence' (Freire, 1996) in
49
50 schooling. Specifically, we draw on the concept of community voice in education, as
51
52 outlined below. We apply this concept to an analysis of the 'community forum' at Elkhorn
53
54 Community College (pseudonym), an alternative school for young people who have left or
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 been excluded from a mainstream school in Queensland, Australia. Such schools are
4
5 sometimes referred to as 'flexischools' or 'second chance' schools and the vast majority of
6
7 their students come from low socioeconomic or high poverty backgrounds. The forum at
8
9 Elkhorn College was designed to encourage their students to have a voice, to provide a more
10
11 flexible approach to education, and support future training aspirations. This paper analyses
12
13 the school's efforts to 're-voice' as well as re-engage young people in schooling.
14
15

16 17 18 **Community voice**

19
20 Student voice is a central component of democratic education (see Beane & Apple, 1999;
21
22 Dewey, 1916; Fielding & Moss, 2011). The way in which this is implemented varies,
23
24 however. Most common are representative approaches, best typified by such bodies as
25
26 student representative councils whose decisions require ratification by staff or school
27
28 administration (Black, 2011; Cremin, Mason, & Busher, 2011). More participatory
29
30 approaches include schools that are run by school meetings (see for example, Neill, 1970)
31
32 and students-as-researchers (see for example, Thomson & Gunter, 2007). Mitra (2006)
33
34 outlines three levels of young people's voice: being heard, collaborating with adults, and
35
36 building capacity for leadership (p. 7). Being heard is the most common form of voice,
37
38 similar to the representative form of democratic education. However, simply being heard
39
40 does not create opportunities for the type of deeper student participation which builds trust in
41
42 the school community (Mitra, 2006). Fielding (2001) suggests that this common form of
43
44 voice identifies young people as 'data sources'. A deeper level of voice is associated with the
45
46 practices of young people and adults working together collaboratively to engage in problem
47
48 solving and decision making related to issues that are important to young people (Fielding,
49
50 2001), and with situations where leadership capacities are developed in young people.
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Fraser's (2004) notion of the representative dimension of social justice is useful here.
4
5 In Fraser's approach to social justice the interconnections between the dimensions of
6
7 distribution, recognition and representation are important. All three are also relevant to
8
9 disadvantaged students, for whom poverty (distribution) and difference (recognition) tend to
10
11 play as major a role in their marginalisation as being silenced (representation) (Mills, 2013).
12
13 For this paper, however, we focus on Fraser's concern with representation, which relates to
14
15 the boundaries which shape a community as well as who is allowed to speak. We would
16
17 suggest that encouraging young people's participation in 'democratic structures and
18
19 processes' (Apple & Beane, 1995, p. 9), including more collaborative and leadership-building
20
21 approaches to youth voice (Mitra, 2006, see above), are effective ways of helping overcome
22
23 structural obstacles and a culture of silence in many schools; and improving connectedness
24
25 (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003) and the representative dimension of social justice for young
26
27 people.
28
29
30
31

32 The notion of community voice draws on understandings that schools are in
33
34 partnership with young people (Gardner & Crockwell, 2006). When adopting such
35
36 understandings, schools catering to the needs of highly marginalised young people are
37
38 unlikely to locate the 'problem' solely within the young person, but to recognise the ways in
39
40 which various forms of injustice have shaped their lives. Schools that support the ethos of
41
42 communities and partnerships with young people are oriented towards changing the structure
43
44 of schooling and promoting active voice for all participants. Advocates for youthful voices to
45
46 be heard in schooling settings have argued strongly for the benefit of the unique perspectives
47
48 brought to bear on issues when young people are consulted (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004); and
49
50 they reposition young people as active rather than passive (Fielding, 2007). Such practices
51
52 work towards encouraging all members of a school community to have the opportunity to
53
54 participate, thereby seeking to avoid what Fraser refers to as 'misrepresentation' when a
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 system fails to ensure that all its members have ‘parity of participation’ (Fraser, 2009, p. 16).
4
5 Despite such positive connotations of youth voice, it is useful to be warned against the
6
7 presumption of a single youth voice (Cook-Sather, 2006) and the ‘dangers of speaking for or
8
9 on behalf of others’ (Fielding, 2004, p. 298). We are also warned that the high ideals
10
11 associated with the inclusion of student voice can, at times, be implemented tokenistically
12
13 (Cook-Sather, 2006; Mitra, 2006). For example, listening to young people without acting on
14
15 their ideas does not give them an active voice and has no value in promoting democratic
16
17 engagement (Robinson and Taylor, 2007).
18
19

20 21 22 **The culture of silence**

23
24 Obstacles to educational engagement and connectedness include an inflexibility, even
25
26 rigidity, within schools (Hayes, 2012; Lange & Sletten, 2002; Wyn, Stokes, & Tyler, 2004)
27
28 that limits young people’s autonomy and choices, as well as their opportunities to participate
29
30 in their school community. This reflects what Freire (1996) identifies as a ‘culture of silence’,
31
32 where young people’s voices are ‘quietened’ or ignored, in systems such as mainstream
33
34 education that are steeped in ‘paternalistic teacher-student relationships’ that do not
35
36 encourage critical awareness in, or of, young people (pp. 12-14). Their presence in schooling
37
38 becomes invisible as they are not regarded as the ‘experts in their own lives’ (Gardner &
39
40 Crockwell, 2006, p. 11) due to commonly held deficit notions of youth ‘in transition’
41
42 towards adulthood (James & Prout, 1999).
43
44
45

46
47 Couldry (2010) argues that ‘voice matters’ and advocates for ‘voice as a value’,
48
49 referring to the ‘act of valuing, and choosing to value’ (p. 2). In contrast, ‘treating people as if
50
51 they lack that capacity [to have a voice] is to treat them as if they were not human’ (p. 1).
52
53 This is particularly true for young people who are routinely subjected to age discrimination
54
55 regardless of their individual capacities. A paradigm of ‘youth development’ minimises the
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 worth of their contributions to society whilst also justifying the necessity for monitoring and
4
5 control. As a group, young people - 'youth'- tend to be marginalised and deprived of a
6
7 meaningful voice. Variouslly constructed as 'victims' or 'threats' within research, media and
8
9 schools (Cremin et al., 2011; Kelly, 2003), the public images of young people continue to
10
11 suggest the need for combinations of care and control, despite the challenging nature of the
12
13 worlds in which they live (France, 2007). White and Wyn (2013) also note that it is
14
15 increasingly incumbent upon 'young people to make their own routes through education and
16
17 work in new economies and negotiate new sets of risk in the form of personal choices' (p.
18
19 125). However, within the context of schools, young people typically continue to be silenced
20
21 by the traditional power relations of such institutions.
22
23

24
25 The paper moves to address the example of community voice in an alternative school
26
27 site for disenfranchised young people, Elkhorn Community College. This school encourages
28
29 democratic education and adopts practices such as the community forum that encourage
30
31 active participation and involvement of young people in their school life. As such, the
32
33 College understands schooling as a partnership with young people and promotes flexibility
34
35 within school structures and provides opportunities for young people to speak and be heard.
36
37
38
39

40 **Research context: Elkhorn Community College**

41
42 Elkhorn Community College (ECC) is a non-government and non-fee paying school
43
44 providing educational programs for young people in Years 10, 11 and 12, the final three years
45
46 of secondary education in Australia. The College is located in an outer suburb of Brisbane in
47
48 the state of Queensland. While the organisation has a 20-year history of community services,
49
50 including the provision of educational services via an annex of a local secondary school, it
51
52 only commenced operating as an alternative school in January 2011 with approximately 20
53
54 young people and two staff. The school receives funding from the State Department of
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Education as part of its Special Assistance Schools program. These schools, whilst
4
5 independent, are guaranteed funding from the state department on the conditions that they
6
7 have been established to meet the needs of young people who have disengaged from the
8
9 mainstream sector, that they do not charge fees and that they are solely dependent on
10
11 government funding. The justification for this funding is that it is 'in recognition of the
12
13 special nature of the services they provide to the State's most vulnerable students' (DET,
14
15 2015). There are currently 20 such schools in Queensland, catering to student populations of
16
17 less than 100. The independent nature of these schools means that they often have diverse
18
19 philosophical frameworks and practices.
20
21

22
23 At the time the researchers were at the College, there was an enrolment of
24
25 approximately 60 young people and five staff, comprising a principal, two teachers, and two
26
27 youth and community development workers (one of whom was completing teaching
28
29 qualifications). Due to turnover of staff in these positions, we were able to interview eight
30
31 different people who occupied these roles. The young people at ECC have a range of
32
33 complex social and learning support needs, such as drug use, unstable home lives, and a
34
35 tendency towards absenteeism, making it challenging for mainstream schools to engage them.
36
37 The College offers a range of formal and informal learning education and training options for
38
39 young people including formally accredited courses in literacy, numeracy and vocational
40
41 education and training (VET). They also offer structured project-based learning options in
42
43 visual arts, computer technology, adventure-based learning, and living skills. All of these
44
45 programs seek to engage and integrate young people into the culture of community-based
46
47 learning, and are delivered in a flexible and supportive manner.
48
49
50

51
52 One of the aims of the study was to identify the degree to which alternative schools
53
54 might reflect representational forms of social justice (Fraser, 2004) via student voice and
55
56 thereby contribute to a 're-imagining' of schooling in *all* school for *all* students. The
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 community forum at ECC was one example of such practices. The research was undertaken
4
5 at this site over a period of 18 months in 2013-2014. Data were gathered using qualitative
6
7 methods including interviews, observations, photography, and the collection of artefacts,
8
9 such as school documents. This paper draws primarily on interview data from eight staff
10
11 members and 18 young people.
12

13
14 Research involving young people generates specific ethical considerations (see Te
15
16 Riele & Brooks, 2013). In Australia, ‘researchers must respect the developing capacity of
17
18 children and young people to be involved in decisions about participation in research’
19
20 (NHMRC, ARC and AVCC, 2007, p. 55) and that their level maturity cannot be simply fixed
21
22 in terms of age. Young people at ECC had already taken a high level of responsibility for
23
24 their own education by moving from a mainstream to an alternative setting. In addition, they
25
26 tended to be streetwise and resilient beyond their years, as a result of having to cope with the
27
28 various challenges created by poverty and disadvantage. Some did not have regular contact
29
30 with any parent or guardian, and were in effect living independently.
31
32

33
34 In order to work ethically with the young people and staff, the researchers participated
35
36 in the school’s daily program, including the community forums each morning. This enabled
37
38 the researchers to demonstrate their respect, to build trust, to get to know the workings of the
39
40 community, and to explain the research informally when people showed interest. For student
41
42 interviews, respect involved gaining their own consent to take part first. For younger students
43
44 who had access to parental or guardian support, consent from the latter was sought as well.
45
46 The researchers made sure all participants understood that in publications we would use
47
48 pseudonyms both for individuals and for the College.
49
50

51
52 The project’s methodology of narrative inquiry aligns with Nancy Fraser’s framework
53
54 of social justice by privileging the narrative position of the storytellers (Clandinin et al.,
55
56 2009). This further enhanced the ethical integrity of the project. Interviews were ‘organic’,
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 with interview questions used as guides or prompts that enabled participants to tell their own
4 stories, which reinforced our approach of undertaking research ‘with’ the teachers and
5 students rather than conducting research ‘on’ them. The narrative perspective also enabled us
6 to identify ‘competing stories’ about education, that is, those stories that ‘live in dynamic but
7 positive tension with dominant stories of school’ (Clandinin et al., 2009, p. 82). The young
8 people in this study often expressed their competing stories in relation to their previous
9 experiences in mainstream schooling.
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17

18 The interview data were analysed using Fraser’s (2004; 2009, and previously
19 outlined) three dimensions of social justice. For this paper, the focus is on ‘representation’
20 (see above) in school practices and pedagogies. Specifically, this paper outlines the
21 community forum used at ECC to analyse examples of young people’s participation and
22 opportunities to actively express their voices within this schooling community.
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

31 **Practices promoting community voice: Youth-led community forums**

32
33 Elkhorn Community College has a similar commitment to ‘democracy’ such as Summerhill
34 (Neil, 1970) and other independent schools deemed ‘democratic’ (see Mills & McGregor,
35 2014, Chapter Four), even though they have a very different history, student population and
36 financial supports from these schools. This democratic perspective was evident on the
37 College’s documentation that cites the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for*
38 *Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008), a statement of educational goals affirming:
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

48 As a nation, Australia values the central role of education in building a democratic,
49 equitable and just society—a society that is prosperous, cohesive and culturally diverse,
50 and that values Australia’s Indigenous cultures as a key part of the nation’s history,
51 present and future.
52
53
54

55 And, that the College would enact core goals to ‘... promote equity and excellence in
56 education and support young people to become successful learners, confident and creative
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 individuals, and active and informed citizens' (MCEETYA, 2008). The College's community
4
5 forum was designed to make a contribution to the achievement of such aims.
6

7
8 The notion of the community forum is based on the concept of the democratic school
9
10 meeting where the intention is for 'students and staff to sit down together as equals, reflect on
11
12 their work and aspirations, raise matters of individual and communal significance, celebrate
13
14 achievements, hold each other to account, and decide on what to do next' (Fielding, 2013, p.
15
16 124; Neill, 1970). The forum is intended as a practice that 'honor[s] the voices of the young'
17
18 (Smyth, 2007, p. 646). Given the routine subordination of youth by the adult world that has
19
20 historical and current sociological resonance, such aims are challenging ones to achieve, even
21
22 within schools that sit outside of conventional structures like ECC. This issue will be
23
24 addressed as we proceed with our analyses.
25
26

27
28 The impetus for the community forum stemmed from the strong community ethos of
29
30 its founding principal, as evident in this excerpt from school documentation:
31
32

33 We are committed to making our community inclusive, strong and confident. In our
34
35 community every person has an equally valued and respected role. We aim to be a place
36
37 of safety that welcomes the participation of all people regardless of age, gender, race,
38
39 beliefs, culture, sexual identity or differing ability.
40

41 The forums at ECC were held each morning, providing opportunities for community-building
42
43 and organisation of daily routines and learning activities. Young people and staff sat
44
45 interspersed in a large circle in an open space, without assigned seats for staff or students. As
46
47 Rita, a teacher observed: 'It is conducive for a community to all be within a circle'. The use
48
49 of the circle also attends to 'the socio-spatial and relational aspects of schooling' that
50
51 facilitate connectedness (Cremin et al., 2011, p. 602). Each day, a different young person, led
52
53 the community forum. They either volunteered or were nominated, and at no time during our
54
55 visits did a student decline to lead the meeting. The forum operated within a set of understood
56
57
58
59
60

responsibilities that centred on mutual respect. For example, each member understood that ‘over-speaking’ was a practice that failed to respect other members of the group and was therefore unacceptable. Additionally, each member of the forum was encouraged to participate by being called on by name to offer an opinion or raise an issue; responses were encouraged systematically by moving around the circle, however, no one was pressured to speak if they declined. These understandings were developed over time and not reiterated on a daily basis unless there were infringements. For example, staff intervened if there were instances of over-speaking, reminding the group of the school’s ethos of individuals having equal value in the community. Within the context of the school’s attempt to facilitate a democratic community forum, this practice was problematic as it contradicts the notion of the equal positioning of individuals. Educational agendas of the adult participants that included promoting student engagement and clarifying concepts thus competed with the goals for foregrounding student voice. Within schooling contexts there are clearly tensions in respect of implementing equality of representation or parity of participation when, traditionally, adult voices have been dominant.

The forum was generally structured into three parts: A discussion of issues that related to local and wider community news and College announcements; a check-in where each member the community voiced their readiness (or otherwise) for the day’s learning; and a sign-up process that incorporated decision making and informed choice regarding the day’s learning sessions. The youth leader ran the 30 minute forum based on this agenda. In the first part of this agenda students and staff were able to raise concerns and issues that would lead to dialogue and decisions regarding operational matters. The second involved a listening exercise. In the third, students, in consultation with staff if they wished, were able to determine their learning activities for the day. The discussion of findings below is structured according to these three parts of the community forum.

Discussing and reflecting on issues

Every member of the ECC community was able to share news and announcements within the community circle, enabling them to discuss a broad range of issues beyond the school context. During one field visit, for example, a news item related to an upcoming federal election. A staff member raised the issue of voting eligibility and encouraged young people to register and participate in the election process. A young person who was already registered to vote spontaneously shared aspects of that enrolment process. Two students commented on the inclusion of such items in the meeting. Cade observed: 'It's not bad. Like, they mention ECC news and the wider community; they don't do that in high school. Like, it's good to know what's going on around the place'. Bella was grateful for the opportunity to think through issues and make informed decisions. She indicated, 'It's actually pretty good, like, to know that at the end of the year, when I am 18, I can make more decisions on my own and be more independent, like I am now'. Cade and Bella expressed their views that these opportunities to discuss issues beyond the day-to-day running of the school were important aspects of their feelings of connectedness.

Patrick, the principal, encouraged staff to 'just try and let the young have as much say as possible'. Occasionally, however, it was perceived that not all young people were comfortable with this level of consultation and decision making. For some young people, there was a view held by teachers that they had had to learn how to become an active citizen. Maddy, a teacher, suggested:

I think that's what [young people] struggle with, when they first start here, that they have power here to make choices and help decide how the community works. They are not used to that; being in mainstream, where we are told what to do. Even in the past, we have had young people tell us, "Why don't you just tell us what to do?" And we say, "We don't want to have to tell you. We have got different roles here, but we are all part of the community and we all want to have the option of making decisions of how things can work better".

1
2
3 This invitation to participate was limited to acceptable forms of participation, as
4 indicated earlier by how teachers reacted to 'speaking over' during the community forum.
5
6

7 The operation of the daily community forum provided opportunities to experience how
8 competing, and sometimes conflicting, concerns were managed. For example, where
9 possible, the diverse needs and interests of students were accommodated through flexible
10 programs and planning. At the same time, students were expected to show respect for others,
11 and to comply with reasonable expectations that facilitated the smooth running of the school.
12
13

14 The maintenance of agreed protocols for participation was not only reinforced by teachers.
15
16

17 During one forum the youth leader coordinated a discussion regarding the issue of
18 punctuality and young people arriving on time to the community forums and to their learning
19 activities during the day. Patrick, the principal, also spoke about the need for all members of
20 the community to be on time. He discussed the College's philosophy regarding 'flexibility'
21 but suggested that this must be balanced by the need for 'structure' in order for a community
22 to operate effectively, suggesting that otherwise the result would be 'chaos'. Young people's
23 suggestions for improvement ranged from the provision of basic incentives such as food,
24 while other ideas drew attention to individual responsibility.
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37

38 In a subsequent meeting, following an ongoing discussion regarding punctuality, a
39 student decided to take action and instigate consequences for late arrival to a community
40 forum: Serge got up and shut the door thereby locking out any late comers. Perhaps
41 encouraged by the College's philosophy of participation and inclusion, he felt authorised to
42 act independently and implemented a strategy that he thought would be effective. Katrina, a
43 youth worker, noted that when young people act in this way it 'has more impact than when
44 we do it'. In addition, she commented on the severity of their actions.
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52

53 They're so harsh, though. They are really harsh. "Lock him out! Don't let him back in!"
54 You have to calm them down a bit. But the whole group was behind Serge.
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Staff agreed that there was a marked improvement in punctuality in the days following
4
5 Serge's 'lock-out' of latecomers; however, they were also concerned about the potentially
6
7 exclusionary consequences of independent actions taken by some students and whether they
8
9 actually contravened the democratic ethos of the community through extreme enforcement of
10
11 rules. We suggest that this points to a 'spectrum of preparedness' on the part of young people
12
13 to assume the responsibilities that come with 'parity of participation'; and that teaching is
14
15 required for the facilitation of youthful representation simply because most young people do
16
17 not experience true equality with the adults in their worlds.
18
19

20
21 Independent actions by students occurred infrequently, but when they did, they were
22
23 often justified as acts of resistance (Bourdieu, 2001) authorised by the principles of self-
24
25 empowerment reflected in the community forums. Two students, Branson and Jace, described
26
27 how they witnessed acts of independence to shut down changes that were not brought before
28
29 the forum. The boys felt that these changes were a 'corruption' of the school's accepted
30
31 processes and therefore justified this response.
32
33

34
35 See, that's what made that corruption, when they tried to change the place as a school.
36
37 The new teacher ... she just brought all this new work that she's been working on for
38
39 ages and shit, the kids grabbed all her work and took it outside and burnt it...
40

41 This incendiary act of resistance once more indicates the need for educational groundwork in
42
43 the construction of community youth forums to support their functioning in ways that
44
45 eradicate forms of oppression, not the replacement of one with another; the destruction of
46
47 another person's property runs counter to notions of mutual respect as the foundation of
48
49 community relations.
50
51

52
53 Most of the time, young people engaged in collective reflection and discussion of
54
55 issues that were raised in the community forums. Definitive decisions were not made quickly.
56
57 Rather it was an ongoing process of discussion, testing, and reflection before existing
58
59
60

1
2
3 practices were changed or new practices were implemented. Bella, a student, added, ‘They
4
5 pretty much treat you like a young adult, so you have more to say to things; they ask you for
6
7 your opinion on things and stuff like that’. Nonetheless, although young people felt they had
8
9 much more say at ECC than in previous schools, *underlying adult power was always a*
10
11 *presence*. Mockler and Groundwater-Smith (2014) problematise the ‘discourse of
12
13 “empowerment”’ (p. 3) with Ellsworth (1989) referring to these kinds of arrangements as
14
15 pseudo-empowerment or limited-empowerment that only enables young people to have a
16
17 voice in certain matters. The principal, Patrick, acknowledged the power differentials, thus:
18
19

20
21 I have got this old-fashioned idea in my head which is like, "No, no, this is - it is
22
23 collaborative decision-making with them. It is not democratic. They are not elders. They
24
25 haven't got social responsibility. We are in charge of the balancing act, you know."
26
27 Maybe that's more conservative than it needs to be.
28

29 Dalton, a teacher, added to Patrick’s concept of the ‘elder’ suggesting, ‘We are the adults; we
30
31 are the responsible ones. We want to take [young people] from young adulthood to
32
33 adulthood’. He also added,
34
35

36
37 With all that flexibility, what makes it hard is that you are never really sure where the
38
39 boundaries are ... It's more about continued negotiation. I just think that's really cool;
40
41 that a young person gets an experience of an adult, who is willing to listen, to negotiate;
42
43 to not just say "no"; yeah, to trust.
44

45 Fielding’s (2013) analysis of examples of school meetings demonstrates that a premise of
46
47 ‘self-governing children’ is widely rejected, instead, suggesting ‘shared responsibility’ within
48
49 the democratic process (p. 129), recognising that young people are ‘capable of responsible
50
51 action’ (Thomson & Gunter, 2007, p. 327).
52

53 54 55 *The check-in rotation* 56

57 The second part of the community forum involved the youth leader guiding the check-in
58
59
60

1
2
3 process through a rotation around the circle. Each member of the community introduced
4
5 themselves with their first name and responded to three questions during the check-in
6
7 process: How are you feeling (on a scale from 1-10)? Do you have a pen? What are you
8
9 looking forward to? For example, a check-in statement might take the form of: 'My name is
10
11 Serge; I am a 5; I have a pen; I am looking forward to the session on graffiti art'. The
12
13 simplicity of these questions should not overshadow the underlying motive of the practice
14
15 which provided opportunities for relationship work.
16
17

18
19 Each of these questions had a purpose and provided feedback to the community about
20
21 its members, while also enabling the members to interact with each other. Indicating a
22
23 number between one and 10 enabled the group to gain an understanding of how each
24
25 individual was positioned for the day, to gauge the school climate, and to provide staff (and
26
27 peers) with an indication of the relational support each student might need that day. Troy, a
28
29 youth worker explained:
30
31

32
33 So when we have check-in at the start of every day and we ask the young people where
34
35 they're at, and they say, "I'm either 2, I am tired or hung-over, this or whatever", or "I am
36
37 a 10". And we go, "That's where you are. That's fine. No judgments on it. We just
38
39 recognise that that's where you are". So I think maybe they see that they are accepted and
40
41 it's okay. I think it's evidence that it is a community where "I am allowed to be me and I
42
43 don't have to be happy today".
44

45
46 The check-in activity was a means by which the College attempted to build relationships
47
48 between its members. Travis, a student at the College suggested, 'You have got respect here'.
49
50 A number of young people stated that the College felt more like a family than a school,
51
52 which helped to foster a sense of belonging to the community (Lange & Sletten, 2002).
53
54 Serge, a student recalled,
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 The first day ... I felt like I was never going to fit in. One of my mates here said it is like
4 a family. Like, you have your ups/downs now and then but you always get over them in
5 the end. And I did fit in.
6
7

8
9 The set questions in the second part of the community forum functioned as symbolic
10 indicators of an individual's preparedness for the day's learning activities. Alvesson and Berg
11 (1992) indicate that symbols, like a pen, have a 'representative function' and often make
12 reference to 'something more than itself' (p. 86). Additionally, the reference often has a
13 'subjective significance' in that it is understood by both the individual and the collective
14 community (Alvesson & Berg, 1992, p. 86). While the question about the pen may appear
15 trivial, all members of the community appeared to respond with sincerity, perhaps
16 understanding the underlying symbolism of their responses, for example of being ready to
17 learn. Occasionally, someone had two pens and was able to lend one to a friend, while others
18 regularly did not present a pen. It was not clear whether this was due to forgetfulness or an
19 act of non-compliance. Regardless of the cause, the forum attendees accepted without
20 judgement what each person chose to share with the group.
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36

37 *Sign-up for learning*

38
39 At the end of the community forum, the youth leader asked the young people to review the
40 information on a white board regarding the available learning sessions for the day. This final
41 question focused the community's attention on learning and led into the selection process of
42 learning activities. The school has great flexibility around curriculum choices, and school
43 documentation indicates that ECC 'is committed to achieving high quality informal and
44 formal learning and education outcomes' for its students. The level of curricular flexibility
45 whilst possible in mainstream Queensland schools is often constrained by many systemic
46 demands. ECC, however, was established on the margins of conventional schooling to cater
47 for disadvantaged students and thus has greater flexibility to determine the curricular content,
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

pedagogy and assessment timelines best suited to its students¹.

Learning sessions varied each day and included classes in sport as well as numeracy, literacy, poetry, story-telling, work-place readiness, food safety, or street art. On some occasions, the teacher or youth worker associated with the activity provided some explanation regarding the learning session. Otherwise, young people reviewed the options and selected one from the white board. Dalton, a teacher, explained the origins of this process:

I remember being at one of the first staff meetings and someone said about, "Wouldn't it be great if they could sign-up for what they wanted to do at the beginning of the day?" Oh, yeah ... young people being experts in their own lives. But it took us a year to get there. But that's alright; had to go through some stuff. But I am pretty excited that we are doing that now.

If learning is considered to be a core activity of schooling, then being able to make informed choices about learning activities is an especially important aspect of student voice; Lange and Sletten (2002) indicate that increased choice and flexibility often leads to young people being more 'comfortable and confident in their educational setting' and that as a consequence, 'academic performance and commitment' improves (p. 16). An OECD report on personalised learning also suggests that offering young people 'curriculum choice engages and respects' them (Miliband, 2006, p. 25; see also Neill 1970). However, staff at ECC were aware that the provision of learning choices posed challenges for them particularly in respect of the investment of time in activities that might not be chosen.

Overall, though, staff were pleased with the way the sign-on and forum enabled student voice, as illustrated by Rita:

¹ Once students are ready for credentialing of various outcomes and certificates, however, they must also meet the same criteria as students in mainstream schools.

1
2
3 The community forums are finally working so well. Young people are running it; they
4 are choosing their classes each day. We are able to have a laugh and it is not all about
5 keeping people quiet as much as just allowing them to express themselves.
6
7

8
9 The community forum ended after the sign-up and with the College community breaking up
10 for morning tea.
11

12
13 In summary, the forums were intended to provide young people opportunities to
14 demonstrate leadership, participate in collaborative decision making, and to discuss issues
15 about the day-to-day operation of the College. Patrick indicated their approach at ECC was
16 to:
17
18
19
20
21

22
23 Create an environment where [young people] have agency in their own life and where
24 they feel safe and where they can be self-directed in a holistic learning sense, and ...
25 where people thrive and grow together
26
27
28

29
30 Certainly we witnessed such good intentions in action and whilst the data suggest that the full
31 realisation of a completely democratic schooling community is still a 'work in progress' for
32 ECC, as teachers and students attempt to 're-imagine' learning at this alternative site.
33
34

35
36 According to one of the students, Drew:
37
38

39 Like, if I didn't want to go to school, I wouldn't have come here. It's like me saying "I
40 want better - I actually want to keep learning". So when people say, "It's a school for
41 drop-kicks", and stuff, it's sort of offensive.
42
43
44

45 **Conclusions**

46
47 The school's commitment to student voice reflects its broader commitment to social justice.
48 Fraser (2009) argues that 'representation' is a critical component of a socially just society.
49 She claims that the intent of a socially just world would be to ensure that 'parity of
50 participation' is achieved, where everyone in that society or community is 'able to participate
51 in social life' (Fraser, 2009, p. 16). The community forum at ECC demonstrates one way in
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 which young people who have been marginalised, not only by age but also by poverty and/or
4
5 ‘difference’, might find a voice within their schooling experiences.
6

7
8 The principal of ECC emphasised his desire to create a ‘learning community’ that did
9
10 not replicate the students’ prior fraught experiences of schooling. He was concerned that a
11
12 legacy of stereotypical views of schooling and teacher-student relationships might make it
13
14 difficult for students to engage with the learning. The community forum was devised as one
15
16 way in which that view could be disrupted, as many of the students at ECC indicated they
17
18 had disconnected from schools because they felt that their voices had not been heard and that
19
20 on occasions they had been treated unjustly.
21

22
23 The students at this school are being taught how a particular form of democracy
24
25 works and how to engage in dialogues to effect change; indeed, it signifies their version of
26
27 ‘educating for democracy, through democracy’ (Biesta, 2001, p. 747). Adults in the school
28
29 claim that they had a responsibility to care for the students and that some decisions were
30
31 beyond student input. This is in contrast to some of the more radical models of schooling
32
33 where students actively engage with all decisions within a school (Mills & McGregor, 2014;
34
35 Neill, 1970). However, at the same time the organisation of the school, as typified by the
36
37 community forum, enabled students to participate in the life of the school in a way that they
38
39 had never experienced before. This was a challenging process for staff and for students. It
40
41 involved building relationships of trust that supported shared participation in decision-
42
43 making.
44
45

46
47 School communities that are underpinned by inclusive democratic processes enable
48
49 young people to practice citizenship through agency and active participation (Freire, 1996),
50
51 and to contribute to creating a more democratic community (Kaur, Boyask, Quinlivan, &
52
53 McPhail, 2008). While this study was conducted at a small alternative school site, we argue
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 that the principles that underpinned the community forum, outlined in this paper, are widely
4
5 applicable and relevant to all forms of schooling in many countries.
6

7
8 These principles include affording students opportunities to be heard; providing
9
10 flexible learning opportunities that are reviewed and accessed on a regular basis; supporting
11
12 students to succeed; staff and students working and learning together; and ensuring that
13
14 students participate fully in the life of the school, including via an active role in decision
15
16 making. These principles taken together indicate a commitment to providing a socially just
17
18 education.
19

20
21 Fraser (2004) proposes that such a 'frame' provides the inclusive structures that
22
23 enable people who have been affected by injustices to voice their claims, thereby attempting
24
25 to minimise injustices related to 'misframing'. Such provisions within the school's structures
26
27 and governance thus strive to embody equitable outcomes for all. By 'dismantling
28
29 institutionalized obstacles that prevent some people from participating on par with others, as
30
31 full partners in social interaction' (Fraser, 2009, p. 16), ECC aimed to overcome injustice and
32
33 breakdown the culture of silence in schooling.
34
35

36
37 Finally, it must be noted here that enacting parity of participation within schooling
38
39 contexts, which have long histories of age-based hierarchical power structures, requires
40
41 ongoing teaching and mentoring of the entire community. Maintaining the balance between
42
43 individual agency and community welfare is an on-going project, and young people should
44
45 not be expected to already have the knowledge and skills required for responsible
46
47 collaboration and action. For adults, the test resides in learning to let go of power and to trust
48
49 in the capacity of young people to make responsible decisions; for all concerned, a key lesson
50
51 is one of patience because true democracy is a slow process.
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

References

- Alvesson, M., & Berg, P.-O. (1992) *Corporate culture and organizational symbolism: An overview* (Vol. 34) (New York, W. de Gruyter).
- Apple, M. W., & Beane, J. A. (Eds.) (1995) *Democratic schools: Lessons from the chalk face* (Alexandria, VA, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development).
- Aron, L. Y., & Zweig, J. M. (2003) Educational alternatives for vulnerable youth: Student needs, program types, and research directions (Washington DC, The Urban Institute).
- Beane, J. A., & Apple, M. W. (1999) The case for democratic schools, in: M. W. Apple & J. A. Beane (Eds.), *Democratic schools: Lessons from the chalk face* (Buckingham, Open University Press).
- Biesta, G. (2001) Education and the democratic person: Towards a political conception of democratic education, *Teachers College Record*, 109(3), 740-769.
- Black, R. (2011) Student participation and disadvantage: Limitations in policy and practice, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 14(4), 463-474.
- Bourdieu, P. (2001) *Acts of resistance: Against the new myths of our time* (R. Nice, Trans.) (Cambridge, UK, Polity Press).
- Clandinin, D. J., Murphy, M. S., Huber, J., & Orr, M. (2009) Negotiating narrative inquiries: Living in a tension-filled midst, *The Journal of Educational Research*, 103(2), 81-90.
- Cook-Sather, A. (2006) Sound, presence, and power: 'Student voice' in educational research and reform, *Curriculum Inquiry*, 36(4), 259-390.
- Couldry, N. (2010) *Why voice matters: Culture and politics after neoliberalism*, (Los Angeles, SAGE).
- Cremin, H., Mason, C., & Busher, H. (2011) Problematizing pupil voice using visual methods: Findings from a study of engaged and disaffected pupils in an urban secondary school, *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(4), 585-603.
- DET (2015) *State Recurrent Grant*. Available online at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/grants/non-state/recurrent.html> (accessed 20 March 2015).
- Dewey, J. (1916) *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*, (New York, Macmillan).
- Ellsworth, E. (1989) Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy, *Harvard Educational Review*, 59(3), 297-324.

- 1
2
3 Fielding, M. (2001) Students as radical agents of change, *Journal of Educational Change*,
4 2(2), 123 - 141.
5
6 Fielding, M. (2004) Transformative approaches to student voice: Theoretical underpinnings,
7 recalcitrant realities, *British Educational Research Journal*, 30(2), 295-311.
8
9 Fielding, M. (2007) Beyond 'voice': New roles, relations, and contexts in researching with
10 young people, *Discourse: Studies in the cultural politics of education*, 28(3), 301-310.
11
12 Fielding, M. (2013) Whole school meetings and the development of radical democratic
13 community, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 32(2), 123-140.
14
15 Fielding, M., & Moss, P. (2011) *Radical education and the common school: A democratic
16 alternative*, (London, Routledge).
17
18 Flutter, J., & Rudduck, J. (2004) *Consulting pupils? What's in it for schools?*, (London,
19 RoutledgeFalmer).
20
21 France, A. (2007) *Understanding youth in late modernity*, (Berkshire, McGraw-Hill Open
22 University Press).
23
24 Fraser, N. (2004) Recognition, redistribution and representation in capitalist global society:
25 An interview with Nancy Fraser, *Acta Sociologica*, 47(4), 374-382.
26
27 Fraser, N. (2009) *Scales of justice: Reimagining political space in a globalizing world*, (New
28 York, Columbia University Press).
29
30 Freire, P. (1996) *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.) (New York, Continuum).
31
32 Gardner, M., & Crockwell, A. (2006) Engaging democracy and social justice in creating
33 educational alternatives: An account of voice and agency for marginalized youth and
34 the community, *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal*, 11
35 (3), 1-19.
36
37 Hayes, D. (2005) Amplifying learning through sites of pedagogical practice: A possible
38 effect of working with disciplinary technologies in schools operating under adverse
39 conditions, *Journal of In-service Education*, 31(4), 683-696.
40
41 Hayes, D. (2012) Re-engaging marginalised young people in learning: The contribution of
42 informal learning and community-based collaborations, *Journal of Education Policy*,
43 27(5), 641-653.
44
45 James, A., & Prout, A. (1999) Re-presenting childhood: Time and transition in the study of
46 childhood. *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the
47 sociological study of childhood* (2 ed., pp. 230-250). (London, RoutledgeFalmer).
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Kaur, B., Boyask, R., Quinlivan, K., & McPhail, J. (2008) Searching for equity and social
4 justice: Diverse learners in Aotearoa New Zealand, in: G. Wan (Ed.), *The education*
5 *of diverse student populations: A global perspective* (Netherlands, Springer).
6
7
8 Kelly, P. (2003) Growing up as risky business? Risks, surveillance and the institutionalized
9 mistrust of youth, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 6(2), 165-180.
10
11 Lange, C. M., & Sletten, S. J. (2002) Alternative education: A brief history and research
12 synthesis (Alexandria, VA, National Association of State Directors of Special
13 Education (NASOSE)).
14
15
16 MacLure, M. (2003) *Discourse in educational and social research*, (Buckingham, UK, Open
17 University Press).
18
19
20 MCEETYA, 2008. *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*,
21 (Carlton South, Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth
22 Affairs).
23
24
25 McGregor, G., & Mills, M. (2012) Alternative education sites and marginalised young
26 people: 'I wish there were more schools like this one', *International Journal of*
27 *Inclusive Education*, 16(8), 843–862.
28
29
30 Miliband, D. (2006) Choice and voice in personalised learning, in: OECD (Ed.), *Schooling*
31 *for tomorrow: Personalising education* (Paris, OECD).
32
33
34 Mills, M. (2013) The work of Nancy Fraser and a socially just education system, in: B. Irby,
35 G. H. Brown, R. Lara-Aiecio & S. A. Jackson (Eds.), *Handbook of educational*
36 *theories*, (Charlotte, NC, Information Age Publishing).
37
38
39 Mills, M., & McGregor, G. (2014) *Re-engaging young people in education: Learning from*
40 *alternative schools* (Abingdon, Routledge).
41
42
43 Mitra, D. L. (2006) Increasing student voice and moving towards youth leadership, *The*
44 *Prevention Researcher*, 13(1), 7-10.
45
46
47 Mockler, N., & Groundwater-Smith, S. (2014) *Engaging with student voice in research,*
48 *education and community: Beyond legitimation and guardianship* (Switzerland,
49 Springer).
50
51
52 Neill, A. (1970) *Summerhill: For & against* (New York, Hart).
53
54
55 NHMRC, ARC and AVCC (2007) *National statement on ethical conduct in human research.*
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000

- 1
2
3 OECD. (2013) *PISA 2012 results: Ready to learn: Students' engagement, drive and self-*
4 *beliefs (Volume III)* (Paris, OECD Publishing).
- 5
6 Robinson, C., & Taylor, C. (2007) Theorizing student voice: Values and perspectives,
7 *Improving Schools*, 10(1), 5-17.
- 8
9 Smyth, J. (2007) Towards the pedagogically engaged school: Listening to student voice as a
10 positive response to disengagement and 'dropping out'?, in: D. Thiessen & A. Cook-
11 Sather (Eds.), *International handbook of student experience in elementary and*
12 *secondary school* (Netherlands, Springer).
- 13
14 Smyth, J. (2012) The socially just school and critical pedagogies in communities put at a
15 disadvantage, *Critical Studies in Education*, 53(1), 9-18.
- 16
17 Te Riele, K. (2006) Schooling practices for marginalized students: Practice-with-hope,
18 *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 10(1), 59-74.
- 19
20 Te Riele, K. (2014) Putting the jigsaw together: Flexible learning programs in Australia.
21 Final report. Available online at: [http://dusseldorp.org.au/priorities/alternative-](http://dusseldorp.org.au/priorities/alternative-learning/jigsaw/)
22 [learning/jigsaw/](http://dusseldorp.org.au/priorities/alternative-learning/jigsaw/) (accessed 7 September 2014).
- 23
24 Te Riele, K. & Brooks, R. (Eds) (2013) *Negotiating ethical challenges in youth research.*
25 Critical Youth Studies series. (New York, Routledge).
- 26
27 Teese, R., & Polesel, J. (2003) *Undemocratic schooling: Equity and quality in mass*
28 *secondary education in Australia* (Carlton, VIC, Melbourne University Press).
- 29
30 Thomson, P., & Gunter, H. (2007) The methodology of students-as-researchers: Valuing and
31 using experience and expertise to develop methods, *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural*
32 *Politics of Education*, 28(3), 327-342.
- 33
34 Thomson, P., & Holdsworth, R. (2003) Theorizing change in the educational 'field': Re-
35 readings of 'student participation' projects, *International Journal of Leadership in*
36 *Education: Theory and Practice*, 6(4), 371-391.
- 37
38 Tyack, D., & Tobin, W. (1994) The 'grammar' of schooling: Why has it been so hard to
39 change?, *American Educational Research Journal*, 31(3), 453-479.
- 40
41 White, R., & Wyn, J. (2013) *Youth and society* (3 ed.) (South Melbourne, Oxford University
42 Press).
- 43
44 Wyn, J., Stokes, H., & Tyler, D. (2004) Stepping stones: TAFE and ACE program
45 development for early school leavers (Adeaide, SA, National Centre for Vocational
46 Education Research (NCVER)).
- 47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60