

COPYRIGHT NOTICE



FedUni ResearchOnline
<http://researchonline.ballarat.edu.au>

This is the submitted for peer-review version of the following article:

Smyth, J. & McInerney, P. (2014). 'Ordinary kids' navigating geographies of educational opportunity in the context of an Australian 'place-based intervention'. *Journal of Education Policy* 29(3): 285-301.

Which has been published in final form at:

<http://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2013.794304>

© 2013 Taylor & Francis.

This is the author's version of the work. It is posted here with permission of the publisher for your personal use. No further distribution is permitted.

**‘Ordinary kids’ navigating geographies of educational opportunity in the context
of an Australian ‘placed-based intervention’**

John Smyth

and

Peter McInerney

Journal of Education Policy 29(3), 2014, pp. 285-301

Abstract

This paper addresses the vexed educational policy aspects of area-based interventions (ABIs) in neighbourhoods designated as ‘disadvantaged’ in an Australian context. We find that the way in which the policy of ABIs is supposed to operate and impact education, is highly problematic. What we present instead in this paper is a much more complex process by which aspirations are formed, sustained, contested and maintained by young people who regard themselves as ‘ordinary’ and as being engaged instead in a process of navigating educational opportunities on the basis of resources available to them.

Introduction

In this paper we have three aims that are broadly reflected in the parts of the paper. First, we want to trouble and unsettle the notion of *Neighbourhood renewal*, often referred to as ‘area-based interventions’ (ABIs). These have become a major policy initiative in Britain and Australia over the past two decades and are widely regarded as a solution to poverty and educational disadvantage. We want to interrogate instead

what Johnstone and Mooney (2005) refer to as the issue of ‘representing *problem places*’. We believe that the way neighbourhoods have been invoked in social policy in Britain and Australia is problematic, giving rise to some highly questionable policies in poor areas. The implicit presumption is that by ‘shape shifting’—a process of ‘temporary alteration of outside appearances for the purpose of deception’ (Merchant, 1995, p. 253)—and moving responsibility onto communities, neighbourhoods and schools, that the deep structural issues of inequality will disappear or evaporate. Second, we want to argue that notions of space and place as they relate to young people are never innocent. As Popkewitz (1998) argues, ‘spatial politics’ is used to ‘construct a space in which to locate the child...[and within] which to think, speak, see, feel, and act towards the child’ (p. 29)—whether that be around notions of ‘at risk’ or having ‘low self-esteem’ (p. 29) or any other set of so-called disadvantaging attributes. The effect, Popkewitz (1998) says, of these ‘discursive spaces’ is that they ‘function to intern and enclose the child in ways that ‘qualif[y] and disqualify individuals for participation’ (p. 29). We argue for a process of ‘detaching’ ourselves from spatial notions of ABIs like *Neighbourhood Renewal*. Third, against these misplaced policy manoeuvres, we pursue a more detailed understanding of how place influences the educational aspirations and choices of some young people—and we do this through presenting and analysing some portraits of young lives. We offer the caveat that this is a necessarily incomplete attempt to theorise some complex connections.

Raco (2009) captured the crucial intent of our paper, in the UK context, when he argued that spatial notions are being used as the new form of governance. Old-fashioned forms of ‘expectational citizenship...[that] generated entrenched modes of dependency on the part of individuals and [that] resulted in a *poverty of aspiration*’

are being replaced with new forms of governance ‘that promote aspirational citizenship’ (p. 438). In other words, there is a shift in social policy discourses around a ‘placing [of] aspirations’ as this ‘pseudo-concept’ operates simultaneously in ‘defining and prescribing the boundary of policy problems’ (p. 440). While this policy trajectory is more muted in the Australian context, it can be seen in tracing notions like ‘community capacity building’ by people like Smyth (2009) and others.

Our over-arching argument is that the effect of neighbourhoods and places on the lives, educational opportunities and life chances of young people from contexts of socio-economic disadvantage (abbreviated as ‘disadvantage’), is not well understood, and invariably reinforces deficit stereotypes. In contrast, in this paper we want to take a markedly different view that starts out by regarding place, space and neighbourhood as significant resources that are drawn upon by young people in forming a viable learning identity—one that recuperates the damage often assigned to them by official policies. It seems to us that the process of turning around these schools and their communities, according to the social determinants (Syme, 2004) policy paradigm which regards them as ‘socially toxic environments’ (Garbarino, 1995), is far more complex than creating joined-up partnerships through policies like *Neighbourhood Renewal*. But this is to get slightly ahead of ourselves—first we need to see what *Neighbourhood Renewal* as an ABI is up to despite the dearth of published scholarly research on this in Australia (see Randolph, 2003; 2004; Randolph & Holloway, 2005; Randolph & Judd, 2000; Wood, Randolph & Judd, 2002—as the exceptions).

Neighbourhood Renewal as a means of Social Regeneration?

Neighbourhood Renewal is a complex and messy policy area, notwithstanding the growing government policy consensus in western countries that poverty appears often to be located geographically in areas of exacerbated, spatial and intergenerational exclusion (Vinson, 2007).

Referring to the Australian experience in Victoria in the early 2000s, Klein (2004) made the point that ‘Neighbourhood Renewal in Victoria is significantly influenced by its namesake initiative in the UK and by the work of the UK Social Exclusion Unit’ (p. 29). This fits with the assessment by Tom Bentley, former director (1998-2006) of the influential UK think tank DEMOS and then Executive Director for Policy and Cabinet to the Premier of Victoria (2007-09). In commenting on the lessons for Victoria from the experiences of *Neighbourhood Renewal* in the UK, Bentley (2007) was in no doubt that ‘In Britain, we set out to try and create a revolution in our own naïve way. What we ended up with was a string of imperfect, inevitably compromised reforms’ (p. 11). Australian attempts to understand this phenomenon have been further obfuscated by several factors noted by Wood, Randolph and Judd (2002):

First, it is difficult to get a genuine appreciation of the nature and scale of publicly sponsored renewal activities [in Australia] since current sources are largely restricted to promotional leaflets and sections of broader annual Reports...[and] independent evaluations...[are] limited...Second, those actually implementing renewal strategies...rarely have the opportunity to record the development of their initiatives (pp. 203).

Ball (2011) describes what seems to encapsulate the Australian initiative as policy ‘mobility’, as ‘policies move through, and are adapted by, networks of social relations

or assemblages...involving diverse participants...with a variety of interests, commitments, purposes and influences...(p. 21). Intended to tackle growing inequality in a context where past attempts had failed, the Australian variant of *Neighbourhood Renewal* was designed to overcome the fragmented government approach by 'building more cohesive communities and reducing inequalities' (Klein, 2004, p. 21). This approach was supposed to 'provide a better deal for disadvantaged communities because it directly tackles *local sources of disadvantage*' (p. 21, our emphases), notwithstanding Klein's surprising admission that 'many of the causes of poverty and disadvantage derive from global and national forces that are beyond the influence of local place-based projects' (p. 28). The intent in the particular Australian instance which is the focus of our paper was to 're-engage communities that are excluded from the political and social mainstream' (p. 28). Linked to the social investment strategy *Growing Victoria Together* (Department of Human Services, 2002), launched in November 2001 and supported by a \$1 billion state government budget allocation (Adams and Wiseman, 2003, p. 13), *Neighbourhood Renewal* was a 'joined up' and 'whole of government' approach with a six point action plan:

- Increase people's pride and participation in their community
- Lift employment and learning opportunities and expand local economies
- Enhance housing and physical environment
- Improve personal safety and reduce crime
- Promote health and wellbeing
- Increase access to services and improve government responsiveness (Klein, 2004, p. 21).

While we are mindful of the risk of eliding local resistance in drawing upon the UK genesis of this policy, we are aware of local literatures in the Australian context that answer back through their encounters with local policy histories using local vernaculars (see for example, Connell, White & Johnston, 1991; Munns, Sawyer & Cole, 2013; Smyth, Down & McInerney, 2010; Peel, 2003; Hage, 2003)—even though we do not have the space to do them justice here. There is an undeniable Australian history of autonomous place-based initiatives that have drawn upon neighbourhood resources in tackling educational disadvantage (see Hayes, Lingard & Mills, 2000; Lingard & Mills, 2007; Munns, 2007; Smyth, Angus, Down & McInerney, 2008; Smyth, Angus, Down & McInerney, 2009), but these have not been officially endorsed or adopted by governments in Australia, and the extent of their effects have remained quite circumscribed. It is hard to be specific on the details about the particular ABI that lies behind what we are exploring in this paper because the specifics do not exist. It has occurred against the general Victorian direction noted above and which are in its dying phases, albeit with buildings being funded in this instance out of general government revenue as distinct from targeted funding.

Speaking of the UK experience with government-initiated ‘area-based initiatives’ like *Neighbourhood Renewal*, Lupton (2010) portrayed ‘educational disadvantage and educational outcomes [as being] spatially patterned, and the central state [having] a responsibility to correct this’ (p. 111). This is an approach that ‘red lines’ (or hermetically seals off) the affected areas, and then targets them for treatment. Following the lead of the UK, *Neighbourhood Renewal* (a place-based initiative) is at the heart of government attempts (see Wood, Randolph & Judd, 2002) in Australia to target policy regeneration and social inclusion in disadvantaged areas.

The official policy argument is that, if we can identify and isolate the ‘risk factors’ associated with socio-economic disadvantage, then governments can intervene with the right mix of flexible policy responses to break the ‘cycle of poverty’. Connell (1993) argues that it is considerably more complex with young people from backgrounds of low parental educational attainment, poor health and housing, deficient parenting skills, and diminished employment prospects, being vulnerable in contexts of rapidly changing labour markets conditions and lacking ‘collective resources’ (p. 29). The reality is that these young people are trapped between dramatically restructuring labour markets and local neighbourhood contexts that are hostile to them gaining the necessary cultural and social capital with which to navigate the changing contours of the workforce. What is allegedly required is an alternative response to the dual failure of both the state and the market ‘to resolve [these] social problems’ (Milbourne, et al., 2003, p. 20). The ‘alternative’ is seen as residing in a number of claims identified by Raffo and Dyson (2007) in that: (i) schools in ‘disadvantaged’ communities working in isolation cannot bring about change on their own—the school needs to be made ‘the hub of change’ (p. 274); (ii) people in local communities need to be involved in decision making; (iii) learning opportunities preferably of a lifelong kind across age groups through a ‘Community Learning Centre’ (p. 274) need to be made available; (iv) to kick start the paid employment trajectory, job opportunities that are attentive to difficulties being experienced need to be provided (p. 274); and (v) improvement occurs through raising ‘confidence, self-esteem and sense of control that would impact on children in local families and hence on learning within the school’ (p. 274).

The policy logic here seems to be that more can be achieved in turning disadvantage and social exclusion around by having agencies working in unison rather than alone

or in competition. This has led to a ‘joined-up’ or ‘multi-agency partnership’ approach to tackling social disadvantage and exclusion—frequently given expression in various forms such as the full service extended school (Raffo and Dyson, 2007), or the co-ordinated hub approach to supporting learning in contexts of disadvantage. The major shortcomings with such approaches, as identified by Milbourne et al., (2003) are that ‘schools, parents and children, as well as [the various] agencies may hold differing views of the roles that project workers entering schools should undertake’, not to mention the ‘inability to embed new strategies within a short time frame’ (p. 32). The UK experience has tended to be one of an inability of support workers to fully understand the policy rhetoric or to meet ‘the original expectations’, and of the policy of inter-agency co-operation being overly ambitious (Webb and Vulliamy, 2001, p. 329).

The most damning indictment of place-based interventions is that often ‘neither schools nor the families who are engaged with these projects have been involved in these new constructions of solutions to their problems’ (Raffo and Dyson, 2007, p. 32). Even when portrayed otherwise, the reality often is that the real power to identify ‘solutions’ still resides with mainstream agencies with little apparent space for the young people and their families blighted by social exclusion. The effect is that agencies ‘fall short of their stated policy aims’ (p. 32), the stigma of disadvantage is sustained within a ‘deficit model’ of disadvantage that locates blame with young people and their families, and what is avoided is any ‘analysis of social disadvantage based on structural reasons for continued exclusion’(p. 33).

The major problem with place-based interventions is that they have become conceptually confused. Speaking of the UK experiences with Education Action Zones, Excellence in Cities, the London Challenge and others (and this applies

equally to their Australian counterparts like Victoria's *Neighbourhood Renewal*), is that 'they [have] failed to make it clear whether it is really places they were targeting, individuals, or schools' (Lupton, 2010, p. 117). In other words, by restricting the focus to who or what is included in the 'bounded' space of the initiative or funding program, what ends up getting focussed upon are 'specific institutions rather than...the wider political, economic, or institutional arrangements that impact upon them' (p. 119). Surveying the UK research, Meegan and Mitchell (2001) conclude that spatial targeting through area-based policies is 'political as well as economic and social' and that the real test resides in the extent to which such policies have the capacity to understand and be influenced by the 'everyday life worlds' of people. Too often interventions ignore the lives and aspirations of those most affected and become irrelevant to target audiences.

Detaching ourselves from notions of *Neighbourhood Renewal* and 'Locating the Subject'

In the second part of this paper we want to show how detaching ourselves from the view of disadvantage as inhering *in* communities and as having a geographic or geometric dimension to be rectified, enables a distancing from particular discourses of community that would have us believe in the idea of 'community' either as an *object* of policy (in other words, a thing to be worked on), a policy instrument (that is, the means by which policies become devised and activated), or a thing to be created (and end in itself)' (Imrie and Raco, 2003, p. 6). What we have here is a set of contradictory policy discourses that both name the 'problem' and the 'solution' around a commitment to notions like 'regeneration', that have in the case of Britain, taken on the appearance of an 'urban renaissance'. The same communities that are 'portrayed, in pathological-underclass terms' and as engaging in 'immoral behaviour',

‘disorder’ and ‘dependency’, are ‘being promoted as a source of moral good...[and as] a key part of a technocratic policy design...[around] programs of empowerment and self-actualisation’ (Imrie and Raco, 2003, p. 26).

What is clearly needed is a way of thinking about the issue of young people’s engagement with education in contexts of disadvantage that goes beyond the ‘ghetto’ or ‘warehousing effect’ (Dillabough, et al., 2007, p. 137) which portrays these contexts, places, neighbourhoods and individuals in pathological, deterministic and constrained ways. Human geographers, for example (Bauder, 2001), argue that in the context of increasing labour market segmentation, and this applies equally to educational segmentation, we need to carefully engage with ‘local uniqueness, situatedness and contingency’ (p. 47) in order to ‘understand how place influences life choices’ (Nayak, 2003, p. 11). Along with Reay and Lucey (2003), we argue the need to go beyond ‘demonised schools’ (p. 126) that are vilified and castigated for underachievement and underperformance, by focussing instead on ‘making sense of the events and opportunities confronting them in their everyday life’ (Ley, 1988, p. 121). This will involve conceiving of everyday lives, families and neighbourhoods as resources, rather than depicting them as deficits.

In arguing for this kind of broad research direction, a number of researchers (Gulson and Symes, 2007a; 2007b; Gulson, 2005; 2007) have recently made the argument about the ‘spatial turn’ and its potential importance in advancing and enhancing understandings of educational disadvantage. As Cormack, Green and Reid (2006) put it, this requires ‘a re-assessment of the significance of environment—literally, the *lifeworld*, or the place of our being and existence’ (p. 2) in ways that amount to listening ‘to what place is telling us’ and responding ‘as informed engaged citizens’ (Gruenwald, 2003, p. 645). Social and human geographers provide a clear theoretical

lineage for the kind of orientation being proposed here (see LeFebvre, 1991; Harvey, 1996; 2000; Massey, 1994; 2005; Soja, 1989; 1996; and Sibley, 1995).

Lupton (2010) argues that we need to ‘use space in more social, historical, relative, contingent, and dynamic ways to examine the educational experiences of economically disadvantaged young people’ (p. 121). Such accounts, she argues, would: ‘demonstrate that both the meaning of poverty and the meaning of education are constructed in space, and that relations between places, as well as the characteristics of particular places, are instrumental in creating educational successes for some groups of young people and educational failure for others’ (p. 121).

Our argument is that we need to rethink how disadvantage is experienced by young people in these kinds of neighbourhoods and communities, and we pursue this around Appadurai’s (2004) notion of ‘capacity to aspire’. According to Appadurai (1996), notions of locality and neighbourhood operate in a policy context of ‘fundamental disjunctures between economy, culture and politics that we have only just begun to theorize’ (p. 33). Central to this view of locality is the notion of ‘an inherently fragile social achievement’ (p. 179) that is ‘primarily relational and contextual rather than ... scalar or spatial’ (p. 178), as people work to have their needs and values variously realised. In other words, the focus is on ‘a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of contexts’ (p. 178)—which is qualitatively very different from notions of pathological dysfunction and recuperation. For Appadurai (2004), neighbourhoods are ‘actually existing social forms’ (p. 179) in which people’s desires and aspirations are worked out, albeit in contexts of ‘conjectures’ and ‘refutations’ (p. 69), especially around the ‘global crisis

of the nation state' (Appadurai, 1996, p. 179).

We can best summarise the essence of Appadurai's thesis as follows:

First, contrary to the deficit and pathologising views that lie behind policy interventions like *Neighbourhood Renewal* in Britain and its Australian variant, Appadurai (2004) says it is not that poor people don't have wishes, wants, needs, desires, plans or aspirations—they clearly do.

Second, the way aspirations operate is crucial. Appadurai (2004) regards the capacity to aspire as being like a 'map' that people use to explore and construct futures for themselves. In other words, 'a navigational capacity' (p. 69) that is matured, honed and nurtured through the opportunity to use it and learn from it in real world contexts. Where these opportunities are limited or do not exist, there is a 'less easy archiving of alternatives futures...[and] more brittle horizons of aspirations' (p. 69).

Third, what distinguishes poor people are the limitations they experience in terms of opportunities or chances to practise or use this map. As he put it, there is 'a diminishing of the circumstances in which these practices occur' (p. 69) among the poor, with only limited chances to explore the implications more frequently and realistically with similarly disposed others. Tellingly, he puts it like this: 'If the map of aspirations ...is seen to consist of dense combinations of nodes and pathways, relative poverty means a smaller number of aspirational nodes and a thinner, weaker sense of pathways from concrete wants to intermediate contexts to general norms and back again' (p. 69). This means there are fewer opportunities to experiment, make mistakes, learn by trial and error, refocus, and reframe in ways from which people can benefit. These 'experiential limitations' are culturally formed and sustained, with the result that there is 'a binary relationship to core cultural values, negative and skeptical

at one pole, over-attached at the other' (p. 69). Put another way, there is an over-attachment to things that are nearby, familiar or local, at the same time as there is an under-willingness to explore more distant aspects of life and possibilities—or what Geertz (1976) called 'experience-near' and 'experience-distant'.

Fourth, and finally, and, not to be at all discounted, is the importance of 'strategies of precedent setting' (Appadurai, 2004), where people have the opportunity to see what is involved in having 'a map of a journey into the future' and how they might 'test...the possibilities for changes in the terms of recognition' (p. 76). Rather than aspiration residing in some aggregation of 'bundles of idiosyncratic' (even psychologistic qualities) (p. 68), when viewed culturally, capacity to aspire presents as an uneven distribution of a resource that can have quite profound effects on how people go about the project of becoming 'somebody'.

To sum up, before we move to the third part of this paper to look at some storylines from young people, our starting point has been that people who are less well off are not cognitively deficient; they *do* have access to less in the way of aspirational pathways; where pathways exist they are fairly rigid, not particularly flexible; they are not able to fully benefit from connections that might otherwise benefit them; they don't get to rehearse these pathways, make mistakes, and learn from them; and, the 'better off', by contrast, have more opportunities and experiences to make connections that will ultimately be more rewarding for them in the future.

Context and Method

Before we provide a brief glimpse into extracts from some interviews with young people, we need to say something about their context within one regional Australian

secondary school.

This paper draws from much more extensive ethnographic research into the effect of neighbourhoods and places upon the lives, educational opportunities, and life chances of young people from contexts of socio-economic disadvantage (see Smyth 2011-2013). Conducted in a regional Australian city, the wider research project involved in situ observations, purposeful conversations, and semi-structured interviews with 60 senior secondary students from two co-educational public schools in 2011 and 2012. In this paper we draw on the narratives from one of those schools. With the consent of participants, individual and group interviews of 30 to 45 minutes duration were audio-recorded and later crafted into narrative portraits (See Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis, 1997; Smyth and McInerney, 2013). In the following account, the identity of the school and the participants has been preserved through the use of pseudonyms. The school provides a comprehensive education for young people from predominantly working-class backgrounds, and has undergone considerable restructuring over the past decade. A small number of the students interviewed were in the junior secondary years (8-9), but the majority of informants were in middle and senior years (years 10-12) studying towards certificates in applied learning, vocational education and/ or academic learning.

New Vision 7-12 Community College

With a student population of 1000, New Vision Community College has evolved from a technical high school to a 7-12 community school serving the rapidly growing residential/industrial estates on the southern margins of Federation City. The College is to become a core part of a community learning hub which will eventually include the provision of health services, a childcare centre, an adult learning centre,

recreational facilities and an auditorium. Students currently have access to an Adolescent Health Clinic and can take advantage of in-school study groups and after-school tutorial classes. Redefining the image and mission of the school in the wake of negative media portrayals and demographic change has become a major priority for the school leadership. The revamped school website outlines a vision of ‘a supportive learning and teaching environment where students can take advantage of challenges and engage in active and fulfilling education to achieve excellence’. There has been a major drive (some would say obsession) to transform the culture of the school with a big emphasis on improvement targets, especially those related to academic achievement, student attendance, punctuality, dress code and behaviour. Students, parents and staff are constantly reminded of these targets through posters, newsletters, assemblies and electronic displays. From our conversations, it appears that many students believe the policies have led to a better learning environment for the academically engaged kids because the so-called ‘trouble makers’ have left or been excluded.

Some storylines from young people

Appadurai’s (2004) logic is that it is within ‘culture that ideas of the future, as much as those of the past, are embedded and nurtured’ (p. 59). Strengthening the capacity to aspire among the least advantaged means enhancing ‘cultural capacity’ (p. 59) through being able to ‘find the resources required to contest and alter the conditions of poverty’ (p. 59). The reason capacity to aspire is relevant to educational contexts of disadvantage is that it has a focus on an ‘orientation to the future’ (p. 60).

Our ethnographic narrative portraits yielded five prominent themes relating to ‘capacity to aspire’ in the sample of interviews with young people in New Vision Community College:

- Limited access to ‘opportunity resources’ and local immediacy
- Having and using navigational maps
- Diminished opportunities to ‘practise navigational capacity’
- ‘Precedent setting and capacity to inspire’
- Rehearsing and sharing navigational maps

For reasons of brevity, we can only deal with the first three of these.

(i) Limited access to ‘opportunity resources’ and local immediacy

‘All my friends will probably leave school before year 12.’

Lydia is 16 years old and in year 10 at New Visions College. She comes from a low socioeconomic background and is struggling to hang in with schooling without the opportunities that come with parental advantage. ‘My dad doesn’t have a job. He does nothing. Whether I stay in school or not depends on how my grades go. Mum wants me to go straight through but I want to leave half way through year 11. I dunno why I want to do that but I want to be a vet...I’ve got birds, two dogs and fish. Mum told me I have to finish year 12 and do six years of university to become a vet but I’ll try to get some part-time work when I leave school. All my friends will probably leave before year 12. My best subjects are photography and ceramics.’ Lydia is involved in a youth action group affiliated with a community not-for-profit organisation. This seems to be a more stimulating

learning environment but whether it will change her attitude to school is problematic. When I finish I'll pretty much stay [here]. I know this area better than any other place. I don't know anything about the [HUB] going on at New Vision. [Lydia 5 April 2011]

Lydia is a student who clearly has limited access to opportunity resources to draw upon and limited knowledge of what the ABI might offer as a resource in constructing a learning identity around 'becoming educated', along with unrealistic and possibly unattainable aspirations in terms of what she requires to make her vaguely formed aspirations come about. Area-based interventions like *Neighbourhood Renewal* (in Britain and Australia), and more recently the *Inspiring Communities* initiative in the UK (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2009), are inconclusive as to how they might change the lives of young people like Lydia. Lupton and Kintrea (2011), in questioning 'the influence of neighbourhoods and communities on life chances...[and] whether disadvantaged neighbourhoods impose additional disadvantages on their already disadvantaged residents' (p. 322), conclude that:

the distinctive influence of neighbourhood is not as important as other influences, particularly family background...[and that] there is still relatively little evidence...on associations between neighbourhood effect and educational attainment.(p. 323)

It is not that Lydia does not have an educational aspiration, but rather how solidly that has been formed within her wider social context and by what set of forces, how easily it may become detached because of a complex array of social and contextual factors swirling around in her life, and indeed, as St. Clair and Benjamin (2011) note, whether her aspiration is 'determined as much by the needs of the moment as by a genuine expectation for the future' (p. 502). In other words, Lydia is an exemplar of

St. Clair and Benjamin's (2011) question of whether 'the aspirations expressed by young people reflect the expectations and constraints inherent in their setting, rather than a free choice of [a] desired outcome' (p. 502). The contradictory situation becomes evident in her wanting to become a vet, possibly formed by her interest in her pets and fed by the push by her mother of wanting Lydia to complete school, but in a wider context of the pull of her peers to leave school. It may be a case of Lydia knowing what is required, but being unable to reconcile that with following her friends in leaving school.

Being especially mindful of the caveat and observation by St. Clair and Benjamin (2011) that in the recent literature on aspirations 'it seems to be everywhere', and that the more frequently it appears in the policy discourses (much of it of a deficit kind) the less the 'clarity of the idea' (p. 502). Not wanting to fuel this lack of clarity unnecessarily, it does seem to us that young people from low SES contexts like Lydia's have high levels of immediacy in drawing upon resources that are very local in nature—close family members, siblings, family friends, and immediate and local experiences in their lives.

Policy notions like *Neighbourhood Renewal* seem to be a long way removed from the existential educational aspirations and trajectories expressed by young people like Lydia. Notions of place are not being given expression in the lives of young people like Lydia in the forms that are fantasised about in the policy documents. For example, in the version of *Neighbourhood Renewal* being implemented in Lydia's so-called 'disadvantaged school' by a 'school community reference team', there is a mantra rehearsed around a 'community engagement tool', with calls to 'bring all stakeholders together', of developing 'fluid relationships', so as to produce 'a comprehensive and authentic learning and wellbeing precinct' that will impact and

provide ‘the optimum possibilities’ for young people (Anon: Terms of Reference, 2012).

(ii) Having and using ‘navigational maps’

In a more complex way, we see how notions of locality are mediated by the broader context, in the following case of Cooper and Jim, who are mapping out futures for themselves with resources they feel they can access.

‘It’s better to have experience than knowledge. You need experience.’

Cooper (14) and Jim (14), both in year 8 at New Vision Community College, have parents who did not extend their own education. Jim’s dad works in a joinery and his mum in a real estate office. Cooper’s dad is seeking employment in the army and his mum does not have paid work. In response to the question as to where they get their ideas about the importance of education and whether this comes from their school, Jim says, ‘I pick it up from everywhere’, to which Jim adds, ‘but mostly my parents. My dad thinks it’s important to stay at school. He would like me to be an engineer because it pays the most.’ Cooper is quick to add that school is not a place he likes much with the exception of ‘the cafeteria’. Cooper attaches a lot of importance to being what he calls a ‘social person’ which he places ahead of formal qualifications. As he puts it, ‘Education is more about experience—that is important. Like, some people can be educated...but it is being ‘social’ that will get you into jobs. Education is not all that important to get a job.’ Jim continues, ‘If you are a social person, there is no need to get an “A” in all your subjects. If you are not that social, education is important or else you will be working at

Maccas (MacDonalds) .’ As to employment opportunities in the area, Jim remarks ‘I’m not sure I will stay in this area in the future’, he says. ‘It depends on where I can get work and what type of work it will be. For Cooper ‘It’s much too early to know where I’ll be’. [Cooper and Jim 5 April 2011]

The narrative of these two boys, what Jenkins’ (1983) calls ‘ordinary kids’, enables us to see how they largely tolerate school despite unanswered questions around their futures posed by the worldwide collapse of the youth labour market. The young people like Cooper and Jim do not see themselves as in any way exceptional, extraordinary, or different from their peers in how they live their lives. Ordinary kids like Cooper and Jim, at least up to this point, are not like others we have written about (Smyth, et al., 2000; 2004; Smyth and McInerney, 2012) who have ‘rejected...school as boring, irrelevant, and frequently repressive’ (Brown, 1987, p. 1). As Brown (1987) put it, Cooper and Jim are not the kind of kids who will finish school having ‘left their names engraved on the school’s honour boards, nor gouged them into the top of classroom desks’ (p. 1). On the contrary, they are largely ‘invisible’, and in varying degrees, go along with school and are willing ‘to make an effort’ (p. 1), despite the misplaced faith their parents and the school have in what Grubb and Lazerson (2004) call the ‘education gospel’—the promise that the ‘knowledge revolution’ (or ‘information society’, or the ‘high tech revolution’) will deliver individual and collective benefits. What Cooper seems to be contesting is his father’s unbridled faith in the importance of persisting with school, despite his own limited experience of it, to enable his son to ‘get ahead’. Cooper, on the other hand, has a much more sanguine view of what kind of navigational map he will need to use,

and it is not around qualifications, but rather in networking, or as he put it, being ‘a social person’. For Cooper, while there is one set of muted messages from his parents, his own judgement is that he does not see formal school qualifications as providing him with a sufficiently robust pathway to make something of himself—he sees ‘experience’ as paramount. His friend Jim is in agreement that, unless he is able to deploy a social networking navigational map, his destiny will be in lowly paid insecure work in fast-food outlets. Clearly absent for both of these young people, are opportunities to practise what would amount to a navigational map of where education might take them.

(iii) Diminished opportunities to ‘practise navigational capacity’

The following dialogue between Natalie and Josie, 15-year-old friends in year 10 at New Vision College, are further illustrative of what Appadurai (2004) terms limited opportunities ‘to practice the use of navigational capacity’ (p. 69). Indeed, both young people seem to be directionless, prepared to just drift along in school.

‘I just go along with my education.’

Natalie and Josie say they plan to finish year 12 but neither appear to have a deep commitment to schooling. ‘I just go along with my education,’ says Natalie. They suggest that school is not a high priority for many kids at this stage in their lives. Natalie’s background has hardly been conducive to school success. She and her family have led a transitory life style having crossed the Nullabor Plain four times, and her parents dropped out of school at an early age. Up to a point, her mother is supportive of her plans to get an education, although she does say ‘don’t come to me if you stuff it up’. Josie has an ambition to work in the hospitality area and Natalie has

no real idea about what she would like to do. As Natalie said: 'I don't know what I'm doing...I'm involved in a course on animal studies at the moment.' She is somewhat ambivalent about the value of school. 'You kind of need it for everything—so it's important. Some of the classes at school are really good, and seeing your friends every day is great, but doing tests and essays and things in English is not cool. I just go along with my education. My oldest brother is still in school, but my parents dropped out so I don't know where I'm going.' As Natalie explains the role of her parents: *'My dad is pushing me to do what he wants me to do—a nurse—but I don't have the patience to do that. It's not a problem really. I just tell him to shut up. It would be boring to have the same job every day. Josie's unrealistic ambition sits somewhat uneasily with her transitory life so far: 'I am going to own my own restaurant.... 'I've crossed the Nullarbor [the huge desert expanse between Western Australia and the eastern States] four times with three dogs and cats. I won't be moving again. I've been to at least six schools and it's hard to get friends again.'* There is also an underlying confusion about the place of school from Natalie: *'I like school. I like annoying the teachers. Then they yell at you and it's funny but some of them are really good.'* [Natalie and Josie 23 June 2011]

Brown's (1987) three-way categorisation of 'being' in school as comprising 'rems' (short for 'remedials' who intend to leave school at the first opportunity), 'swots' (the academically inclined who intend to complete school), and the 'ordinary kids' (those in-between who are trying to muddle along with not much ambition), is helpful in understanding the lives of those like Natalie and Josie. Brown (1987) depicts ordinary

kids as having an ‘alienated instrumental orientation’ (p. 71) to school. That is to say, they see much of what goes on in school as ‘irrelevant’, and what they do undertake they do with ‘a minimum of personal investment’ (p. 52). They comply with school ‘to the extent that they perceive that if they continue to “do a bit”, at least they will have something to “show”’ (p. 52). The prevailing logic, from the students’ perspective, seems to be that they are prepared ‘to maintain a degree of involvement in their schooling, if only for what they perceive they can “get out of it”’ (p. 52). While Josie has an aspiration to work in hospitality and eventually own her own restaurant (and Natalie has ‘no real idea’ except her interest in animal studies), there seems to be evidence here of Appadurai’s (2004) unevenly distributed capacity to aspire, and a dearth of clarity as to how either of them are going to acquire the information with which to fulfil their ambitions. What seems to stand out here given their parental backgrounds, is that neither girl has much in the way of cultural and social capital to draw upon to formulate aspirations in deciding a future. While one has been given explicit parental licence to decide her future using her own resources, but with no recourse if she ‘stuffs it up’, the other shuns the advice and tells her father ‘to shut up’. The opportunity to draw from parental backgrounds that might conceivably help them to enact any kind of aspirational pathway is severely diminished, and what they are left with is a strong ‘loyalty’, probably class-based, that while school might be a good place to socialise it is unlikely to deliver them much more.

Educated hope: a resource towards student ‘control of destiny’ (Syme, 2004)

To return to our opening arguments. Place attachment is generally seen as having positive impact on young people especially as it provides security, access to social

networks and/or a sense of identity. Not surprisingly the notion has become a focus for policy makers concerned with the regeneration of ‘disadvantaged’ areas and the promotion of sustainable communities. But from our observations, there remain big question marks over ABIs and the extent to which they have really engaged young people and opened up opportunities for meaningful employment, training and further education pathways. Some of our participants envisage an optimistic future, others seem to be stuck in a place without too many options and many are looking to move to metropolitan areas when they leave school. Emotional and social bonding (family and friends) is one thing but longer term attachment to place seems to be conditional on job prospects. We have countenanced a number of categories in order to try to get a better ‘research imagination’ (Appadurai, 2000) on how young people in areas officially designated as ‘disadvantaged’ shape destinies for themselves against policy interventions like *Neighbourhood Renewal* that purport to see the problem in area-based terms. Where we have ended up is with what Appadurai (1988) calls ‘the problems of place and voice’ (p. 16)—which is to say, approaching a policy initiative that has a spatial dimension to it and trying to get behind the ‘circumstantial... dilemmas of place and voice’ (p. 16). In policy terms, there are notions here of working *against* ‘projects and projectivisation’ (Appadurai, 2002, p. 30) that are tied to ‘short-term logics’, and pursuing instead embedded forms of ‘slow learning and cumulative change’ (Appadurai, 2002, p.30) built around trust and long-term relationships. What we have revealed through some case portraits of young people, their schools and teachers, is a kind ‘politics of show-and-tell’ in which young people are speaking into existence a subversive form of activism where they are controlling the spaces, rather than them being beholden to official policy-speak. The strategy is much more one of young people ‘seeing and hearing...of sharing experiences and

knowledge' (p. 41) rather than being subjected to and absorbing the standards, practices and mantras being imposed by area-based initiatives. As Appadurai (2002) put it, the emphasis is rather upon 'horizontal learning, sharing and exchanging' with the 'key words [being] *exposure, exploration, and options*' (p. 41 emphases in original).

Contrary to notions of raising self-confidence and esteem, mediated through joined-up multi-agency partnerships and token community involvement in breaking the so-called 'cycle of poverty', what we have revealed instead are young people who regard themselves as *ordinary* kids 'struggling to make the best of the possibilities that are opened up to them' in 'craft[ing] scripts of possible worlds and imagined selves' (Appadurai, 2003, p. 19). As Appadurai (2003) put it, that is not to say that 'the social projects that emerge from these scripts are always liberating or even pleasant' (p. 19), but they are a way of working through the 'link between memory and desire' in an exercise that he labels 'the capacity to aspire' (p. 19).

What we have been arguing here, in the context of targeted area-based interventions, is that the view of 'disadvantage' as a convenient label with which to describe personal failings, is emaciated and impoverished. We would rather regard disadvantage as being constitutive of a set of limitations or restrictions. In pursuing Appadurai's ideas we have argued that aspirations are constructed in and through various aspects of social life, and that people who are better off have access to more variegated and rich pathways and opportunities, and get to practise, reinforce and affirm the kind of actions necessary to fulfil one's aspirations, in contrast to people who are less well off.

The notion of 'educated hope', which has been an important analytic category for some time (see: Freire, 1972; Freire, 1996; Giroux, 1997; Smyth, 2011; Webb, 2010; Duncan-Andrade, 2009), seems to us to capture the alternative essence we have in mind, since hope is quintessentially a more attractive possibility than notions of the market which are becoming so deeply insinuated in young lives in schools. The broader canvas of this paper has been one that counters notions of disadvantage and inequality located within the circumscribed limitations of *Neighbourhood Renewal*, by arguing instead for authentic space from within which 'people [can] exercise their imagination for participation' (Appadurai, 2007, p. 33).

Acknowledgements. **This research was funded by an Australian Research Council Discovery grant. Appreciation to the four anonymous reviewers and the editor who helped us improve the paper.**

References

- Adams, D., and Wiseman, J. (2003). Navigating the future: a case study of "Growing Victoria Together". *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 62(2), 11-23.
- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Appadurai, A. (1988). Place and voice in anthropology theory. *Cultural anthropology*, 3(1), 16-20.
- Appadurai, A. (2000). Grassroots globalization and the research imagination. *Public Culture*, 12(1), 1-19.
- Appadurai, A. (2002). Deep democracy: urban governmentality and the horizon of politics. *Public Culture*, 14(1), 21-47.

- Appadurai, A. (2003). Archive and aspiration. In J. Brouwer and A. Mulder (Eds.), *Information is Alive* (pp. 14-25). Rotterdam NAI Publishing.
- Appadurai, A. (2004). The capacity to aspire: culture and the terms of recognition. In V. Rao and M. Walton (Eds.), *Culture and Public Action* (pp. 59-84). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press with the World Bank.
- Appadurai, A. (2007). Hope and democracy. *Public culture*, 19(1), 29-34.
- Ball, S. (2011). Exporting policy: the growth of multi-national education businesses and new policy 'assemblages'. Unpublished MS.
- Bauder, H. (2001). Culture in the labour market: segmentation theory and perspective of place. *Progress in Human Geography*, 25(1), 37-52.
- Bentley, T. (2007). *Reform or revolution: the UK experience of getting government to work on a community agenda*. Melbourne: Address to the Communities in Control Conference convened by Our Community and Centacare Catholic Family Services, 5 June.
- Brown, P. (1987). *Schooling Ordinary Kids: Unemployment and New Vocationalism*. London: Tavistock.
- Connell, B. (1993). *Schools and Social Justice*. Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves Education Foundation.
- Connell, R., White, V., & Johnston, K. (Eds.). (1991). *'Running Twice as Hard': the Disadvantaged Schools Program in Australia*. Geelong: Deakin University Press.
- Cormack, P., Green, B., and Reid, J. (2006). *River literacies: discursive constructions of place and environment in children's writing about the Murray-Darling Basin*. Paper presented at the Sense of Place Conference, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 5-8 April.
- Department for Communities and Local Government. (2009). *Inspiring communities grant*

programme: information pack for applicants. London: Communities and Local Government.

Department of Human Services. (2002). *Neighbourhood Renewal: Growing Victoria*

Together. Melbourne: Office of Housing, Victorian Department of Human Services.

Dillabough, J.-A., Kennelly, J., and Wang, E. (2007). Warehousing young people in urban Canadian schools: gender, peer rivalry and spatial containment. In K. Gulson and C. Symes (Eds.), *Spatial Theories of Education: Policy and Geography Matters* (pp. 131-154). London and New York: Routledge.

Duncan-Andrade, J. (2009). Note to educators: hope required when growing roses in concrete. *Harvard Educational Review*, 19(2), 181-194.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Garbarino, J. (1999). *Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Geertz, C. (1976). From the native's point of view. In K. Basso and H. Selby (Eds.), *From the Native's Point of View: Meaning in Anthropology* (pp. 3-30). Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.

Giroux, H. (1997). *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope: Theory, Culture and Schooling*. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press.

Grubb, W., and Lazerson, M. (2004). *The Education Gospel: the Economic Power of Schooling*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gruenewald, D. (2003). Foundations of place: a multidisciplinary framework for place-conscious education. *American Educational Research Journal*, 40(3), 619-654.

Gulson, K. (2005). Renovating educational identities: policy, space and urban renewal.

- Journal of Education Policy*, 20(2), 141-158.
- Gulson, K. (2007). 'Neoliberal spatial technologies': on the practices of educational policy change. *Critical Studies in Education*, 48(2), 179-195.
- Gulson, K., and Symes, C. (Eds.). (2007a). *Spatial Theories of Education: Policy and Geography Matters*. New York: Routledge.
- Gulson, K., and Symes, C. (2007b). Knowing one's place: educational theory, policy, and the spatial turn. In K. Gulson and C. Symes (Eds.), *Spatial Theories of Education: Policy and Geography Matters* (pp. 1-16). London and New York.
- Hage, G. (2003). *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*. Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press.
- Harvey, D. (1996). *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Harvey, D. (2001). *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Hayes, D., Lingard, B., & Mills, M. (2000). Productive pedagogies. *Education Links*, 60, 10-13.
- Imrie, R., and Raco, M. (2003). Community and the changing nature of urban policy. In R. Imrie and M. Raco (Eds.), *Urban Renaissance? New Labour and Community and Urban Policy* (pp. 3-). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Jenkins, R. (1983). *Lads, Citizens and Ordinary Kids*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Johnstone, C., and Mooney, G. (2005, 16-17 June). *Locales of 'disorder' and 'disorganisation'*. Exploring new labour's approach to council estates. Paper presented at the Securing the Urban Renaissance: Policing, Community and Disorder Conference, Glasgow.
- Klein, H. (2004). Neighbourhood renewal: revitalising disadvantaged communities in

- Victoria. *Public Administration Today*, 1(Sept/Nov), 20-29.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., and Davis, J. (1997). *The Art and Science of Portraiture*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ley, D. (1988). Interpretive social research in the city. In J. Eyles (Ed.), *Research in Human Geography* (pp. 121-138). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lingard, B., & Mills, M. (2007). Pedagogies making a difference: issues of social justice and inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 11(3), 233-244.
- Lupton, R. (2010). Area-based initiatives in English education: what place for place and space? In C. Raffo, A. Dyson, H. Gunter, D. Hall, L. Jones and A. Kalambouka (Eds.), *Education and Poverty in Affluent Countries* (pp. 111-123). New York and London: Routledge.
- Lupton, R., and Kintrea, K. (2011). Can community based interventions on aspirations raise young people's attainment? *Social Policy and Society*, 10(3), 321-335.
- Massey, D. (1994). *Space, Place and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Massey, D. (2005). *For Space*. London: SAGE.
- Meegan, R., and Mitchell, A. (2001). "It's not community round here, it's neighbourhood": neighbourhood change and cohesion in urban regeneration policies. *Urban Studies*, 38(12), 2167-2194.
- Merchant, B. (1995). Current educational reform: "shape shifting" or genuine educational improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. *Educational Theory*, 45(2), 251-268.
- Milbourne, L., MacRae, S., and Maguire, M. (2003). Collaborative solutions or new policy problems: exploring multi-agency partnerships in education and health work. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18(1), 19-35.

- Munns, G. (2007). A sense of wonder: pedagogies to engage students who live in poverty. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 11(3), 301-315.
- Munns, G., Sawyer, W., & Cole, B. (Eds.). (2013). *Exemplary Teachers of Students in Poverty*. London: Routledge.
- Nayak, A. (2003). Last of the 'real geordies'? White masculinities and the subcultural responses to deindustrialisation. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 21, 6-25.
- Peel, M. (2003). *The Lowest Rung: Voice of Australian Poverty*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- Popkewitz, T. (1998). *Struggling for the Soul: the Politics of Schooling and the Construction of the Teacher*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Raffo, C., and Dyson, A. (2007). Full service extended schools and educational inequality in urban contexts—new opportunities for progress? *Journal of Education Policy*, 22(3), 263-282.
- Raco, M. (2009). From expectations to aspirations: state modernisation, urban policy and the existential politics of welfare in the UK. *Political Geography*, 28(7), 436-444.
- Randolph, B. (2003). Poverty and place: new thinking. In Australian Council of Social Services (Ed.), *Communities and Their Capacity to Tackle Disadvantage* (pp. 17-28). Strawberry Hill, NSW: Australian Council of Social Services.
- Randolph, B. (2004). Social inclusion and place-focussed initiatives in Western Sydney: a review of current practice. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 39(1), 63-78.
- Randolph, B., & Holloway, D. (2005). Social disadvantage, tenure and location: an analysis of Sydney and Melbourne. *Urban Policy and Research*, 23(2), 173-202.
- Randolph, B., & Judd, B. (2000). Community renewal and large public housing estates. *Urban Policy and Research*, 18(1), 91-104.

- Reay, D., and Lucey, H. (2003). The limits of "choice": children and inner city schooling. *Sociology*, 37(1), 121-142.
- Sibley, D. (1995). *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Smyth, J. (2009). Critically engaged community capacity building and the 'community organizing' approach in disadvantaged contexts. *Critical Studies in Education*, 50(1), 9-22.
- Smyth, J. (2011). *Critical Pedagogy for Social Justice*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Smyth, J. (2011-13). Young people's narratives of socio-economic disadvantage and educational opportunities in contexts of place-based interventions. University of Ballarat, Australia: Australian Research Council, Discovery Grant (DP 110102619).
- Smyth, J., Angus, L., Down, B., & McInerney, P. (2008). *Critically Engaged Learning: Connecting to Young Lives*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Smyth, J., Angus, L., Down, B., & McInerney, P. (2009). *Activist and Socially Critical School and Community Renewal: Social Justice in Exploitative Times*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Smyth, J., Down, B., & McInerney, P. (2010). *'Hanging in With Kids' in Tough Times: Engagement in Contexts of Educational Disadvantage in the Relational School*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Smyth, J., Hattam, R., Cannon, J., Edwards, J., Wilson, N., and Wurst, S. (2000). *Listen to Me, I'm Leaving: Early School Leaving in South Australian Secondary Schools*. Adelaide: Flinders Institute for the Study of Teaching; Department of Employment, Education and Training; and Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.
- Smyth, J., Hattam, R., with Cannon, J., Edwards, J., Wilson, N., and Wurst, S. (2004). *'Dropping Out', Drifting Off, Being Excluded: Becoming Somebody Without School*.

New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

- Smyth, J., and McInerney, P. (2013). Whose side are you on? Advocacy ethnography: some methodological aspects of narrative portraits of disadvantaged young people, in socially critical research. . *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 26 (1) 1-20.
- Smyth, J., and McInerney, P. (2012). *Silent Witnesses to Active Agents: Student Voice in Re-engaging with Learning*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Soja, C. (1989). *Postmodern Geographies: the Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso.
- Soja, E. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- St.Clair, R., and Benjamin, A. (2011). Performing desires: the dilemma of aspirations and educational attainment. *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(3), 501-517.
- Syme, S. (2004). Social determinants of health: the community as empowered partner. *Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice and Policy*, 1(1), 1-4.
- Vinson, T. (2007). *Dropping Off the Edge: the Distribution of Disadvantage in Australia*. Richmond, Vic: Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia.
- Webb, D. (2010). Paulo Freire and 'the need for a kind of education in hope'. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 40(4), 327-339.
- Webb, R., and Vulliamy, G. (2001). Joining up the solutions: the rhetoric of inter-agency co-operation. *Children and Society*, 15, 315-322.
- Wood, M., Randolph, B., & Judd, B. (2002 February). *Resident participation, social cohesion and sustainability in Neighbourhood Renewal: Developing best practice models*. Melbourne: Australian Housing Research Institute.

