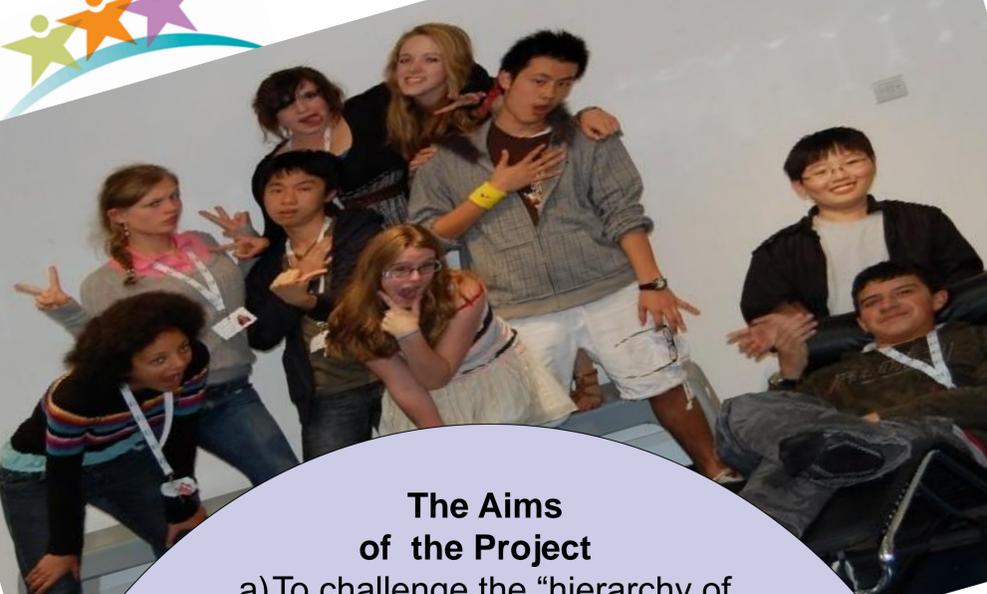


Education as a Human Right **URSS**

IGGY Junior Commission Research Project 09



The Aims of the Project

a) To challenge the "hierarchy of credibility" (Becker 1970) and enable children to speak and participate in the social world they live in.
b) To provide opportunity and to create a supportive environment to allow children to express themselves on the social issues in which they are interested. According with the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have a 'voice'. The emphasis is on the young person as a researcher with the potential to turn their unique localised experiences into constructive and 'theorised' knowledge which has much wider relevance

c) For the undergraduates, developing research skills, data analysis and communication skills through mentoring individual commissioners and learning to identify appropriate methods for individual topics. Experiencing the pedagogies of supporting young people during the research process. Learning how to work as a team and identify personal strengths and weaknesses within a team.

Reflections on the Project

"Democracy is best learned in a democratic setting, where participation is encouraged, where views can be expressed openly and discussed, where there is freedom of expression for pupils and teachers and where there is fairness and justice" (Council of Europe 1985)

If "pedagogy is "an extension of conversation", the mind of each pupil is unique and enormously complex. It is only through purposeful dialogue that a teacher can be sure to start from where the learner is, appreciate what is to be learned from the learner's point of view. Therefore, two way dialogue may be assumed to be the essence of good teaching" (Dworkin 1959)

The genre of film as a means of analysis and dissemination enables young people to learn new literary, communication and technical skills and provides a strong and lasting output from their work.

Project Supervisor:

Dr. Cath Lambert

Academic Mentors: Kerry Smith; Julie Tavner
Marian Orton; Suzanne Linstead

The Project

*Ten young people aged between 11-17 from different countries became Junior Commissioners as part of Warwick University of Warwick IGGY programme. They carried out individual and collaborative research on the theme of Education as a Human Right. For the young Commissioners, with the support of their peers and Academic Mentors, a focused research question which relates to their specific geographical, social and educational context was used as the starting point from which to generate 'expert' knowledge with regards to the manifestation of Education as a Human Right in a localised context.

*The project contained two parts, initially through email mentoring and supervision and then a one week meet up at the University for research data analysis and film production for a wider audience.

*Together with one member of academic staff from Sociology, four Sociology undergraduate students acted as Academic Mentors to the young Commissioners and at the same time gained first hand knowledge on the subject of children as social researchers, on the topic of education as human right, and research and mentoring skills with young people.

*The final film was produced by the Commissioners : "That's the Way It Is: Educational and Skills as a Human Right"

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/study/iggy/events/junior-commission>



Conclusion

- * Children can be social researchers and they need to have opportunities to express themselves on the issues that affect them.
- * Methods of communication with young people are important and appropriate and most affective strategy need to be identified according to individual needs.
- * The use of technology need further investigating as a resource for research communication and academic learning.
- * Ethical issues involved when conducting social research with young people need to be carefully addressed.
- * Learning through research is possible. There are particular benefits in terms of learning practical skills, and enhancing academic skills and confidence.



URSS Experiences:

- *Good teamwork, dedication, encouragement, and leadership are essential
- *Good planning, time and resources management throughout research process can reduce failure and personal anxieties.
- *The use of technology can enhance the outcome of a study.

