

Geographies of Youth Work, Volunteering and Employment: The Jewish Lads' Brigade & Club in post-war Manchester

Introduction

Youth work is based on the principles of informal education (Mills and Kraftl 2014) and exists in many forms in different countries with diverse political histories (Verschelden et al. 2009). It draws on implicit and explicit spatial metaphors: starting from where young people are 'at' and carving out 'space' for youth workers (Cartwright 2012; Davies 2012). In the context of the United Kingdom, youth work generally refers to the state-run 'Youth Service' but has philanthropic roots (Davies 1999) and historians have charted how the state has played 'catch-up' with the long-standing tradition of philanthropy, mutual aid and voluntary action in the UK (Hilton and McKay 2012), for example around character and/or religious education as a form of active citizenship for both young people and adult volunteers.

Whilst important work by geographers has examined spaces of youth and community work (Blazek 2011; Skelton 2001), youth councils and out-of-school care (Matthews 2001; Smith and Barker 2000), alternative education (Kraftl 2013), voluntary uniformed youth organisations (Goerisch and Swanson 2013; Mills 2013), Sunday Schools (Harvey et al. 2007) and the experiences of young people and families engaged in diverse extra-curricular activities (Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson, 2014), one area marginalised in this literature is the relationship between volunteering and employment – a relationship that I contend is at the heart of understanding the spatialities of youth work and, more broadly, a range of social and political issues.

The use of both paid and unpaid labour to create and sustain spaces of support for different social groups is becoming increasingly politicised with debates on the delivery of public

services and the state-voluntary sector nexus (Hardill and Baines 2011; Mohan 2013). Indeed, the current landscape of organised activities outside of formal education for young people in the UK and beyond is composed of diverse schemes funded and delivered by the state, voluntary organisations, charities, religious institutions, neighbourhoods, families, or a combination thereof. The contemporary relationship between volunteering and employment is often framed as a new phenomenon embodied in concepts such as internships and workfare (Perlin 2012; Isaac 2015). Indeed, it is almost impossible to discuss volunteering by adults or young people today without reference to labour market dynamics. In this paper, I demonstrate how related debates surrounding volunteering and employment are historically situated, as well as highlighting the role of religious identity in shaping the geographies of youth work.

In bringing these two foci together, the paper uses the case-study of the Jewish Lads' Brigade in Manchester during the post-war period to provide an enlivened and embodied historical geography of different encounters with volunteering and employment in one youth work site.

This paper explores how one national organisation's policies – those of the Jewish Lads' Brigade founded in 1895 – were interpreted 'on the ground' in a specific place (the city of Manchester), through one specific youth work site (the Jewish Lads' Brigade *and Club* – hereafter JLB & C) at a particular point in time (post-World War Two). It provides an analysis of the explicit *geographies* of youth work in the JLB & C – that is, examining how the philosophies and practices of both volunteers and employees operated in and through space. Whilst in many ways the JLB & C was a unique space, bringing together a uniformed Brigade wing for boys and a mixed-sex youth club in the same building, the paper exemplifies the professionalization of youth work in post-war Britain that challenged the role of volunteers and by extension the voluntary sector (Bradford 2014; Spence 2014). The motivations behind youth work and youth organisations have changed over time and are intimately wrapped up in a whole series of moral geographies about childhood, youth, gender

and religion (Valentine 1996; Mills 2013). However, my argument here is that we should go beyond identifying these rationales and membership criteria (Springhall 1977) to explore how these ideas were operationalised *in practice* and to ask – what happens when different philosophies and motivations come together in one building, are negotiated *between* volunteers and employees, and clash? This paper shows how one local site of the national organisation re-invented itself and its quasi-religious citizenship training within an emerging landscape of modern youth culture. This re-invention brought about some fundamental tensions: first around employing a ‘modern’ professionally trained youth worker and what this meant for a cohort of existing uniformed volunteers; and second, tensions around faith and religiosity when the post-war employee drafted in to uphold the moral fortitude of ‘modern’ Jewish youth was non-Jewish. Drawing on unique archival material, the paper highlights the relationships between youth workers, young people and adult volunteers within this emerging landscape and period of experimentation. It explores how the identities of volunteers and staff both shape, and are shaped by, the contexts through which they ‘work’ with young people and therefore exemplifies some of the wider tensions around the boundaries of employment and volunteering. Overall, this paper presents multiple historical geographies: of post-war youth, of the Jewish community in Manchester, and of volunteering and employment.

This paper first locates these contributions more fully within geographical work on volunteering, youth, and religion. It then introduces the development and post-war spatialities of the national JLB organisation before outlining the distinct site of the JLB & C in Manchester. The paper then provides an in-depth analysis of the geographies of youth work, employment and volunteering at the JLB & C. In the conclusion, I draw connections between the historical record and contemporary youth work practice and discuss the importance of this study beyond children’s geographies.

Geographies of Volunteering and Employment

Geographical research on volunteering has examined the relationship between the state and voluntary sector in the delivery of public services (Milligan and Fyfe 2005; Baines and Hardill 2011) and the growing emphasis on volunteering in Higher Education (Holdsworth and Quinn 2012) and other youth-targeted programmes (Bailie-Smith et al. 2013). However, the focus in geographical scholarship has largely been on contemporary settings, complimented by emerging – yet still isolated – studies by historians on past volunteering practices (for example Brewis 2014; on youth work histories more broadly, see Spence and Devanney 2006; Gilchrist et al. 2009). This present paper importantly reveals the complexities behind identities that are so often neatly defined as ‘employee’ or ‘volunteer’, arguing that in reality, these are much more messy, contingent and relational. For example, this paper highlights the tensions between the two ‘time-spaces’ that characterise volunteering and employment, but that are often exceeded into domestic and family life. Whereas studies mentioned above have focused on the framing of volunteering as a route *to* employment, this paper considers some of the tensions that can arise between volunteers and employees when they work alongside one another, under the same remit of providing a service to young people. This analysis helps to contextualise current debates on youth work including issues of responsibility, the role of the state and civil society, and the delivery of public services. The question of who is responsible for the ‘upbringing’ of children and young people (both in terms of time and resources) is long-standing. What role do (or should) parents, families, schools, youth workers, and/or communities play in relation to organising and/or supervising activities for young people? These questions are becoming increasingly politicised in a climate and reality of austerity (Hamnett 2014) that has seen average public spending to UK youth services fall by 27% between 2010 and 2012, with reports of funding

cuts of up to 50% in 19 English Councils (Butler 2013). As such, this paper's discussion is of wider relevance to academic debates on the contemporary geographies of volunteering and employment, especially as the role of faith-based organisations working with young people is under ever-increasing scrutiny (Smith et al. 2015).

Geographies of Youth, Religion & Identity

This paper explores how religion and faith can permeate and infuse spaces for young people through both activities and adult personalities, not all of whom may label themselves as 'religious'. Catherine Brace, David Harvey and Adrian Bailey's insightful work on Methodism in Cornwall has demonstrated how engagement with young people was considered an integral part of religious community-building practices (Bailey et al. 2007; Harvey et al. 2007). Indeed, in an important article by Hopkins et al. (2011) *institutions* are listed as one of several potential influences on the religiosity of young people. This paper has a unique focus on Jewish youth, as Judaism is somewhat marginalised within the loci of work on geographies of religion (Kong 2001, 2010; although for an important exception, see Valins 2003a, 2003b). In doing so, this paper moves beyond official histories of the JLB (Kadish 1995) and significantly, it adds a religious dimension to academic debates on the emergence of youth sub-culture in post-war Britain (Hall and Jefferson 1976; Cohen 1973; see also Nayak 2008, Mills 2014) through excavating alternative accounts of post-war (religious) youth. Here, I demonstrate how fears surrounding post-war youth were internalised by Anglo-Jewry¹ and the JLB at a national level, but how at the local scale, this one meeting place in Manchester tried to replicate post-war youth's leisure activities in the (safe) space of the Club as part of a wider culture of support to help Jewish youth in their transitions to adulthood. Overall, I use this example of tensions surrounding 'modern' Jewish youth to demonstrate how moral geographies of childhood and youth can be constructed, negotiated and politicised in relation to faith-based identities and communities.

Methodology

This paper draws on historical data from archival fieldwork at the University of Southampton Library & Archives, the Manchester County Records Office and the Manchester Jewish Museum, all of which contained material on the JLB & C produced at the local, regional and national scale. Sources included annual reports, programmes, minute-books, correspondence, scrapbooks, newspaper cuttings, photographs, youth magazines, and recorded oral histories. Original material was consulted at these three sites, photographed, and then converted into an electronic database (Morris 2011). Data was then subject to textual analysis and coded through a series of thematic guides on youth, religion, volunteering, gender and other project themes. The names of all young people either listed in source material, or who produced secondary sources, have been anonymised for ethical reasons. It is also worth highlighting the ‘silences’ within this archival material. Surprisingly, there is almost no reference to the histories and tragedies of Judaism in the context of World War Two (a period that this material immediately follows). Whilst it is impossible to account for the reasons behind these silences, one could suggest that discussions or records relating to Shoah were either not deposited with the collections (perhaps deemed too political or emotive for inclusion) or were not officially recorded in written material.

‘Advance Again’: The Jewish Lads’ Brigade, ‘modern youth’ and post-war Britain

The inaugural meeting of the JLB was held in London in February 1895 after a Colonel Albert Goldsmid proposed a Jewish version of the Christian uniformed youth organisation – the Boys’ Brigade (Springhall 1977; Kyle 2014). Historian Sharman Kadish argues that the JLB was conceived as a quasi-military organisation that “functioned chiefly as an agent of

Anglicisation” (1995: xvi; on Jewish youth work more broadly, see Bunt 1975; Rose 2005).

The JLB’s aims and ideals were embodied in their ‘Object’:

“to instil into the rising generation from their earliest years, habits of orderliness, cleanliness, and honour, so that in learning to respect themselves they will do credit to their community”²

This aim and rationale mirrors the informal citizenship training espoused by several British youth movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Mills 2013). However, the *raison d’être* of the JLB was also concerned with the maintenance of Jewish culture, not only producing ‘good’ citizens, but “good and loyal members of our faith”.³ Early activities for boys aged 12-16 included English classes, Drill, Band, boxing and camping, all targeted at working-class immigrant families, yet a separate Jewish Brigade organisation for girls did not emerge until as late as 1963.⁴ The founding JLB Companies reflected the demographic characteristics of Anglo-Jewry with a presence in Glasgow, Liverpool and noticeably Manchester, where early members recalled in recorded oral histories that the city’s JLB “kept the Jewish boys together”⁵ and for some, was “their only Jewish contact”.⁶ The inter-war period saw a fall in membership numbers, which was further accelerated after World War Two due to an uncomfortable and ultimately sacrificial relationship with militarism. With poor finances, the post-war unpopularity of military-inspired or influenced organisations, and the dispersal of the Jewish community, the JLB was struggling and in 1950 had just 725 members, compared to 2000 in the 1930s and 4000 before 1914 (Kadish 1995: 143). The post-war period was therefore a significant turning point and chance to re-evaluate the aims and methods of the organisation.

An explicit spatial strategy was used to frame its ‘Advance Again’ – the title of its re-launched post-war journal. The JLB Annual Report from 1947 contained a simple cartographic illustration of JLB Companies emanating from the capital’s HQ, with the aspirational rhetorical question “Where do we go from here? It’s up to you!”:

[FIGURE 1]

Figure 1 captures the ‘future’ imaginative geographies of the JLB’s development and mirrors other spatial motifs of reconstruction, order, regulation and atomic futures that were popular in post-war Britain (Hornsey 2010). The JLB began to weave together a narrative of the necessity for spatial expansion coupled with the desire to meet the changing needs of modern Jewish youth. The same Annual Report claimed that:

“To-day, Jewish Youth...scattered not only through the Metropolis [London] and its far-stretching suburbs, but also in many provincial centers, more prosperous and better educated in English ways, still require leadership and guidance although in a different form from that which attracted them in by-gone days, when amusements were few and money scarce”⁷

These constructions of Jewish youth, ‘placing’ them in both a landscape of England and Englishness, was coupled with a growing awareness amongst JLB authorities that the socio-economic status of youth and their leisure practices were drastically different to those of the late nineteenth century. Academic historians have outlined the massive social, economic and political changes for youth in post-war Britain (Bugge 2004; Stainton Rogers 2004; Osgerby 1998), whilst other scholars have highlighted the various pre-cursors to ‘teenagers’ and ‘youth culture’ (Fowler 2005, 2008; Savage 2007). The JLB authorities believed that although there was “very little poverty” in post-war Britain, “the job of growing-up seems to be just as difficult as it ever was”.⁸ The challenge of being a young person was further complicated, they argued, by the faith-based identities of its membership and potential target audience:

“Whatever “modern youth” is or is not, whether it is good or bad, better or worse, its greatest need is still to be given the opportunity to satisfy the challenges of growing up. And “modern Jewish youth” perhaps finds those challenges even greater than it would otherwise do because of its Jewishness”.⁹

JLB Companies and volunteers were therefore concerned with supporting Jewish youth through these challenges, but their local efforts were framed by pervasive national fears about

‘modern youth’ and the spaces they were seen to reside in. These were articulated and imagined by parents, Rabbis and the wider Anglo-Jewry community and fed off wider social constructions of youth, and particular youth sub-cultures, as problematic and troublesome (Hall and Jefferson 1976; Massey 1998). The idea that certain spaces in the city were encouraging and hosting problematic behaviours was pervasive and created a moral landscape of childhood (Valentine 1996). This centred on practices such as smoking, drinking, dancing, sexual behaviour, gambling, and in a Jewish context – intermarriage. This specific faith-based concern of ‘mixing’ requires a separate in-depth analysis and is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the wider context of ‘problematic’ spaces and associated practices can be charted over time - from the picturehouse of the 1920s and 1930s to the coffee-bar of the 1950s and 1960s. The JLB had an impossible task – charged with stemming the tide of ‘modern’ temptations, yet needing to attract new members. Indeed, the Chairperson of Manchester’s JLB stated that “Our young people have much to look forward to. They have much to avoid, too.”¹⁰ I argue that their messages were contradictory – rallying a call to attract ‘new blood’ to be “the life and soul of the Brigade”¹¹ and yet decrying jiving, pop records, ‘telly’, jeans and Perry Como haircuts as “not necessarily Jewish”.¹² By the late 1950s, the organisation began to adopt an understanding tone towards young people and acknowledged their spending power and changing tastes. Here, in terms of the appeal of particular *spaces* and the aesthetics of modern youth culture:

“When a young man buys a seat, or more likely two seats, at a cinema he knows what he is getting. He gets nice comfortable seats, the sort of music he likes, darkness, and he gets some hot hands as well. All that he can afford to buy...is all of very high quality...it therefore follows that those youngsters will no longer be content to go into Boys’ Clubs or Girls’ Clubs, or other organisations of that sort where they have to climb up three flights of un-carpeted stairs, where the gas fire gives very little heat, and the gramophone does not work, or if it does the records are fourteen years old. They will not do that now just because we think it would be good for them to do it. I have the greatest sympathy for these youngsters; they are tired of being done good to and being worked among”.¹³

In response to this changing landscape, the JLB advocated some modernisation to the aesthetics of its youth programme, but that its real role would be to help young people manage their *time* to navigate such spaces. Indeed, the message in the 1960s was that the JLB could help youth “employ their greatly increased leisure time *to the best possible advantage*”¹⁴. Despite these narratives of progress, membership of the JLB following World War Two remained low in comparison to other spaces of youth work. That is, apart from one JLB space in Manchester that had very different dynamics, personnel, and spatial expressions.

The Jewish Lads Brigade *and* Club: Manchester and ‘dangerous experiments’

The JLB & C in Manchester integrated uniformed *and* club life. Shortly after the city’s uniformed JLB Company was founded in 1899, a Club was established for members as an extension of its work. This was more of a traditional recreational ‘youth club’ with activities including sport, music and drama, rather than disciplined militarised performance and regulated camps (Collins 2003). Originally in the heart of a huge slum district, the Club moved premises over the years to ‘keep up’ with the shifting residential patterns of Jewish diaspora towards the suburbs. The focus of this paper is not on the early history of the Club however, but the post-war period when the Club was seen as a potential solution to the JLB’s dwindling numbers. And yet, to prioritise this half of the building’s work and openly engage with elements of ‘less wholesome’ modern youth culture was controversial. This approach coincided with the employment of dynamic youth worker Stanley Rowe between 1954 – 1969. The JLB & C’s Trustees felt the presence of someone permanent (and trained) to become a key fixture in the lives of the young people was now essential. Rowe had youth work experience in Buckinghamshire and East London and his philosophies reflected the belief that young people had a need to belong and should have opportunities for new experiences.

In welcoming Rowe, the Trustees were supportive, but warned against any “dangerous experiments”.¹⁵ Prior to his employment, the Club was run by volunteers and yet several accounts recall that the JLB & C was almost single-handedly ‘saved’ by Rowe and he was showered with praise and awards, a “tower of strength” that was tactful, cheerful and co-operative.¹⁶ Before his arrival, access to the Club was restricted to those who attended the uniformed Brigade, but these rules were relaxed under Rowe’s employment and visitors were commonplace. Similarly, the age of Club membership was set at 14 and a half, but archival material suggests this was often relaxed too. Rowe’s first proposals for making the Club more attractive and successful included closing later (10pm), a bright and modern redecoration, and establishing a democratically elected Club Members’ Committee (Figure 2):

[FIGURE 2 HERE]

This Committee represented a shift in terms of responsibility and youth work practice, giving members a “chance to express themselves”.¹⁷ The everyday lives of its membership however often disrupted Rowe’s idealistic aims. For example, a set of minutes reveal that “Maureen Gold sent a letter of resignation from the committee as she has too much homework to do and cannot make the meetings”.¹⁸ Indeed, these anecdotal accounts of reasons for leaving or low attendance provide a snapshot of the everyday lives of Jewish youth in Manchester during this period. At the time of Rowe’s arrival in 1954, there were just 84 members across the JLB & Club combined. By 1959, there were approximately 300 teenagers regularly using the Club and 400 across both the Brigade and Club.¹⁹ Despite its popularity, Rowe meticulously recorded ‘reasons for leaving’, including “change of college, Girls’ Brigade, courting, professional beat group, school work, crowd too young, going to university, married, new job, engaged to be married, goes to town, does not like subs, friendship patterns, maturity, football interest, coffee bars” with the most popular reasons marked on his tally chart as ‘courting’, ‘studies’ and ‘maturity’.²⁰ These chime with ideas of youth as a period of

‘transition’ from childhood to adulthood, a conceptualisation that has been critically engaged with by children’s geographers (see Evans 2008; Valentine 2003; Worth 2009). In a list of reasons for departure from 1963, Rowe had included a column “club failed them”.²¹ In giving the Club this sense of agency, I suggest that Rowe clearly felt a great sense of responsibility and personal identification with the quality of youth work on offer; this is noteworthy as we tend to think of definitions of ‘success’ and ‘impact’ in youth work as a contemporary feature in the evaluation of youth services.

The number and breadth of recreational activities on offer massively increased under Rowe’s leadership; less time was spent in uniformed drill and more time listening to music next door. In this sense, the Club itself started to embody – at a local level – the very freedoms that troubled some parents, Rabbis and national Jewish commentators. Rowe somehow carefully navigated the needs of young people, parents and other invested parties. He was a member of various national bodies dealing with youth and community work, an active trainee in social work practice, and a Labour County Councillor for some of his time in Manchester. In 1969, he retired after 16 years of service to take up a post in the South Manchester Jewish youth and community centre, with the JLB & C Chairperson stating that “the period of rapid growth and development of the Club coincided with Stanley’s leadership and his national fame in his chosen field has reflected in no small measure on our organisation.”²² However, closer examination of the archival material reveals some tensions that help to illustrate the broader politics of volunteering and employment in youth work spaces. In the next two sections, I illustrate some of these tensions: first in terms of the different roles and responsibilities between volunteers and Rowe in the context of religious identity; and second, through issues of work-life balance and the transformation of domestic space in order to sustain the Club’s activities.

Volunteers and the ‘problems that faced me’

Throughout the twentieth century, conceptualisations of volunteering in the national JLB were framed in terms of duty, sacrifice and faith, with a national call that “we must have young men and women who will sacrifice some of their leisure”.²³ Surprisingly, early volunteers in the national JLB were actually *charged* on gaining a post, had to pay two guineas per annum towards funds, and could also be fined for unauthorised absence (Kadish 1995: 25). This formal and financial burden on volunteers was phased out when the JLB struggled to get Officers and volunteer help became scarcer during both World Wars. Indeed, this seems in stark contrast to today’s ‘incentivised’ culture of volunteering that for some schemes includes the reward of VIP experiences, or more commonplace features such as in-kind benefits and remunerated expenses.

Throughout Rowe’s management in the 1950s and 1960s, 20 to 50 people per week volunteered at the JLB & C in Manchester. It is unclear how many of these volunteers were Jewish, but in an article written by Rowe from 1965, he stressed that:

“For 5726 years Jews have marked the New Year, one year building upon another, century upon century. Today is an age of voluntarism. No Jew needs to be a Jew unless he voluntarily wants to commit himself to his community and religion.”²⁴

This is interesting, not least due to Rowe’s identity as a non-Jew, but also in the connections between faith-based responsibilities and ‘active citizenship’ (Yarwood 2013). As the JLB & C’s report from 1960 stated, “Perhaps the most important – and challenging – part of [that] title is the word Jewish. It implies a whole series of duties and demands which ‘any’ youth club can evade.”²⁵ A key component of the Club’s ‘success’ was therefore the skills and energy of its Jewish voluntary base, for example the inclusion of Rabbis as Honorary Chaplains and ad hoc helpers. Volunteers were also integral to Rowe’s own – perhaps surprising – attempts to make the club ‘more’ Jewish. In 1954, they held a Club Succah²⁶ for

the first time in thirty years. Although it was Rowe's idea, he needed to draw on the help of three Jewish volunteers and a Rabbi to say Kiddish²⁷ during the festival. Whilst Rowe was embraced by many in the Jewish community (his scrapbooks overflow with wedding and Bar Mitzvah invites), it should be noted that attempts like these were not universally applauded: some parents still expressed fears about a 'secular' youth worker charged with the responsibility of overseeing spiritual development. On the other side of the spectrum, Rowe suffered racist and anti-Semitic abuse from pockets of the city, including anonymous letters calling him 'Jew lover' and 'n***** lover'.²⁸ These incidents were not unnoticed by the young people, who discussed "the question of hooligans concerning swastikas on local buildings" at length in their own committee meetings, noting that "the club leader even had them on his wall and he is not Jewish".²⁹

As well as young people leaving the Club as part of 'growing up' (see earlier discussion), the peaks and troughs of Club attendance were also shaped by the precarious nature of volunteering, with a slump in membership in 1964 accountable to "there being fewer voluntary helpers to help with some activities e.g. swimming".³⁰ Whilst the Chairperson of the JLB & C stressed the practical side of the need for volunteers, "without whose continued help the Club would be unable to function"³¹, for Rowe it was about the 'quiet politics' of volunteering that could be transformative (Askins forthcoming), seen in this anecdote:

"Mrs G. Davies spends 3 nights in the club most weeks running the canteen which is a sort of social centre and, what is most important of all and what too few helpers do, making real friends with the members by her quiet, helpful manner. There is one girl, aged 16, who uses the club just to 'let off steam' on Mrs. Davies; she is very neurotic. One cannot measure the help given by just being friends in a case like this."³²

The principles of informal education and youth work are based on dialogue, of meeting young people 'where they are' (Mills & Kraftl 2014), but often it is not stressed that volunteers are also engaged in this type of activity as well as formally trained youth workers. Rowe believed the Club were 'lucky' to have such a volunteer base, describing how they

“contributed so much towards the life of the building”³³, but although he was full of praise for the efforts of those such as Mrs Davies, he would often comment on the lack of helpers engaging in this type of activity (see above quote) and constantly stressed the need for rigorous training, especially in adolescent behaviour and psychology. Overall, we can see how a dichotomy of ‘old’ and ‘new’ was set-up between volunteers on the one hand, and the ‘modern’ youth worker on the other, with Rowe having to tread a very fine line between keeping his volunteers happy, stressing the need for their training, and at the same time trying to secure better pay and conditions as a salaried youth worker.

Inevitably, there were tensions based on the above dilemmas – often with uniformed volunteers on the JLB side of the building who felt Rowe needed supervision, with suggestions that “there must be a planned programme and a copy should be issued to each leader and manager”.³⁴ Some volunteers left stating they had “never been officially thanked nor been asked to continue”³⁵ and there was disquiet amongst some for not being reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses.³⁶ Under the heading ‘problems that faced me’ in his private notebook, Rowe recalls a violent attack in the office between two JLB volunteers after a dispute about using an office, with one of the volunteers explaining that the other had:

“...raised his clenched fists obviously with intent to strike me. I protested...he grabbed me by the throat and threw me to one side”³⁷

These *realities* of volunteering are often hidden in celebratory popular accounts of the goodwill, generosity and almost blanket positive descriptions of how ‘rewarding’ volunteering is. Towards the end of the 1960s, there were disputes about the boundaries of the Brigade and Club in relation to discipline, which was starting to ‘overlap’ and cause leadership issues. This impasse led to a new constitution in 1968 that formally separated the activities of the Brigade and Club, which seems to have paved the way for Rowe’s departure in 1969 for a bigger role in Jewish youth work.

Overall, despite belonging to a national organisation, the practices of the JLB & C were localised, feeding off the availability, skills and also shortcomings of local – mainly Jewish – volunteers, overseen by a youth worker who despite his own lack of faith, infused the space with an atmosphere of support and respect. The next section continues the focus on youth work practices, but specifically illustrates how the boundaries between employment and volunteering were often blurred at the JLB & C in terms of both the *time* spent on youth work activities and through the appropriation of particular *spaces* – including the home.

‘Office hours’ and the cellar coffee-bar

Rowe claimed that he spent 46 hours per week (on average) in Club work, going above and beyond his salaried contract, with Annual Reports often stating how much of Rowe’s “devoted work” was “outside office hours”.³⁸ Several examples were given of his work in the community including home visits and liaising with social workers. Of particular relevance to this paper’s wider argument about volunteering and employment was that Rowe poured a huge amount of emotional labour into helping *young people* find work after they noted in their own magazine that the city’s Youth Employment Bureau was “not very useful”³⁹ – so Rowe established the Club’s own employment bureau in the late 1950s.⁴⁰ He simultaneously encouraged young people to volunteer *themselves*, with typical activities including Club Members cleaning flats in preparation for Pesach.⁴¹ His encouragement in this area – as with enlisting adult volunteers – tended to invoke a sense of faith-based duty (see also Baillie-Smith et al. 2013). To return to the discussion of workload, an average monthly report from Rowe to Club management detailed his work beyond the Club’s four walls:

“Old club member released from a mental institution and taken into membership at the request of the mental health authorities. He is completely at home with us. A twenty-year old ex-club member, going blind, helped with employment and training and in his social life generally. A deaf and dumb girl taken into

membership...Attempted suicide boy visited for many hours. Police and mental health authorities seen and boy given a place in a training centre to learn a new trade.”⁴²

These activities often had a profound impact on young people’s lives. One handwritten thank you letter to Rowe reads:

“Sir, I would call you Sir Stanley or Lord Rowe...I saw you on the train, my snotty nose was the most important trademark then! Yet I’ll not write an obituary like praise but a living tribute - think of all your days. I asked almighty God that you should be spared to open more clubs”⁴³

Rowe maintained “it was difficult to refuse help when none was available from any other source”.⁴⁴ This ‘filling in’ of gaps in state provision has striking similarities to today’s youth work landscape, where employees, parents and volunteers are responding to service withdrawal in complex ways (Jupp 2013; Horton 2013). Rowe often tried to extend his visiting and family counselling service, claiming it could “well be extended if volunteers would come forward for training”.⁴⁵ However, some Trustees felt that Rowe’s extra work was a distraction, with one board member using this reason as justification for voting against an annual increment in his salary in 1961:

“...He [Rowe] was adequately paid in view of the fact he had a four bed-roomed home for which he only paid a rental of 30- weekly...much of Mr Rowe’s work was not connected with the Club.”⁴⁶

These types of tensions can still be found in contemporary discourses surrounding paid/unpaid work, framed around questions of value, remuneration and the boundaries of an employee’s responsibilities. Overall though, most of the Club’s trustees felt that “none could appreciate fully the work Mr Rowe was doing nor realise the number of hours he spent with families putting right what was wrong and enabling our youth to get a proper start in life”⁴⁷ Rowe felt a personal responsibility to the youth of the Club, noting tasks to complete with a sense of urgency in his daily notebooks. For example after one Club night in February 1967, he jotted down: “Must ring Robert to see how the new job is going ‘tick’; Must drop a note to

2 who are both ill”⁴⁸ He talked of the ‘hurdles’⁴⁹ that adolescents had to overcome and the support they needed for the “complex lives they would have to lead”⁵⁰ In sum, Rowe was not just someone who set-up badminton nets and organised day-trips to Blackpool, but spent hours of emotional labour actively involved in shaping young people’s futures. Take, for example, this letter Rowe received in 1971 from former Club member Smokey Joe that highlights the personal embodied relationship between youth worker and young person:

“Do you remember? I think you called me Smokey Joe. Short, red haired, ruddy complexioned...It was two summers ago. I’ve written you a hundred letters in my mind; you represent the distant, objective observer. You sort of remain timeless and against your image I catalogue my own change and milestones.”⁵¹

Here we see an example of the role that youth workers – certainly in this case – had in providing a reference point from which to map out (youth) transitions and events in one’s lifecourse. Whilst historical material such as this is rare, partial and fragmented, it does hint at the relationships that ‘held together’ youth work spaces.

As well as the demands on Rowe’s time, his employment also seeped into his home life, with several examples of going ‘above and beyond’ his job description. Feminist geographers have discussed these issues in relation to home and work spaces (for example Johnson et al. 2007) and there is scope to further elucidate the relationship between these arenas. Rowe’s notes detail how sometimes Club members would ‘enter’ home space, for example “An 18 year old club member spent Christmas with [the family] as she was at odds with her parents who went abroad”.⁵² For Rowe and his family, these encounters were at their most extreme between 1957-9 when building work was undertaken at the Club. During the refurbishment, Rowe and his wife offered up their cellar to be converted into a coffee bar, decorated by young people from the Club’s Jazz group. The Chairperson acknowledged Rowe’s “willingness to sacrifice his leisure and home life for the sake of our members”⁵³ and thanked his wife Wendy for “enduring *without complaint* the turning of her cellar into a Club Room and Coffee Bar

where Members have met regularly during the past two years”⁵⁴ However in an official meeting, the Chairperson reported that “Mrs Rowe was feeling rather harassed as so many activities took place in her own home, which in the long run places some financial burden upon her.”⁵⁵ In some ways, I argue that the cellar ‘coffee bar’ was an attempt to mirror the city and compete with Manchester’s emerging youth scene, however it could also be viewed as simply ‘making do’ to keep the Club going, whilst also inspiring young people to create and design their own space. The seeping of the Club into home life was pronounced and I suggest this went well beyond an employee’s responsibilities, so much so that Rowe and his wife were effectively ‘voluntarily’ giving up time and space to continue the Club’s activities. I argue that the examples in this section illustrate how youth work crossed a number of boundaries between ‘home’ and ‘work’ and echo a number of contemporary debates about the time-spaces of employment and work-life balance. Helena Pimlott-Wilson (2012) has recently argued that children’s views on these issues matter, and it is clear from other archival material that the young people in the Club (as well as Rowe’s own children) were aware of the demands on his time and family life. Indeed, this section ends with an account from the youth-led magazine *Club Reporter* that captures Rowe’s workload as a ‘leader’ (rather than employee or volunteer):

“he sits behind his desk trying all at once to add up last month’s accounts, to eat sandwiches which he calls his tea, to persuade a boy that he must leave a deposit for the table tennis bat he is trying to “remove” and to advise one of the older members whether it would be better for his career if he stayed on at school to the age of 23 or go to sea in a rubber dingy...the answer to why he is a good leader is really much more simple than all that. It must lie in the keen look and interested tone he uses when he asks “How are you, John?”.”⁵⁶

Conclusion

This paper has drawn on the case-study of the Jewish Lads’ Brigade and Club in Manchester in the 1950s and 1960s to make a series of wider arguments about the geographies of

volunteering and employment, faith-based identities, and the spatialities of youth work in post-war Britain. In this conclusion, I draw some connections between the historical record and contemporary youth work practice, suggesting fruitful lines of enquiry for future research.

Through highlighting a series of tensions in relation to the JLB & C's activities and infrastructure, this paper has provided some historical contextualisation to what are often seen as contemporary issues, for example work-life balance, the boundaries of employment responsibilities, and the politics of volunteering. Much more than that however, the paper has emphasised some of the emotional challenges of volunteering/employment and the sheer volume of work involved in sustaining these types of spaces through holding them together *in place*: in the Club, the canteen, and the home cellar. I argue there is a great need to further our understanding of the dynamics between employment and volunteering; indeed this paper has shown how roles so often neatly defined as 'employee' or 'volunteer' are, in reality, much more messy, contingent and relational. Most youth programmes, clubs and organisations operate via the work of (paid) employees and (unpaid) volunteers and certainly in the UK, the lines of responsibility for youth work have been sharply re-drawn in this mould in recent years (Nicholls 2012). Indeed, the professionalization and training of youth workers that Rowe himself championed in the post-war era is today being dismantled (UNISON 2014). This de-professionalization has been prompted by cuts to public spending in an age of austerity where new geographies of voluntarism are shaping the delivery of public services and by extension the role of the voluntary and community sector (see Clayton et al. 2015). Overall, a number of spaces – not just for young people – are currently sustained and operationalized through this type of combined 'effort' or structure of paid and unpaid labour. I argue that an understanding of how libraries or the National Health Service⁵⁷, for example, work *in practice*, as both a space of employment and space for volunteering, will become increasingly important in an age and reality of austerity. In this respect, the example

of a youth club should not just be of interest to children's geographers, but rather, to those working in diverse areas of human geography and beyond as an insight into wider processes of social, economic and political change.

The specific post-war landscape in which the JLB & C was transformed by Rowe marked a wider shift in how young people were constructed as 'in need'. Rather than being seen as in need of discipline or the cornerstones of Anglicisation as per the early days of the JLB, ultimately Rowe was commissioned to foster a space in the city that would help support young people through the various 'transitions' to adulthood in the context of post-war youth culture. However, whilst justifications behind the need for supervised activities for young people can be situated in their respective social and political contexts, the idea that youth is still *in need* remains enduring and continues to underlie the contemporary dynamics of youth work in distinct ways. The idea of 'correct' spaces fostering 'correct' behaviours for young people is continually used as a justification for wider processes of social control. For example, there is scope to further interrogate the relationship between youth work and discourses of militarisation, infused with the politics of class and gender (see, for example, Wells 2014) as part of more critical geographical research on youth work politics and practice.

Finally, this paper has also focused on religious (or non-religious) identities. Faith-based communities continue to shape organised activities for young people, with the Jewish Lads and Girls' Brigade – in its modern incarnation – currently a powerful vehicle in the delivery of the Duke of Edinburgh award with a unique Kosher format. Ideas about 'modern' Jewish youth and the 'challenges they face because of their Jewishness' (to paraphrase an earlier quote from the 1950s)⁵⁸ are still used in contemporary contexts to justify provision and help support those (faith-based) transitions to adulthood, currently played out in a landscape of reported increases in anti-Semitic attacks across Europe (Booth 2015) and a volatile and uncertain contemporary economic climate (Hall & Pimlott-Wilson, forthcoming; Holdsworth,

forthcoming). Other axes of identity (for example, gender, sexuality, or disability) can underpin and ‘hold together’ youth work spaces that are established by adult volunteers, the state, or carved out by young people themselves. Furthermore, whilst issues of in/exclusion are clearly not limited to youth organisations, spaces for young people are powerful examples of how difference can be spatialised and often stimulate polemical debate about ‘living with difference’ (Valentine 2008). This can be seen through the example of faith schools (Dwyer and Parutis 2013) or recent plans from a charity based in Manchester to open a specialist state LGBT school (Hill 2015). In interrogating these spaces (or their envisioned futures), it is important to recognise that a key feature in how they are created and sustained is often through the dual efforts of both employees and volunteers, and therefore it is crucial that these dynamic relationships are the focus of more scholarly attention. The case-study of the JLB & C and Rowe’s own identity politics discussed in this paper perhaps complicates perceptions that those who volunteer (or work) for a particular faith-based organisation share those same beliefs. Indeed, Rowe did not subscribe or identify with the same beliefs of most of the young people and volunteers he worked with. This may have been unusual at the time, however since the post-war era there has been both a rise in the prominence of faith-based actors in state-funded and voluntary youth work (Smith et al. 2015) and a wider shift towards secularism in Western Europe (Davie 2000). This paper has shown how Rowe, as an ‘outsider’ in many respects to the Anglo-Jewish community in Manchester, was able to bring a new set of perspectives and energy to the JLB & C as a full-time employee. In this sense, it is encouraging to see emerging geographical scholarship on the role of inter-faith youth projects (Mayblin et al. earlyview) and volunteering in the ‘post-secular’ landscape (Middleton and Yarwood 2015) that reinforces the timeliness of these debates.

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