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Abstract

This article adopts a radical lens and examines the relationship between community development, adult education and professionalism. It draws from research on one specific community- university partnership and presents the professionalisation of community work as detrimental to radical practice because of its encouragement of individual vertical progression for learners and a favouring of professional practitioner benefits over collective community gain.

Introduction

Twenty years ago, Mary Whelan (1990) wrote an article entitled Training and Professionalisation in Community Work. In it she identified a tension between community workers residing in disadvantaged areas that were affected by poverty and exclusion, and 'outsider' community workers, people from other areas and usually with middle class origins, also enraged by inequality. She challenged the appropriateness of professionalising community work arguing that to do so would exacerbate tension between these disparate groups. Quoting documentation from a working group within the Community Workers Cooperative (CWC) she refers to their description of professionalisation as an "anathema" to practice and quotes them directly when they state,

> The process of professionalisation is about gaining status. It is a search for power, money and control over the practice of community work. It is a process whereby a small group decides on the rules of entry and works to have them accepted and so build up a membership. The profession resulting from this process would be:-exclusive with restricted right of entry;-self-regulating and as such, not answerable to the community.

(1990, p. 154)

During the ensuing years the once marginal suggestion that community development[1] can deliver social change towards egalitarianism has been embraced across the political spectrum. Theoretically the dominant discourse is towards pluralism, and the notion of civil society as the terrain for participatory democracy within which the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS)[2] is a key player would appear virtually uncontested. Despite early objections such as the one that opens this article, the need to professionalise also commonly goes uncontested. Professionalisation is linked to a need to raise standards of practice to ensure a robust, cohesive and effective movement. However the professionalisation debate, although somewhat muted, has not gone away and concerns have been raised about its potential to distance grass-roots activism (Meade & O'Donovan, 2002, p. 8) and of its over-emphasis on technical competence above ideological debate (Thompson, 2007, p. 29).

This paper contributes to the debate on professionalism with a specific focus on its impact on radical community education. It draws from a case study that examines a partnership arrangement between a Community Development Project (CDP) whose origins are influenced by the writings of Freire, and a University Department openly committed to a critical pedagogy agenda. These organisations have been working together for almost twenty years and the fruit of this partnership is a locally delivered and university accredited Certificate in Community Development and Leadership which is delivered over one academic year. This article focuses on a central finding from this research, namely of a continued tension between 'outsider' and 'local' community workers. It argues current professionalisation trajectories are intrinsically linked to the accreditation of learning, and are exacerbating tensions through the promotion of individual practitioner advancement over collective community praxis.

Following an explanation of research methodology, the piece discusses the analogous relationship between community development and community education when considered at their radical ends. It then outlines core arguments surrounding professionalisation with a particular emphasis on its relationship with accredited learning. Theoretical propositions draw on Freirean and Gramscian philosophies, the purpose of which is to identify contradictions between these ideas and professionalisation. Following this, pertinent findings from primary research are drawn out. The article concludes with a brief outline on some of the wider implications for radical community education/community development as a social movement for change.

Research methodology
The data presented is drawn from research I undertook between 2007 and 2009. The primary purpose of this research is to examine the aforementioned community-university partnership's potential to advance social justice; a guiding principle of radical interpretations of both community education and community development, and an aspiration for both organisations. Alongside documentary analysis, qualitative methods were employed namely one to one interviewing of a twenty-five strong research population, the majority of who were past students of the certificate course from 2005-2008. All past students were involved in community work across Dublin, either paid or voluntarily, and all but two identified themselves as representative of the communities the CVS purport to represent. Interviews were also carried out with individuals working within both organisations. Purposeful sampling was used meaning candidates were deliberately chosen in order to encourage maximum generation of relevant data (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 56). A case-study approach afforded the opportunity to explore micro-level experiences, which can then be considered in the midst of wider macro-level debate (Robson, 2000, p. 5).

All research brings with it an auto-biographical element (West, 1996, p. 17) and this research was viewed through an anti-positivist critical research paradigm. Ontological assumptions rely heavily on Freirean interpretations of oppressive social stratification, liberation from which can only be realized through radical change, in other words deep-seated political and economic transformation. I also concur with suggestions of Ireland as a "neo-liberal state", a political arrangement that practices neo-liberalism without the utopian vision of state shrinkage usually associated with this particular ideology (Allen, 2007, p. 67). In addition personal experiences are at play including my involvement with the work as past Coordinator of the CDP under examination (as an outsider community worker) and also involvement with the university department as a postgraduate student.

Community education, community development and praxis
Although community development and adult education are sometimes presented as separate disciplines, there is a lengthy history that connects the two. Internationally, adult education as community development has been traced to the UK University Settlement Movements of the 1920's (Gilchrist, 2009, p. 25) and, at its inception, the US National Association of Adult Education (NAAE) declared community the "sociological nexus of adult education" (Spense &

Wolff, 1953, p. 248). However it is community education in particular that is most associated with processes of community development and its interpretation as a socially transformative process has led to elucidations of a symbiotic relationship between the two (Lovett, 1995, Fordham, 1979, Kirkwood & Kirkwood, 1989, Connolly, 1996). Supporting this, the emergence of community development in Ireland (particularly in an urban setting) has been linked to grass roots anti-poverty focused education groups (Brady, 2003, p. 40, Connolly, 2003, p. 50) and the ideologies of Freire are commonly evoked by both schools. The community development worker becomes the critical educator who, through everyday issues, poses questions that encourage communities to interpret their world in a critical way. Crucially, this new reading is then used to inform actions and, through continual appraisal of these actions, praxis emerges. Connolly (1996) exemplifies the relationship between the two disciplines when she states, "community development without the essential elements of emancipatory learning domesticates the activists and subverts the possibility of radical social change…adult education without the conduit of community development remains located in the personal" (1996, p. 40).

Community development is however a problematic concept. There have been contestations of the virtues of community, a notion usually based on historical images of support and solidarity that often fail to focus on more potent underbellies of NIMBYism and exclusion (Mayo, 2000, p. 41, Shaw, 2008). Equally overlooked are the impacts of residualization; communities are encouraged to galvanise community spirit and overcome disadvantage without due regard for the impact of poor planning decisions and of government policy that is detrimental to adequate social housing provision (Fahey, 1999, p. 20). Not only are geographical depictions questionable, communities of interest, such as the gay or Muslim community, surely signify a level of exclusion from more 'mainstream' community in the first place?

Core principles guiding community development namely empowerment and participation also warrant scrutiny. Empowerment - a process that encourages individuals to better understand their capacity to control their lives therefore enabling them to become more active citizens (Schuftan, 1996) is meaningless without a corresponding concession by power-holders. The experiences of the CVS in corporatist arrangements show this has not been forthcoming to date (Murphy, 2002, Meade, 2005). Similarly participation - the involvement of groups otherwise excluded from a range of decision-making fora (CWC, 2008,

p. 26), can be interpreted through Arnstein's "ladder of citizen participation" (1969). This 'ladder' ranges from manipulation/tokenism at one end, to citizen power at its peak but in reality, the term 'active citizenship' is commonly used to describe bottom rung information giving and consultation processes that legitimise decisions already made by the state (Cornwall, 2008, p. 270). Another fundamental problem with participation is a potential for presentations of 'good/welcome participation' in particular compliant engagement in corporatist governance, and 'bad/unwelcome participation' including demonstrations and pressure group campaigning often borne out of discontent with seemingly democratic structures available (McClymont & O'Hare, 2008).

It is also common for community development to be tracked along two distinctive theoretical pathways that are either pluralist or radical (Hanmer, 1979, Popple 1995, p. 4). Each school acknowledges a political dimension to practice but differ on their analysis of power. Pluralism understands power as something diffuse that can be shared by competing groups; a robust CVS can therefore negotiate a more equitable distribution. Radical conceptions arm themselves with a Marxist analysis and link community development to wider class struggle (Hanmer 1979, p. 205, Ledwith, 2005, p. 11, Gilchrist, 2009, p. 26). Radical models position power with those wishing to maintain the status quo arguing systemic change is what is needed rather than negotiation within the realms of current arrangements. However, it is hard to ignore a persistent theory-practice divide as it is likely most practitioners do not consciously endorse either ideology. Increasingly the CVS is becoming enveloped in front line service provision, a situation that has been compounded by the state's prioritisation of funding for services and reluctance to finance research work or actions that attempt to influence public opinion (Lee, 2006, p. 16-17). Where community development is radically motivated, there can also be a tendency towards prioritising reflective components (oftentimes within community education classroom settings). What can be lacking is due regard for action components upon which praxis is also dependent.

Professionalisation and accreditation

Amidst these contestations and discrepancies, the professionalisation of community work is however gathering considerable momentum. Professionalism is being explicitly linked to the raising of standards, standards that "will provide a benchmark by which we measure the effectiveness of quality community work" (CWC, 2008, p. 20). There is nothing wrong with giving consideration

to technical standards and competence indeed some radical adult educators have expressed concern about in-attention to the proficiencies of the trade at the expense of more 'high-browed' academic discourse (Collins, 1995, p. 47, Holst, 2009). However, there are sociological interpretations of professionalism that present it as something primarily about practitioner self-promotion with the benefits of professional status being most tangible for the professional her/himself and not the clientele (in this case the community) s/he serves (Larson, 1977, MacDonald, 1995, Kennedy, 2007). Although it has been suggested the professionalisation of community work in Ireland "should avoid professional self interest as a main defining character" (Crickley & McArdle, 2009, p. 20), it is unclear how this is to be avoided and processes to date have followed the usual touchstones of professionalisation. Firstly, to support any profession, there needs to be a specialist and 'scientifically verified' body of knowledge validated through university recognition (Larson, 1977, Houle, 1980, Cervero, 1988, Collins, 1995, MacDonald, 1995, Wilson, 1995, Merriam & Brocket, 1997, Flexner, 2001). Last count, there were over thirty domestic university accredited community development courses on offer (O'Leary & Conroy, 2006) as well as a number of home grown academic publications[3]. As with other social justice fields of study, specialist knowledge in community development (and adult education) continues to grow and applying credentials to measure the transfer of these 'specialisms' re-enforce the importance of the university system preserving its image as the gate-keepers of 'expert knowledge'. When disciplines are then built around concerns with equality, justice and the eradication of poverty, surely the resultant professionals become dependent on the continuation of the social circumstances they set out to eradicate for their own academic and professional survival?

A second component to successful professionalisation is the emergence of a state recognised elite. This elite are central to the development of approved ideology, central to agreeing characteristics that form the basis of membership, and central to negotiations with the state to agree levels of autonomy granted (MacDonald, 1995, p. 7-8). Professionalisation in Ireland has most recently been bolstered by the publication of Towards Standards for Quality Community Work, the first account of a consultation process driven in the main by the CWC[4] and The Department of Applied Social Studies at NUI Maynooth[5]. The document clearly favours pluralist approaches when it commits the future of community development to "networking, solidarity and engagement with all of the stakeholders, including central government and local authorities"

(CWC, 2008, p. 13). It identifies its intention to establish agreed standards and approved qualifications for community workers and proposes the establishment of an independent monitoring body to oversee these 'advances'. The publication conceptualises standards as an inventory of agreed requirements listed under the headings "knowledge", "skills", and "qualities". Together these enhance an individuals capacity to support a process grounded in the core principles of community development namely "collective action", "empowerment", "social justice", "equality and anti-discrimination", and "participation" (ibid, p. 22-26).

The quandary with agreeing "essential prerequisites" (ibid, p. 20) is the corresponding need for proof of competence generally measured through academic accreditation. What this does is favour prescriptive curricula, more readily able to gauge the transfer of these attributes, over Freirean methods of being led by a learning group's generative themes. Organic efforts at dialogic learning that take into account group needs, aspirations, and intent are therefore at risk of being standardised and squeezed towards non-Freirean banking approaches where the expert teacher fills the student receptacles with the knowledge deemed most relevant by the academic institution awarding credentials. Whilst it can be argued Towards Standards does not negate radical approaches rather equips practitioners to implement them, we cannot ignore the way our formal education systems have generated class discrimination through inequality of access, participation, and outcome (Lynch & Baker, 2005, p. 135). It therefore seems likely the outsider community worker, more adept in formalised study, will more readily fit into prescriptive and credentialised learning environments. Academic qualifications also place a 'use value' on courses to be exchanged for recognition as an 'approved' community worker. The educational journey becomes an individualised, often costly one, taken in order to satisfy accreditation requirements for professional entry, rather than the collective journey towards praxis led by community concerns and issues.

Why professionalism and radicalism are diametrically opposed.

Freire suggests that interventions to advance learning can never be neutral. They either maintain the "submersion of consciousness" or "strive for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality" (1970, p. 62). When learners are liberated towards 'conscientization', they are freed from considering their position in history as either fatalistic or the will of God (ibid, p. 37). Freire was not a reformist and believed the solution to inequality is "not to inte-

grate them [the oppressed] into the structure of oppression" (ibid, p. 48), but to transform the structures themselves. Comparisons can be drawn between Freirean ideology and Gramscian theories of hegemony and intellectualism and it is not unusual for radical community development theorists to evoke the ideas of both (Popple, 1995, p. 44/52, Ledwith, 2005). Gramsci identifies the presence of organic intellectualism in each social stratum. Crucially, rather than being distinguishable by their profession, organic intellectuals are discernable by their role in directing the ideas and the objectives of the class they are bound to (1971, p. 3). The challenge for 'working class' organic intellectuals, is to encourage an alternative-hegemony that reframes common sense reason. Apply this contemporarily and it can be argued predominant hegemonic logic is the conjecture that, although not terribly popular, there is simply no alternative to neo liberal style global capitalism. For Freireans, the hopeful nature of his works demands a rejection of this TINA assumption.6 Freire does not advocate blind utopian hopefulness rather he states, "hope of liberation does not mean liberation already. It is necessary to fight for it, within historically favourable conditions. If they do not exist, we must hopefully labour to create them… Without a vision for tomorrow, hope is impossible" (1998, p. 44-45).

The professionalisation of community work prevents such Freirean envisioning. It does this by embedding the co-option of community development through its interpretation of 'good/recognised community development'; practice that reveres harmonious and non-confrontational pluralist approaches and 'bad/un-recognised community development'; practice that challenges the effectiveness of current participatory structures and, if necessary, engages in actions that accost state structures. The dangers of professionalism did not escape Freire himself and his comments illuminate its contradictory relationship with the oneness with communities he encourages:

> To serve the dominant order is what many intellectuals of today who were progressive yesterday are doing when they reject all educational practices that unveil the dominant ideology while reducing educational practices to mere transference of contents that are considered "sufficient" to guarantee a happy life…in embracing what appears to them to be new, they are reincarnating old formulas that are necessary to preserve the power of the dominant class. And they do this with the appearance of considering themselves

up-to-date and able to transcend "old ideologies". They speak of the great need of professionalizing pedagogical programmes even if they are empty of any possibility to understand society critically.

(2001, p. 40-41)

Case-study findings

Thus far it has been suggested that, both theoretically and in practice, there is a contradiction between the professionalism of community work and the practice of community education as community development. This is because the former is dependent on a state approved understanding of harmonious practice, measured through recognised standards and qualifications, and confirmed by vertical academic professional pathways. This negates radicalism through its dependence on prescriptive curricula and endorsement of 'good/recognised community development' only, a trajectory likely to better suit the aspirations of outsider community workers. This next section sets this argument against case study findings.

The overwhelmingly reason learners entered into the Certificate in Community Development and Leadership was to acquire a recognised qualification. Qualifications were described by one as "very desirable", and by many as the only perceived route either from voluntary to paid work, or for promotion within organisations. Nevertheless, many participants were bothered by a belief that an equally valid measure of a good community worker is a legitimate community connection. As one interviewee put it "you would have a passion coming from a community…if you have experienced something…you have more passion, you are more driven by it, you would have more understanding of all sides of it". This attribution of importance to lived experience by local community workers has also been identified elsewhere (McVeigh, 2002, Henderson & Glen, 2006, p. 282) and as with these sources, the concern raised in this study is that local knowledge and direct involvement through personal experience is not valued to the extent participants feel it should be. Participants are not anti-qualifications, and generally not completely against the intervention of outsiders. A concern nonetheless is of a culture of outsider workers being valued over both local volunteers and local community workers employed on return to employment initiatives (the single biggest source of remuneration for those I spoke to). This was done through the scheduling of meetings during office hours thus excluding volunteers, and of seniority of role determining organisational representation rather than local knowledge/connections. Many felt com-

pletely excluded from representative positions particularly in Local Drugs Task Force (LDTF) arrangements and Local Area Partnerships (LAP), and a large number had no knowledge how community representatives gained entry (or exit) to these structures. For those who did manage to get involved, the predominant complaint was of not being listened to. One interviewee illuminates this when she comments:

> There are people around the table who are quite high up in their organisations you know and maybe people from the community weren't really listened to. I think maybe that's why people if they are there representing their community do tend to be, maybe aggressive is the wrong word but, maybe they have this reputation because they are not being listened to.

This sentiment was not unique and another interviewee comments, "I don't think the voluntary community workers are always [pause], what they have to say is always appreciated and that maybe sometimes they do actually know something on what is the best way to do something". Another respondent complains of not being listened to at a meeting called by a LAP because, "they [only] take notice of who works for them and who don't live in the area". One final excerpt referring in more general terms to the CVS as a whole captures the emotions expressed by many:

> If some-body is running the project well, fair play to them. But if they are not giving an opportunity for local people to be trained into a chance for them to run the project...The whole picture is that they do not want people locally to know what is going on, now I know it sounds paranoid... If it is supposed to be for the community and yet there is no locals, you know, running the community projects, it's just like I say, outsiders as far as I am concerned.

This situation is blamed in part for a corresponding lack of capacity at local level and a belief that communities are not given the chance to develop local leadership. Part of the reason suggested is because outsider community workers can misinterpret their role and take up representative positions rather than be supporters of local representation. One interviewee links the two stating:

> I don't think, in fairness to [outsider] workers, like there is no intention, they don't come in intentionally to do that, it's what happens. So that keeps telling

us, or that should keep telling us that somewhere along the way a bit is missing about the building the capacity of people to be the ones who are saying, you know there is a certain piece of work obviously the worker has to do, but when it comes to making, when it comes to negotiations, when it comes to dealing with the local authority, when it comes to local people representing their community on different projects then it is the local people that should do it.

The *Certificate in Community Development and Leadership* is a piece of work initiated to support the development of the kind of local leadership the above passage refers to. Participants from both organisations identify praxis as an overriding aim at course inception, and tutors currently involved in delivery confirm these continuing ambitions. One tutor describes her hope as follows:

> You are kind of hoping that at some point people are going to say 'right', cause they have the confidence, and they have some of the skills so therefore you combine the whole lot. They would go off and, you wish they would start a revolution but I mean again too, it depends how you define revolution. But if they get on a board of management of a local organisation and have the confidence to hold their own on it, well then it's the start of a process that can be moved on.

There is supporting evidence of paradigm shifts by some students towards a new reading of the world. These include a greater awareness of oppression based on gender and class, and a deeper analysis of the function of community interventions. These are set against reports of tangible action outcomes directly attributed to course learning. These include a successful defence of a "direct threat" from a Local Authority to withdraw funding for a community initiative, and the establishment of a support and lobbying group for people affected by suicide. The problem however is deep-seated concerns, by tutors in particular, that professionalisation is threatening this approach. One tutor explains:

> The people doing the courses and the people active in the community are the real practitioners of it but yet, they are bringing this so called professionalisation to it that I think could ultimately wipe out, or certainly what happens on the ground, leave it in a very less state. And again it comes back to that whole power thing too and I think that it will scare [local] people off. I think it does scare [local] people off.

Where tutors emotions appear particularly strong is when discussion moves to accreditation, a subject they consider entwined with professionalism. They report change emanating from the university since course inception, namely increased assignment demands and greater scrutiny of the credentials of tutors, seemingly regardless of student evaluations of learning. One tutor goes so far as to suggest:

> I do think now that, I am going to use the word elitism. They [university department] have managed to put it in there. I think it is almost like competing with other 3rd level institutions to say that they are producing the best and it is because of these assignments and they are piling stuff onto people. The whole emphasis is on theory and I think the risk in that is the local bit gets lost because they want to, 'if its not backed up by theory it's not really relevant'.

Another tutor draws out the impacts she believes this is having on her pedagogic approach. At no time does she, or the other tutors, question the intellectual capabilities of learners, instead the concern raised is that dominant assessment processes give unfair advantage to those more familiar with formalized assessments. She explains:

> my experience from a lot of the women, and men, who came on the course, was that some of them had left school very early. They were very capable of doing the [community] work that they did, but really hadn't ever sat down and sort of wrote up 3,000 word essays or whatever it was, or projects. And this was a huge step, a huge, huge step for them you know.

She names an increased number of 'outsider' workers coming into community education who have existing expertise in formal writing and juxtaposes this against those who "participated and they shared this experience or that, that was very moving, very challenging, and couldn't produce an essay. For me, I kind of felt, you know, who are we backing up here?" A final passage from another tutor summarises sentiment well:

> The reality is people in communities that have been disadvantaged and lack facilities and have problems, and those people then come together to try to do something about it, in a lot of cases they haven't had the benefit of education from a young age. You know that they left school maybe early for what

ever reasons, and that has been their life so far and they have gone and done whatever they do in their life so they are at a huge – ye, I think my problem with it is that these kind of courses while they are great, can disadvantage, disadvantaged people again. And I think that is sad.

These tutors are not alone in their identification of friction between accreditation and radicalism. Keyes (2004, P.68) identifies "inherent tensions" between radical approaches to education and accreditation claiming discomfort stems from a belief that curricula are either one of two things; student led or subject led.

Returning to this research, there were similar concerns voiced from within the university. Essay type assignments were described as "problematic" and reference was made to a "credentialisation trap" adult and community education is enveloped in. Overall, university sentiment was paradoxical with the virtues of the written word highlighted for its potential to encourage greater conceptualisation of ideas. Yet despite ambivalence towards dominant methods of accreditation, there is no connection named by university staff between accreditation and professionalism. Quite the contrary, there is an uncontested embracement of professionalism in departmental prospectus. Furthermore, in assisting potential students in choosing from the array of courses on offer, the prospectus clearly plays to individual tendencies and states, "it all begins with you, that is with what you want at this particular time in your life". This individual approach to learning from a university department espousing radical education is not unique. A UK based case study that examined a university Department of Adult and Community Education found similar tendencies and warns of its potential to interpret practice as about "the development of individual vertical progression routes for 'disadvantaged' students" rather than about efforts to collectively mould our social circumstances (Ward, 1997, p. 74).

In this study, there is further evidence through interviews of a bias towards vertical progression. One interviewee, occupying a senior management position in the university department, defends the need for academic rigor, even if it excludes local community members, and suggests that those struggling to achieve academic standards might be better served elsewhere. Following discussion identifying concerns by tutors that local people could be excluded this respondent wonders, "is it a university that should be running those courses? Or is there kind of return to learning at an earlier phase, you know, there are other providers that do that...", the rationale presented is the preservation of

university progression routes and the respondent elaborates, "so if you are on a ladder, you are not on a different ladder that is over there for different people, that there is something about people being allowed into the mainstream". It would appear that efforts at real world connections through which praxis can be encouraged have been usurped by individualised learning pathways in situ to enhance professionalism.

The implications for radical adult educators

Community development is by its nature a political action and any community-university partnership that involves radical educators should reflect an approach that is critical and questioning. This particular research upholds a claim made elsewhere that professionalisation represents "the professional self-interest of an exclusive elite, aiming to promote increasing credentialisation to exclude others, including unpaid activists and volunteers in the very communities in question" (Mayo, 2008, p. 16). This is happening because, at the point of formation, professionalised community work has exposed the organic connections of those at the helm, not with the 'oppressed' but with the 'oppressor'. They have therefore become what Gramsci describes as the messengers through which the consensual adoption of ideology is supported, and act as "the dominant group's "deputies" exercising the subaltern function of social hegemony and political government" (1971, p. 12). Freire also makes clear potential impacts of outside interventions organically at odds with those they seek to emancipate and states:

> As they cease to be exploiters or indifferent spectators or simply the heirs of exploitation and move to the side of the exploited, they almost always bring with them the marks of their origin: their prejudices and their deformations, which include a lack of confidence in the people's ability to think, to want, and to know. Accordingly, these adherents to the people's cause constantly run the risk of falling into a type of generosity as harmful as that of the oppressors.
>
> (1970, p. 36)

Outsider community workers do not deliberately set out to further exclude and marginalise the local community workers they align themselves with. The complexities of contemporary community infrastructures also contribute to confusion, particularly the existence of a manufactured civil society created through top-down state structures (Hodgson, 2004). The community workers employed in these organisations are in all probability motivated by a desire to do good. However, if adult educators align themselves with other academics in support of the development of specialist bodies of knowledge and towards the commodification of credentialised learning, there is the potential to equally reveal organic connections with those wishing to preserve the status quo. The challenge for radical adult educators is therefore to remain critical and questioning in an increasingly un-critical community development terrain. Anti-professionalism does not mean anti-standards; in fact considerable credence is given to the need for high standards of practice from those critical of the appropriateness of professsionalising radical adult education (Collins, 1995, p. 47-48, Freire, 2001, p. 85, Holst, 2009, p. 324). The challenge is to maintain standards of practice that safeguard education as an instrument of social change. By resisting the TINA assumption and preserving the hope Freire inspires, we can again begin to encourage a counter-hegemony that challenges the appropriateness of professionalising community work.

Notes

1. Although some commentators use the expressions 'community work' and 'community development' interchangeably, 'community development' is presented in this instance as a process those practicing 'community work' adopt to harness power to instigate change (Banks, 2003, p. 10).
2. The CVS is presented as a sector built from the merging of the 'voluntary sector' referring to unpaid workers and the 'community sector' referring to paid workers, only when this work is underpinned by equality (Powell & Geoghegan, 2004, p. 119). It is acknowledged there have been contestations to the existence of such a sector in itself (for example Collins, 2002, p. 96-97).
3. Publications include Changing Ireland, a state funded community development periodical and *Working for Change*, the Irish Journal of Community Work launched in July 2009.
4. Although community work in Ireland is currently uncontrolled, the CWC has been identified in one European study as the closest thing we have to an explicit regulatory body (Hautekeur, 2005, p. 391).
5. Named organisations in the 'Towards Standards' document are Belfast Metropolitan College, University of Ulster, Community Action Network, Community Change, Pobail, Rural Community Network, NICVA, Respond! Housing Association, Anna Clarke Development Consultancy, and the Cork Institute of Technology. The work is funded by the Combat Poverty Agency.
6. TINA (There is no alternative) is the slogan commonly attributed to Thatcherism and refers to an assumption that despite the many short-falls

in capitalism, there is no other feasible economic system. Those who wish to dispute this, offer alternative slogans including 'there are thousands of alternatives' TATA, coined by prominent political scientist Susan George and the slogan 'another world is possible' that is popular with anti-globalisation movements.

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