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What does the pub do for young people? Quite a lot really

Or

The pubs supportive role in the process of emerging adulthood

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Introduction

Social networks lie at the foundations of most of the social and economic interactions of individuals. Pubs in England play the role of a social networking hotspot as well as having a positive influence on the socio-economic activity of local communities, (Cabras and Reggiani 2010). Pubs are used by young people for entertainment and in some cases as venues for 'having a good night'. There are of course different types of pub ranging from the village pub to the large drinking and eating chain pubs such as Wetherspoons and Green King where staff are so busy that their working lives are relentless and very tiring. However, smaller pubs often make a major overall contribution to young people's development through giving them a wider experience than just that of working for a wage. Rural pubs are often examples, of these more wholesome experiences. They are places where young people meet in an atmosphere of civility and warmth. Many of the local young people in a village will have been using the pub since early in their childhood with parents. When they are 16, they are entitled to consume alcohol with a responsible adult in a controlled and familiar environment. They mix with people they know from within the community and across the generations. They're often felt to be safe spaces when compared with the town pub which may be raucous and may lead to alcohol fuelled antagonistic situations (Valentine, 2008). There are also small-town pubs or pubs that are not full to overflowing most of the time and have the warm feel of a village pub.

Both town and village pubs are also a source of employment for young people as part-time income streams, holiday jobs, a chance to review options for the future and as a vehicle for the status passage into adulthood. Young people may well take up their first job in a pub because of the choice of shifts but also because of the social aspect. A whole flurry of new thinking and research about young people in the USA has been stimulated by Jeffery Arnett's theory of 'Emerging Adulthood' (Bynner 2007). This argues for recognition of a new stage of the life-course between adolescence and adulthood reflecting the extension of youth transitions to independence. Although the perspective aligns with developmental psychology's conception of 'stages of development', its appeal extends across the social science disciplines and policy domains.

We carried out a small-scale research project interviewing about 12 young persons aged between 17 and 22 to find out how pubs in which they work has affected their lives and persona and social development. We used four village pubs and one town pub known as the Ale House because of its special interest in cask ale and could be considered like a village pub as it is a safe cross-generational hostelry. These are therefore small pubs who employ mainly one or two bar staff per session.

Pubs	Ownership/Management	Young employees interviewed
CA	Tenant Couple (Admiral PubCo)	Callum
BA	Manager Couple (Heartstone Inns PubCo)	Brenda, Bertram, Barry,
WP	Leaseholder/Manager (Individual Owner)	Helen, Winston, Wayne,
B+C	Leaseholder family (Property developer owner)	Harry, Hunter
AH	Co-owner	Andrea, Althea, Andy

These pub managements took a supportive role when employing young people and saw their responsibilities as inducting them into the world of work and pub work specifically.

We identified four aspects that feature as part of emerging adulthood and have meaning for these young people: an introduction into working climates and responsibilities; personal development; social relations and lastly the way in which working in a pub became, for many, a community they valued and a place in which they felt they belonged.

Becoming a worker

For many of these young people the role of a barperson was the first independent job they had experienced. There were four aspects that appeared central to the development of their induction into work: that of a career, a working role, ownership and control and sustained engagement. There were several different reasons for doing so either directly related to it being a career choice for the present or a temporary activity with other goals in mind.

Careers

For Ben it was a career choice after doing a couple of years at college studying IT. He had been working at his local village pub during this course but at the end of it he decided he wanted it to become more permanent and the landlord agreed to take him on under the government's apprentice scheme so he could gain qualifications while working. The publican received about £40 a week work for the person and they assisted the trainers who saw the student/worker through their modules and assesses them.

Harry did the same course,

At first, I went to a College where I did a catering management course, but you can't learn how to cook in a classroom, anyone will tell you that. I wasn't really very happy with what I was learning. I wasn't really learning at all. I spent the first month just faffing around and watching presentations on a screen. So, I left that college because I liked the look of the apprenticeship scheme. It's the style of learning, really. I prefer to learn on the job, and it's better for me, (Harry).

On the job learning was a good move for some as it allowed them to gain credits and diplomas while being based in daily practice and real life situations, 'My apprentice manager has a big list of things that she ticks off every time she observes me, for example, cellar cleaning, cellar maintenance, line cleaning, ordering. That all goes towards the overall mark, and each one adds up points throughout the year until I've got enough to pass. It's an NVQ, the equivalent of three 'A' levels at the end of three years. It's run by a private company, a training school, (Harry).

Wayne started in the kitchen of the pub where his dad was a regular,

I started in the kitchen just washing up when I was 15 years old and then, one day the chef didn't turn up and we were fully booked and it was just me and the head chef and he said, 'right, you're going to have to just do what you can and give me a hand'. We were busy but I enjoyed it. Everyone was fine with no complaints or anything. So, the chef kept that in mind and then, every now and then, he would show me what to do because he knew that I had an eye for it. That's what I wanted to do originally when I was younger, was to be a chef, (Wayne)

Wayne continued working in the pub itself for many years in between travelling and doing other work. He still organises a Pizza night once a week to go along with his two other jobs.

Helen was in her late teens when she started working in the same pub as Wayne and has been there for a couple of years gradually becoming full time, working at least 40 hours a week while she considered her long-term future. 'I'd definitely be happy being here for a year or two. I wouldn't be here forever because I want to go and do more things, but I like knowing that I'm happy. I'm not looking for something else' (Helen).

Althea, like Wayne had worked in a variety of part time jobs before joining the town pub for about seven months from the age of 18 prior to going to a new career job after some travelling.

I have been working since I was 14, waitressing and in an office as well but this is my first behind the bar job. I left school after 6th form and intended this bar job to be part time but gradually it turned into full time. I am off travelling next week and then back in September

hoping to do a degree apprenticeship working full time and studying for a degree with the firm paying for it, (Althea).

Working Role

For many young people pub work is their first job and it is an induction into the role of a worker which entailed keeping to time, acting responsibly in a contractual situation, handling money, servicing strangers and engaging with older people.

Upskilling is part of many jobs but with such a varied activity list for working in a pub young people were introduced not only to the technical activities but to finances and developing the business,

We all have an active input. These publicans won't dismiss your ideas because you're a waiter. They've said to me 'if there's anything that you think the pub needs go and buy it and we'll give you the money back to you'. They try and include everyone in the working community. We all have a part in it, it's not just you come in, do your job, go home and get paid. They're all constantly talking to us, they're constantly letting us know what's going on with the business as well. You can take on more responsibility. If you want more, you can ask for it and if they feel that you are at the stage where you can take it on, they'll give it to you. They go through with you how you're developing with your skills and then give you more responsibility if you can manage it and if you can't then they're completely fine with it. They don't impose their hierarchy. There's no 'I'm your boss this is what you have to do' It's very much mutual respect and a mutual working environment, which is one of the things that I find so fantastic about it (Hunter).

They soon picked up the necessities of take up a working role in a pub and also bought with them ideas of how they would like to be treated if a customer, 'If you go into a pub and the person serving you is really not smiley or very friendly with you, it creates a bad atmosphere. So, it's always best to be bubbly and polite and friendly because then you'd get the same kind of response. Even if I'm not feeling great, I'd always try and cheer myself up because, then, you end up feeling better yourself as well if you act with a welcoming discourse. You trick your mind into feeling that way anyway, (Wayne).

However, this also meant learning that there is 'performance' to be carried out when busy with many strangers in the pub, 'From a professional point of view things backstage may be hectic out the back with plates piled 10 stories high but when you come out of the door from the kitchen you have to exude calm and convey a sense of professionalism and control. I always make sure my outward facing persona looks calm whatever is going on behind the door', (Bertram).

The varied activities and the relaxed culture meant an opportunity to learn all the time, 'Obviously you learn from experience, you also learn from watching. I am obviously taught to do things, but a lot of it is using your initiative. I think there's a good amount of guidance, but also enough room for you to figure it out for yourself, to learn the ropes as it were, (Winston). Given time young people gain confidence and it becomes 'second nature for me now. I know it very well. I find it quite easy to settle here now, even coping with 40 walkers. You know you can serve two or three people at the same time, (Andrea).

Regulars often played a large part in making these young workers feel more secure. As time passed Callum developed such close relations with the regulars that he felt more secure in a job that might require dealing with unpleasant people or situations, 'I came into this as my first real job, stood behind the bar and it was quite scary to start. I knew nobody but as time went on, I had got to know say half of the 40 regulars here and that gave me some leverage in that you know they would assist you if things went wrong, (Colin).

Good publicans create a warm and settling atmosphere for their young workers making it easier to make that status passage to adulthood, 'You feel like you work for the business and you work to make the pub the way it is, it's so special. They want everyone to be happy and they want the pub to

be a happy place, which it is. Everyone who comes here feels it is a happy place including me. I'm happy to come here all the time because it feels like a safe place that's always going to be fun, that's always a bit different. I think that's why it's so special, (Helen).

Where publicans create a warm working culture, it was highly valued by young people as they took their first steps into adulthood,

Working with these publicans is good because they help you through it if you are not sure what you are doing. Everyone helps and we are always cracking jokes with each other. We laugh about things when they go wrong rather than being told off. It's a friendly approach to work, it's not strict. You feel more comfortable if things go wrong. It's the atmosphere. I love Friday nights when many of the locals come in and I look forward to my chats with them. I found it a relief from schoolwork, such as A levels which are quite tough. I found it more enjoyable with less stress, even on busy Sundays. I looked forward to my weekends as it was less stressful than doing schoolwork, despite it being busy. Work is my pleasure pastime as well, (Brenda).

They looked forward to coming to work where the work cultures were supportive and where humour played a large part.

When you get on with your colleagues in your job, you never dread coming to work. I like the interaction with colleagues. The job is never the same twice. You are always busy. You learn to adapt to the situation, different challenges, different people and their needs. You try to represent the pub with whoever you come across in the best possible way. Everyone is easy to get on with and chatty. I don't think anyone doesn't enjoy being here. It's a light-hearted culture where if you make a mistake you are not going to be blasted. We accept them and move on and that encourages us not to reprimand anyone because we all make mistakes at one time or another. It's a give and take culture that comes from the top. People pick up the culture quickly and it helps cope with a stressful busy weekend. Rather than ramping up the pressure we accept problems, and nobody moans if you drop a glass with a long queue at the bar. We just get on and accept these things happen. We clean up, have a laugh and get on with it. Humour makes me more comfortable, (Bertram).

Ownership and control

Some publicans felt it part of the training of young persons to let them take up responsibilities quickly and the latter found it rewarding and positive for self-esteem. Harry's parents were the licensees of the pub in which he worked.

I do have a lot of responsibility, because obviously they trust me. I'm pretty much the bar manager at 17, which I don't think many people are. Half my friends are the pot washers here, so I'm ahead of them. I choose all the beers and I clean all the lines on a Monday, I do all the ordering. It's more responsibility than I would be getting if I was working somewhere else. Last week I did the whole quiz. My mum was reading it out, but I designed it. I got all the questions and we did a wine tasting section where they had to guess the wine as they tried it and we did a music round. Everyone said it wasn't too hard, it wasn't too easy, which was good. All the tables were full, which is always a good sign. (Harry).

The young people valued taking ownership of their role, 'I like the fact that there's a lot of different tasks that make up the job from sweeping and mopping in the morning. It sounds strange but I do enjoy it. I have been focussing on the wine because I often work in the morning and I have had a chance to understand the wine list quite well because I'm unpacking deliveries and putting it on the shelves and you get a feel for the whole range' (Winston). Being left alone helped, 'it builds my initiative because we are often left on our own in the quiet times and if it does get busy, I just have to cope. I feel that being on my own makes me find something to do to justify my pay such as

looking for cleaning jobs stacking logs etc. I quite like taking ownership of the bar, knowing where everything is and organising it' (Helen).

Running a bar involved many service aspects and being left alone to do it is an effective way to take control as a responsible adult,

I've never overseen a till before and now I am handling money and I've had to learn to deal with that because if I am on my own its down to me if something goes wrong. However, the flip side is that the publican has put his trust in me and knows that he can go away and trust me to do the right thing. So, being left alone by the publican instils independence and at the same time makes me feel good that he trusts me. I've gained management skills. I like being front of house, being in charge and being organised. I'd do it again, (Althea).

Taking ownership also entailed becoming more familiar with the drinks sold,

I was never ever, ever a beer drinker of any kind before I worked here. I was very keen on cider but mainly bottled or keg cider and then I tried, the cider and I was amazed at how different it was. So, then I went off factory mass produced cider. I tried a few ales and when away from here I started going to other places and trying ales. I now know what I like and certain hops I don't like. I love standing behind the bar or at the bar and when someone asks something being able to have some knowledge about it, (Andrea).

Being left on their own to cope had its advantages in personal development,

In my previous jobs I have always worked with lovely people who have appreciated me and my work but that isn't the style of management here. You cope with managing on your own and coping with the fact that you are often on your own while the publican is cooking or not around. I must cope with customers who may be somewhat discourteous or rude and I've had to learn how to turn around and smile, bounce back and get on with it. I have had to develop coping strategies and realise that some things are best left unsaid, (Althea)

New situations had to be dealt with and working behind the bar soon enabled a young person to take on roles they might not have encountered in other jobs with less customer interface,

You get curve balls every day, for example I had a bloke come in one lunch time and his mother had died the previous evening. The was the first place he had come to after that event and bought a pint. I chatted to him and suddenly I found myself talking to someone who was literally drowning his sorrows and I had to empathise and build a bond as a sympathetic listener for over an hour while working a quiet shift. I had never met this fellah but there we were talking about memories of his mother. I had also lost my parents when quite young and so I was quite happy to talk about that, (Andy).

Getting to know the regulars and knowing their preferences adds becomes part of the working role which ensures work satisfaction, 'One of my favourite things is knowing everyone. I know all the footballer group and I know what they drink; I know all these guys on this table, and I know there's a couple that always comes in and they always sit on that table and have two fish and chips, one of them doesn't like tartar sauce and one of them has peas. I know all their names, even though we are never going to be friends or go and hang out with them' (Harry).

The pub maybe the first place where young people find independence, becoming an adult with responsibilities faced with new decision making situations as a worker and also acting in a role of confident, 'There are regulars who have helped me along; it's definitely different from working on a till in a supermarket. They don't even acknowledge you as human beings. Whereas, in a pub environment you form relationships and maintain them. You very quickly find out what kind of drinks they're going to like, and you get to know what's been going on with their week. It's very nice to have that kind of personal level of relationship with so many people, it's quite a nice release, (Andrea).

These types of encounter were all part of developing quickly a young person's journey as an emerging adult.

Sustained engagement

Many of the young people developed a sustained engagement with their work to the extent that they enjoyed it and gave the job their full commitment.

I was just washing up every Saturday as a 15-year old. As I got older, I started to do more things, preparing like salads and things like that and gradually getting to serve people and tables, taking their orders and taking foods out. When I turned 18, I was trained on the bar. I shadowed Kev or whoever was on the bar. Sometimes time drags but there's always something to do like cleaning the shelves and tables. I just like cleaning things or going into the kitchen and maybe clean the worktops or make sure everything's put in order in the cellar, and I might bottle up, (Callum).

Sustained engagement was partly due to the nature of a pub itself where overall people were enjoying themselves and this rubbed off on those serving them who found it a considerable element of joy in the role. This sustained their engagement,

If it's busy you're there and you're on it and it's quick and if there's no problems it's a very enjoyable shift because there's always something to do, there's always people to talk to and all the customers that come in are just really lovely, which is fantastic. The pub's festivals are fun to work, especially being on the bar outside having all the music to listen to and everyone is happy. It makes a big difference to our atmosphere as workers if the whole pub's having a good time, because it means that we're relaxed and chatty, and everything's a lot better. If there's been a busy Saturday night and everyone's having a great time and telling us how good it's been, at the end of the night we are all ecstatic because we've had a very good evening, (Hunter).

Commitment meant overcoming temporary difficulties,

I'd fallen off my bike, injuring both my hands, but I was bored at home so when the manager rang me up and told me that she was struggling, I jumped at the opportunity, more from boredom and I was just missing the place and being at work. So, I hopped behind the bar. We were a man down as well; it was a busy Friday night and I just had to wing it, with two bandaged hands, trying to pull pints but, I just wanted to be helpful. It was painful but it was busy, so I didn't really think about it. The next day it was a lot more painful. I rested and they were really swollen, and the cuts opened again, but it was my own fault. The publican did tell me not to work when she saw the injuries, but I insisted that I was perfectly able, I quite enjoyed it, (Wayne).

Young people's engagement often resulted from the culture of the place and they developed a sustained commitment, 'I'm here all the time and even when I'm not working, I'm here, sat with those people, so I do spend most of my time here, to be honest. But I enjoy it. It's not like work. I love coming to the pub so it's a bonus that I get to work here and be a bigger part of it. I would come here anyway even if I didn't work here but being able to feel like I belong here because I work here, is nice. I'd never thought I'd say it, but I love coming to work, it's so strange, (Helen).

A major factor in a sustained engagement was the culture developed by the managers to support these young people. These supportive pubs took young people into their 'family', 'Someone who used to work here, with whom I became a friend, circulated a Facebook picture of me posting about leaving to go to college and when I came into work there was a poster of me saying 'If found please return' and I wasn't expecting it. They also put the picture on a mug when I left saying they would all miss me. I celebrated my 18th birthday here. I just wanted a family do and the publicans made it special with champagne. It's a loving place. They make you feel wanted', (Brenda).

As a first job these pubs provided a safe environment welcoming young people into their family environment conscious of the important social role they are performing,

I think it is a perfect pub and especially here where you get to know the management well and they work with you. It's not a high-pressure environment like working for a big corporate company where a lot of different things expected. You can learn about a working life and life in general in a very supportive and friendly environment. I don't think I could ask anymore, of a first job. It's important that our first jobs are not intimidating places. The intimacy of a small pub is a good environment to begin ones working life, (Bertram).

Sometimes young people's relationship with the pub and its regulars becomes their main life,

When I first started, I would go home straight after my shift because I would be nervous to stay and talk to anyone. Now I feel like I'm so welcomed by everyone and the management and all the other staff members that I want to stay and have a drink or have a chat with someone or go out with them somewhere else. If you've got happy staff that all get along with everyone, that the locals know and the locals trust and where they are nice to customers, then the pub is going to be what it is. That's why I think this pub is the way it is. It's because everyone gets along so well and everyone's got different relationships with everyone and we all feel like we belong to the and it's our place, (Helen).

Taking up a pub job as a late teenager had a significant affect on the young people as they traversed the difficult terrain between childhood and becoming an adult. Sympathetic publicans ensured the experience was very productive and assisted the development of each person. Personal development was one that was appreciated by these young people.

Personal Development

The status passage from teenager to adulthood was one of personal development as well as gaining knowledge about the world and of work experience. They took on new responsibilities related to the world of work and at the same time adapted their personalities to manage these new experiences. We noted characteristics such as confidence, pride and achievement and emotional connections.

The customers reassured me, and they would say, 'don't, get yourself lost in your head'. My co-workers and customers helped me blossom and helped me find my footing. It was challenging having to interact with so many people and different kinds of people and, speaking over loud music and having to shout things like 'last orders' in front of a room full of 30 people. A year and a half ago I wouldn't be so confident. I can see the, difference in myself to my friends who haven't, worked in this kind of social environment (Andrea).

Brenda said she had, 'grown as a person. I now enjoy cooking which I didn't when younger and I watch the chef to pick up tips and skills,'. Bertram, learnt to respect the work that goes on behind an order of food and drinks, 'When I leave, I'll take the direct bar skills but also my confidence and interaction skills and the knowledge of how things work. I will never now go to a restaurant and complain about the time my meal is taking to arrive. I now know that it's very annoying to staff when customers ask that, when you are very busy'. Andy developed listening capacities and used these in his training of young navy recruits,

You may be faced with a drinker complaining about the world and you must go along with that or be sympathetic with someone griping about a small part of their life. Unknowingly you help them and learn about them and about dealing with these situations. I use some of these examples when working now with young people out on manoeuvres in training rooms (Andy)

They gained confidence in a safe environment, 'I don't go out to Stroud and go partying which is why I think I am a bit different because I work 35 hours a week. This is my life. If someone's ill, I'll cover

their shift. Although I am only 18, people come to me if there's a problem and that helps me. It develops me because I can show them how to do it', (Harry). Andrea, noted increased confidence in the job and her life,

I've noticed that it has done wonders for my confidence. I tend to suffer with anxiety quite badly so, when I first started this job it was terrifying. I was very, very scared. You get all self-conscious and it's a new job and you make mistakes and it can be overwhelming. I think within a month my mum said, 'you have come out of your box'. I struggled in my first year of college with a lot of anxiety and self-deprecation. I was suffering quite a lot with my mental health in my first year, and in my second year I went to a different college which helped but then this job did pretty much take away that irrational anxiety that I had (Andrea).

Responsibility brought about increased confidence, 'It has been quite a good way to develop myself, because three years ago because I'd be really awkward. I wouldn't be able to talk to a stranger like I can now. It's because I learnt on the job and I can now talk really well to people', (Harry). Good employers encouraged creativity for these young people who were always keen to try out new ideas, 'Esther, one of our other workers, walked in one day and said "I fancy making a cocktail" so we made a cocktail for two weeks and everyone loved it. So, you can come and have a creative input' (Hunter).

Helen also gained much more confidence in her latest pub.

I didn't feel confident even in the pubs I worked in before. Now I feel I really know everything, and I feel a lot more confident in myself. I go and talk to customers and I have conversations with people. I can sit down after my shift with anyone and I know them and I'm able to talk to them whereas before I'd be nervous to talk to anyone more than I must. In the past if people invited me out, I wouldn't want to go, but now, I feel I'm more confident and that I'll go out and try new things because of what this place has done for me. It has built my confidence inside the pub and outside because you're forced to talk to people, you must, (Helen)

She began to engage in meaningful discussions and suggested that the relationships with regulars enabled her to thrive and to take part more readily.

Apparently, the domination of social media meant that young people may well not be engaging face to face as previous generations did and working in a pub aided personal engagement, 'In these days of social media speaking to someone face to face or over the phone is quite rare. If I wasn't here I would rarely do it. The job has given me the confidence to know how to speak to adults and learning politeness. In the past I would much prefer to deal with life online rather than face to face such as going to a bank. Now I am more confident about doing that because here you cannot shy away from people because you don't want to talk to them. It builds your confidence in a low-pressure situation and supportive environment', (Bertram).

The opportunity to be creative enhanced their enjoyment of the work. They found it challenging at times and prided themselves on coping,

Sometimes it can be challenging, for example when it gets busy there's a lot of people to serve and you have to think about a lot of things at once saying to yourself 'oh is that table finished yet or they're okay but have they got drinks or whatever. You're serving several people at the same time and doing a lot. it's surprising how time flies when you're doing all of that. I must admit I really do enjoy it (Ben-CA)).

Pride and achievement were often an outcome of gaining confidence and personal development that pub work enabled, sometimes through working on external awards,

I've been actively part of entering the pub into a competition for 'Young business of the year', so it's really rewarding for us and the staff were very happy about it. There's been

photo shoots and from a business point of view it's a fantastic thing but as a worker you're also kind of proud of your pub, you're proud that you've had an active part in getting this award that is now widely recognised throughout this area. Personally, I feel a great sense of achievement (Hunter).

Although bar work was often seen as filling a pecuniary role people become emotionally connected to the place, they where they worked and this aided customers' enjoyment,

If you have an emotional attachment to the pub and you actively show it, it makes all the customers value the service more and value their experience at the pub. So, it's not a business thing for me, it's part of my life. I'm going to take it wherever I go. Obviously if I'm absolutely shattered after work or even going to work, once I'm here everyone else is very active and very bubbly and they bring you up to an atmosphere of 'I want to be here', which is brilliant. All of our work is very emotionally connected to this place' (Hunter).

Many young people returned to the pub where they worked after college terms to continue working there because they, 'enjoyed the relationships I made with people who you welcome again and make them feel comfortable as well as enjoying the longer term relationships with regulars. You were at work of course, but you knew what they liked, their dislikes, their gripes and you could have enjoyable chats with them again' (Colin). Returning was sometimes emotionally revitalising,

I went to London to study anthropology. As much as I enjoyed the subject, I didn't enjoy the environment in which I was studying and so I guess getting this job was quite important for me because it helped me reconnect with this area. I'd walk to work; it's such a beautiful walk through the countryside. It was interesting to then come back here and reaffirm how much this place is important to me, (Winston).

Pubs that encouraged a collaborative approach where everyone became part of an enterprise as well as a community assisted young people across that status passage to adulthood,

The management aren't so focused on making sure you're doing your job and frowning on having conversation with customers. They want you to build relationships because they think that really helps both the business and the atmosphere. They want everyone to feel welcome and they want everyone to feel like they belong here, which I'm pretty sure everyone does. I feel I really do belong here, and I appreciate it. They want you to feel like you work for the business and you work to make the pub the way it is, it's so special. They want everyone to be happy and they want the pub to work and to be a happy place, which it is. You wouldn't come every day if it wasn't a lovely place to be; if you didn't feel like it was your pub, but everyone does, including me. I'm happy to come here all the time because it feels like a safe place that's always going to be fun and that's always a bit different and that's why it's so special, (Helen).

Gradually, these young people developed into caring adults and taking on responsibilities for others welfare: another large step across that status passage.

Social Relations

A major part of being a bar person is social. The technical is learned on the job as time goes by but the main activity of working a bar is the social aspect in terms of service but after that social relations becomes the major role in a place that has many regulars. Young people are exposed to many different characters and social situations than they might have encountered within the family or with their peers. They serve and engage with a cross generational group of people and, in some cases, they develop close relations. However, their main role is to be make people feel comfortable in a social situation to which many will want to return.

As they enacted this role, they enhanced their social development, 'I am comfortable with most people who come in here. They are all very pleasant and it's good to talk to older people. It is a good

place to find about the lives of older people and to build confidence for me', (Althea). Andy had moved on after his stint at the pub but found it very useful, 'A lot of my job involves driving things, personal relationships, helping with their careers and talking openly to them. I learnt while here a lot about talking openly in an unbiased way, giving something back and allowing them space to talk, dealing with their problems and issues' (Andy).

The pub role as a bar person meant young people had to take on new social roles where they were the one who was being engaged to discuss customers problems and issues.

My number one priority when working is to be people orientated. Working in a pub has really suited me although I didn't plan it this way. I spend most of my time talking to people and learning about them. It is almost like counselling as people pour out their heart to me and not in a way that they perhaps realise but they stand and talk and talk and I talk with them. I have learnt a lot about different people, their past careers, their life and it's a two-way thing. I enjoy the process of learning about that man and his life. I love working in this industry for that reason; you get full frontal people all the time, good and bad but mostly good. I am comfortable with most people who come in here. They are all very pleasant and it's good to talk to older people, to find about their lives, (Althea).

The young people were drawn into the life at the bar, which is a natural phenomenon of pubs. This is where individuals and others stand at the bar as a community that welcomes anybody who wishes to engage in chatter. For the young people this may well have been a new experience. They developed two-way relationships during slow times during a shift, 'There's a connection with the regulars that drink at the bar and that is new for me for when I am out socialising in pubs I don't stand at the bar. I didn't know about this aspect of a pub, this two-way connection that exists in a bar. As bar staff you must be chatty. I appreciate regulars who greet me and are interested in my life as well as their own', (Althea). Alongside providing a service bar-workers often developed close relationships with the regulars, exploring the lives of both.

I really like working on the bar now I know what to do; I love it. I like talking to all the regulars plus the families that come here. It's quite rewarding in that the regulars learn about me and they know about me and since I have returned from college to work here, they welcome me back and ask about my life. That sort of thing would not happen at a bigger pub like Weatherspoon. It has been quite a big part of my life as I work most weekends, most of my half terms and summer holidays (Brenda)

These interactions become a large part of the role of barperson and at the same time assisted their development to social adulthood, 'I enjoy interacting with people. There are quite a few people that come in who are always talkative and we'll talk about the village or the pub, or about where the food came from or the ales. When you're sitting behind a computer all day every day, it drags on just doing the same stuff, whereas working in a pub is much more enjoyable', (Colin). These relationships sometimes developed beyond the pub, 'There's a guy who always stays right 'til the end of a shift called Danny and we are sharing music together and that's always great, even though there's one customer and there's not much business' (Harry). The pub can be a pathway to new relationships even as a pub worker.

The social relationships sometimes benefited the young person in ways that they didn't expect, 'I once poured out my troubles one day and then apologised but the guy was very supportive and made me feel very comfortable and said it was OK for him to listen to me for once as it was normally the other way round as a bar person' (Althea).

Conversations with customers played a large part not only in a young person's development but they often added to the enjoyment of being at work,

This is very much a destination pub and you meet a lot of people, alongside the regulars, with whom you engage socially. One set of visitors had come from a place in the USA, which I had visited, and it was great talking to them in a little more depth than would be

usual or acceptable to the management. I like asking visitors about their homes and conversations often develop. I find those gems of conversation endearing, (Bertram).

The culture of these pubs was one of caring and supporting the development of young people. They acted as responsible adults assisting young people in their journey from family into the wider world of work and social relations,

Pub Culture and Community

Working in the smaller pubs such as those in our study meant, for many young people becoming part of the culture and community of the pub, where they feel they belong - a second home. The pubs that support young people are those who work to develop individual pub cultures, where history, the quality of service and products matters to the publicans,

The past is celebrated here and obviously people will also laugh and joke and there will be anecdotes from the past anecdotes of flamboyant old locals who had big characters. People are attracted to this pub because it partly stays the same as it was. There's something about the fact that it's not overly modernised. Sometimes you go into an establishment and you feel it doesn't have a soul. Whereas there are dusty corners here and I think that's something about it that it has like a homely feel doesn't it. It's a refuge from technology, where you can hide away from the world. At the same time, it's very much like somewhere where you go to embrace the world, because socialising on a day to day level is what life is all about, (Winston).

Young people enjoyed the culture of pub where trust, respect and safety were key factors, 'Everyone has respect for each other. The locals have respect that I know what they want, and they trust me, and I trust them that if they set up a tab with their card, I know that they're not going to run off with it. There are so many locals, but we all trust each other. You don't have any fear, everyone who comes here is safe' (Andrea).

The pubs that young people appreciated were those that encouraged difference and familiarity, 'I think it's like just being able to come here no matter what night it is or if I'm working no matter what day, it's always different but in a really nice way. Sometimes there's the unexpected such as a jam night that comes out of nowhere. You never know who's going to be here, but you know that you're going to be able to sit with whoever is here. You feel really welcome here, you know what it's going to be like here, you know that no-one's ever going to fall out and you're not going to go to the pub and it's going to be boring. You don't have to be organised to meet someone here', (Helen).

Pubs invite young people into a community different from family and school/college. It's a working community in which social relations are prominent across the generations, class, gender, sexual and ethnic groups. They are places for quiet engagement, meeting strangers, enjoying familiar company and the young people who work in them become part of this culture.

It doesn't go quiet with everyone thinking, "who's this guy"? People just say, hello and smile. However, they might also give some advice as to you what to drink and ask where you're from. This pub is the kind of place where you can just get involved without having to try. It's more of a community than a pub. Most of the locals here aren't locals either, they're scattered around the area, but they all come here, because it's just where everyone feels comfortable. If it's busy it doesn't feel as if there's hundreds of people being loud and noisy. You can still find a quiet corner and have a drink and read your newspaper or you can get involved with conversation. You're more likely to know more than one or two people in there, but you have a choice of socialising or being alone; you can do both here. It's quite warming, especially in the winter, with the fire going; it's just quite a warming, welcoming place, (Wayne)

Familiarity is a feature of an English pub and that breeds

honesty in what you see is what you get. You see the same faces often and it's the place where people can be honest with each other and speak their mind. I think that when foreign people think of English pubs or when we think of what it means to be British, it is the sense of community, of people coming together to communicate ideas and to chill out. It's just somewhere where I feel that if a stranger came to this pub and they went into the main bar, I think they'd be welcomed. They'd be asked questions about themselves and they'd probably feel that they can talk quite freely. (Winston).

The pubs in this research were a haven from young people's partying for some, 'When my generation go out, they're very loud and rowdy and, like doing lots of shots. I'm just not about that. I prefer quieter pubs, more mellow that don't attract a kind of, the hectic-ness which is what I really love about this place. It's very rare that you get young, people out on the lash so, I think, it's a quite nice comfortable pub to be in' (Andrea).

Most smaller pubs, where young people felt happiest, had their own history and culture which they joined and respected, 'This is the sort of, pub you find yourself visiting again and again; somewhere you feel welcome; some where you feel you matter. Above the bar there are photographs of regulars and publicans who are deceased; honoured on the wall above the bar. As a worker you see like little things like moaner's corners, in jokes and jibes from past landlords against locals and vice versa. It's little things in the corners that draw your eye in, and they all have a story behind the artefacts, (Winston)

The young people quickly developed a feeling of belonging in pubs that cared for them, a transitional place as they moved into the adult world with many new spaces and places to occupy, 'It probably makes me feel I belong somewhere, to something bigger. I feel welcome, appreciated and I'm known by quite a lot of people. The the nicest thing is to work somewhere where you feel like you belong, that you're completely happy and that's why I'm always happy to be at work, (Helen).

Many returned to this adopted family and culture, 'I left here over a year ago, but I always like coming back in here when on leave and renewing relationships with regulars. I am a fan of real ale, but I also come back because there are people I know. I walked in today to watch the rugby and felt at home, an extension of my family' (Andy). They were sure they would return from college or travelling, 'even if I go away, when I come back, they will want someone to work, so it's a place that I can come back to and feel comfortable in. I love being part of the local community, I think it's fantastic because you get all the locals in and it's all very cheery and happy; it's brilliant' (Hunter). They often felt very closely connected to the place that assisted their transition into a more independent life.

Sometimes those connections were closer to home and more connected, 'I live with my dad just down the road. He is the head gardener of the estate to which the village is connected. He's been working there for 39 years this year' (Colin). Actual family connections assist young people's development and commitment, 'It's great to see it all grow. As I live here so I see it every day. It is long hours, but that's fine. I don't have to go anywhere. I live here, so it doesn't make a difference to me, and it's nice to help my parents rather than going to another place where I'm not helping anyone in my family, it's helping the family, like paying back for all the years of them helping me, (Harry).

Wayne's early experience cemented his relationship with the pub,

My dad has lived in Slad now for 30 odd years, so this is his local and he's been bringing me here since before I could walk. This is the kind of place where everyone knew me as well and I felt more welcome. When I first started working in the bar here it just felt more of a home, really. I knew everyone and it's my second home, so it didn't really feel like work, to be honest. It just felt like I was chatting to friends and friends of the family and just giving them a few pints here and there. So, from being on the drinker's side of the bar, I went around to the other side and worked instead. I have always said, 'one day I'd love to have

my name above this door'. It's just been where I've grown up and been brought up since a young age (Wayne).

Belonging meant never wanting to leave the place, 'even if it's busy, it's nice because you see the locals and you have conversations at the tables with them and everyone at the bar. They all know you and you know them and the staff; you get along with them all. After my shift I hang around; I never want to just go' (Helen).

Conclusion

The pubs in this research made every effort to ensure these young people's work experience was enjoyable, and developmental. They developed their understanding of the world of work, became connected to a wider social world and developed personal skills, competencies and knowledge. The publicans provided a safe environment for their status passage as emerging adults and they learnt to value, respect and live, sometimes briefly in these warm, friendly cultures and environments. These pubs and their publicans made a major contribution to the development of young people as they do local economies and communities. They are places of work that centre on people both as workers and customers and as social places where people spend some time. They are ideal gateways for young people to the adult world of work and social interaction.

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Bob Jeffrey - Contact@eande.org.uk

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