**Contested Cultural Spaces – Exploring Illicit Drug-using through *Trainspotting***

Dr Judy Hemingway

Post-Doctoral Research Fellow

Geography Department

Institute of Education

University of London

20 Bedford Way

London WC1H 0AL.


Telephone:  +44 02(0) 7612 6515

Fax:          +44 02(0) 7612 6792

E-mail:       j.hemingway@ioe.ac.uk

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**Abstract:**

Contending that culture is one of the most potentially divisive signifiers of human activity, this paper probes some of the complexities that attend the (un)popular culture of illicit drug-using with which many young people in contemporary Britain are identified. Irvine Welsh's multi-media drugs narrative *Trainspotting* is drawn on to explore the politics embedded in Edinburgh's low- and high-cultural spaces and interrogate how lived culture is spatially constituted and expressed. Investigations focus on the micro-mappings of Scotland's drug-using 'Other' which disorder official cartographies of the capital and illustrate the processes of marginalization. The final part of the discussion argues that the academy's recent cultural turn can inform school geography by contributing to a cultural pedagogy which recognizes that informal sites of learning can be used with young people to examine the multiple dimensions and dynamics of in/exclusion.

**Changing Geographical Cultures**

> When we find that half this generation has tried an illicit drug by the
> end of their adolescence and perhaps a quarter are fairly regular
> 'recreational' drug users, we can no longer use pathologizing
> explanations (Parker et al., 1998: 1).

Prompted by the assertion that 'these are exciting times for human geography' (Jackson, 2000: 51), this paper registers the cultural turn which has opened a vast array of issues and objects of study to disciplinary inquiry (Anderson et al., 2003; Crang, 1998). The widening of interests is well demonstrated in relation to young people (Aitken, 2001; Skelton & Valentine, 1998) whose local knowledges, (un)popular cultures and visceral 'lifeworlds' (Matthews & Limb, 1999: 66) are now established subjects of geographical investigation. The conceptual frameworks underpinning the selection, collection, and interpretation of data have also broadened. They have stimulated changes in the 'doing' of cultural geography (Shurmer-Smith, 2002). Yet, despite this expansion in intellectual activity, 'many of these ideas and approaches have yet to make any significant impact on geography teaching in schools' (Jackson, 2000: 55).

This paper takes up Jackson's challenge. What follows is an exploration of illicit drug-using which is a matter of interest to many young people in Britain (see Table 1) and concern to others. While it is a field that remains largely uninvestigated in cultural and school geographies, it is oblique to neither, and the overarching aim of this tentative dialogue between subdisciplinary fields is to see how recent trends in theory and practice can bring the topic of illicit drug-using into the debating arena. The paper's

principal question asks, 'how might geographical insights inform discussions about illicit drugs in new and constructive ways?', and the second, 'what are the implications for geography classrooms?' Provisional responses draw from human geography's acknowledgement of the importance of culture in the social construction of space; its turn to the popular; and its engagement with textual analysis. Contemporary understandings of texts, widely conceived, in critical and interpretive spheres of geographical scholarship counter the longstanding view that 'an educated geographer is an observer, not a writer' (Morgan, 1997a: 61). What this suggests is that since the world is not neutral, but 'authored', it can be 'read' and 'rewritten' (Barnes & Duncan, 1992). The democratic possibilities offered by such reconstructive geographies demonstrate the progressive potential of the discipline – through which students can derive understanding and work towards change.

## Using, refusing, and experimenting with illicit drugs

### North-West Longitudinal Study (1991-1995)

| Age in years | Offered % | Ever tried % | Used in past year % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 59.1 | 36.3 | 30.9 |
| 15 | 70.9 | 47.3 | 40.6 |
| 16 | 76.5 | 50.7 | 40.5 |
| 17 | 87.5 | 57.3 | 46.1 |
| 18 | 91.1 | 64.3 | 52.9 |

(Parker et al., 1998: 83-85).

**Table 1**  Young Britons and illicit drugs in North-West England


The ensuing discussion quarries these potentially empowering shifts.  First, an attempt is made to produce a critical geographical reading of Irvine Welsh's multi-media text *Trainspotting* (Boyle, 1996; Welsh, 1999), a popular source of drugs knowledges for millions.  Through the filter of this vernacular text some of the spatial narratives and politics embedded in Edinburgh's lived cultural landscapes are explored at a time when hostilities between high and low culture are heightened.  Second, since popular cultural productions may be regarded as 'the *teachers* of the new millennium' (original emphasis, Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997: 92), drawing on *Trainspotting* marks the terrain of a cultural pedagogy that registers the streetworld or everyday life of the many drugwise young people who use, refuse or experiment with illicit drugs.  And if a key purpose of the education enterprise is to assist students in their endeavour towards self-determination, geography educators need to address how the discipline can engage with the informal cultural curriculum.


**Politics of culture and space**


> Culture is not a residual category, the surface variation left
> unaccounted for by more powerful economic analyses; it is the very
> medium through which social change is experienced, contested and
> constituted (Cosgrove & Jackson, 1987: 95).

*Trainspotting* starts on the first day of the Edinburgh Festival, a three-week cultural event integral to Scotland's symbolic and other economies. It is an annual arts celebration – of pageantry, film, theatre, literature, art and music – which has global reach. Welsh's text indexes not only the renowned high cultural spaces of heritage which are temporarily inhabited by middle-class Festival-goers, but also the lesser known low cultural spaces of drugs and institutional neglect occupied by the novel's marginalized protagonists. This polarization – in which some groups are centred and others literally spaced out – shows the differential influence of identity groups or cultural 'taste communities'. Thus, the preferences of the dominant middle-aged middle classes sustain Edinburgh's high-cultural sobriquet, 'Athens of North', whilst the allusive drugs tag associated with youth, 'Amsterdam of the North', remains largely uncirculated. The cultural taste of the middle-class gaze is reflected in a survey of London-based civil servants whose images of Edinburgh coalesce around the city's castle (41.6%), festival and tattoo (19.1%), rock (6.7%), Princes Street (6.7%), pleasantness (6.7%), culture (5.5%), tourists (3.4%), tartan and kilts (3.4%), zoo (2.3%), and university (2.3%), though few connect Edinburgh with meanness and hardness (2.3%) (Pacione, 1995: 237). This inscription by professionals is reinforced in raging indecorum[1] by Franco Begbie, one of Welsh's notorious 'lads'. On an inter-city train journey between the cultural 'honeypots' of Edinburgh and London, Begbie encounters two Canadian travellers and describes with disinhibition how:

> These burds ur gaun oantay us aboot how fuckin beautiful Edinburgh
> is, and how lovely the fuckin castle is oan the hill ower the gairdins n
> aw that shite. That's aw they tourist cunts ken though, the castle n
> Princes Street, n the High Street (Welsh, 1999: 115).[2]

The same visitor attractions, however, take on different meanings and functions for Welsh's characters to whom Princes Street, a signifier of conspicuous consumption, is 'hideous' and 'deadened by tourists and shoppers, the twin curses ay modern capitalism' (Welsh, 1999: 228). For the 'lads', Edinburgh's castle, is 'just another building tae us' that 'registers in oor heids just like the British Home Stores or Virgin Records' (Welsh, 1999: 228). In these examples, the city's main shopping street intermeshes two of many different and simultaneous worlds (Massey, 1993: 64-65). One is lifeless and totemic, a means through which to acquire cultural capital and tangible commodities. Another, emphasized by Welsh's characters, is alive and vital. Deemed perfect for a 'shoplifting spree' (Welsh, 1999: 228), Princes Street is a means of resourcing a way of life that takes place 'back stage' if not 'off stage' (see Figure 1). In this instance, *Trainspotting* brings into view the geographies of the street and provides fertile ground for teachers and students to explore the social relations and interconnectivities of mundane urban environments.

*(Suggest taking in Figure 1 here.)*

Likewise, to argue that 'a plurality of cultures also implies a multiplicity of landscapes' (Jackson, 1989: 177), prompts consciousness of the existence of 'Other', usually unnoticed or relegated, versions of Edinburgh. Conventional depictions of the city as a tartanized tourist trap become only one of many interlocking identities. The valorization of the demotic in *Trainspotting* renders these wider linkages and fluidities, or 'polylocality' (Crang, 1992: 533) visible. It interrupts the normative surfaces associated with cultural heritage to expose the peripheralized landscapes, lifeworlds, and cultural

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subjectivities of youthful local inhabitants.  Welsh's text begins to illustrate how, by outcasting  some groups and centring others, 'the *idea* of culture works in society' (original emphasis, Mitchell, 2000: 77).  Again, drawing on this interpretation of the spatio-cultural dialectic, young people can start to unpack and rationalize their own and others' use of space – who is allowed where and by whom, what groups are refused entry and why – and in learning that space is not 'fixed' nor culture 'inert' understand that both are open to contest.

Since culture, intertwined as it is with values, social relations and language, provides the 'maps of meaning' (Jackson, 1989) through which people make sense of the world, it is a potent force in shaping human activity, as *Trainspotting* makes plain.  This cultural encompassing of lifeworlds is inseparably entwined with the dynamics of in/exclusion (Sibley, 1995) and, since people are 'intrinsically spatial beings' (Soja, 1996: 1), culture is ineluctably constituted and expressed through space.  From this realization, it becomes possible to argue that:

> The contest over "culture" *is* a contest over space – over its control, its
>
> production, over who is allowed in and who is kept out, and over what
>
> the nature of acceptable activities is to be in that space, over what
>
> constitutes a pure space filled only with acceptable behaviors, and
>
> what constitutes transgression of that putative purity.  The production
>
> of new (cultural) spaces is a complex dialectic (original emphasis,
>
> Mitchell, 2000: 170).

These spatial politics of culture are exemplified in *Trainspotting* through its portrayal of divisiveness which took place during the Thatcherite 1980s when lines of demarcation were drawn between those who were valued and those who were not. What the next section indicates is that the borders created in order to define and delimit groups of people are neither impermeable nor permanent. They are porous, temporary, and above all geohistorically contingent. Geography teachers can mobilize Welsh's text to open discussions about how barriers are erected, maintained and disrupted. It can also be used to compare changing attitudes to, and laws regarding, particular drugs such as cannabis which was recently reclassified in the UK.

**Intersecting city spaces**

The locus of Edinburgh's high-cultural visitors extends little beyond its 'Grecianized' centre (Devine, 1999: 329). The interests and city limits of this group focus on the 'new town' closely associated with Sir Walter Scott, after whose Waverley novels the train station is named, and the 'old town' identified with Robert Louis Stevenson. Prior to the arrival of the decommissioned Royal Yacht *Britannia* at the Port of Leith and the success of *Trainspotting* there was little to attract tourists to Edinburgh's docklands where Welsh's protagonists live and for whom Leith 'means hame' (Welsh, 1999: 306). This high/low cultural division is emphasized by the novel's principal character, the heroin-using Renton, who describes Edinburgh's changing demographics in a journey that transects the city. As he moves from the manifestly belligerent margins, where two locals are fighting, and towards the more genial centre he observes that:

By the time ah get tae the Playhouse, the noise fae the two arseholes

has been replaced by the appreciative chattering ay groups ay middle-

class cunts as they troop oot ay the opera: *Carmen*. Some of them

are making for the restaurants at the top ay the Walk, where

reservations have been made. Ah stroll on. It's downhill all the way'

(original emphasis, Welsh, 1999: 306).[3]

Welsh's excluded 'porridge wogs' (Welsh, 1999: 190) are resentful of the annual

invasion of 'middle to upper-middle-class English' tourists (Welsh, 1999: 302) whose

culture threatens to overwhelm local specificities. The extraneous 'fat', 'rich', and 'lazy'

Festival-goers are accused of keeping taxis in short supply because the 'cunts' are 'too

fuckin lazy tae walk a hundred fuckin yards fae one poxy church hall tae another fir thir

fuckin show' (Welsh, 1999: 4).[4] Similarly, when Renton and the former heroin-using Sick

Boy come across tourists looking for the Royal Mile, a thoroughfare of shops and sights

stretching along the High Street from Edinburgh castle to Holyrood Park, they remark

resentfully that these 'two oriental types' are distinguishable by their 'posh' language

spoken in 'English-colonial' tones (Welsh, 1999: 29). Nonetheless, the priapic Sick Boy

offers his assistance and asks whether these 'Chinky chickies' or 'oriental mantos'

(Welsh, 1999: 30) are going to a show:

Yes. One of the (china) dolls hands us a piece ay paper wi *Brecht:*

*The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Nottingham University Theatre Group*

on it. Doubtless a collection of zit-encrusted, squeaky-voiced wankers

playing oot a miserable pretension tae the arts before graduating to

work in the power stations which give the local children leukemia or

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investment consultancies which shut doon factories, throwing people

into poverty and despair (original emphases, Welsh, 1999: 29).

While the everyday realities of this excerpt exemplify  the economic logic of the Thatcherite era, the subtext discloses the intermeshing of different kinds of space: cultural, racialized, sexualized, economic, and classed, which unsettles conventional understandings of space as singular, immutable, and absolute.  Geography educators can make use of selected passages to investigate the politics of space and the ways in which it can be used to empower and disempower particular identity groups.

Although intercultural resent frames the landscapes of *Trainspotting*, there is shared ground between Edinburgh's visitors and Welsh's locals witnessed by the presence of the 'lads' in the city centre and their familiarity with elite culture.   Stereotypical expectations of illicit drug-users are disrupted, for instance, by Renton's year spent at university; his theft of books for reading rather than selling to support a heroin habit; and his opinions on Kierkegaard and morality.   These unexpected moments unsettle conventional prejudice and provide connections with, rather than gulfs between, the liberal middle-classes (Sinfield, 1997: xiii).   The production of artworks by the 'lads' similarly forges bridges but also raises political questions about the production, commodification and domestication of culture (Cresswell, 1996: 31-61).   In one uncompromising vignette, Renton visits a betting-shop toilet and squashes 'a huge, filthy bluebottle, a big furry currant ay a bastard' and smears its blood and entrails on the wall to form the word 'HIBS', the name of a local football team and declares with satisfaction that the fly has 'been transformed intae a work of art' (Welsh, 1999: 25).   At another point, Renton and Sick Boy parody avant-garde art when recounting how, as

adolescents, they used photo booths 'tae git pictures taken ay oor knobs' which they subsequently put 'doon behind the glass panels in the auld grey bus shelters fir people tae look at', proclaiming, 'wi used tae call thum oor public art exhibitions' (Welsh, 1999: 200).[5]

Examples such as these, which juxtapose and reveal the links between low and middle-class expressions of culture, offer a space for examining the 'heretical geographies' of art (Cresswell, 1996). They present opportunities for teachers and learners to interrogate the processes by which revered cultural heritage, much of which did not proceed from conformist sensibilities, has been assimilated into and by the collective class-consciousness of the bourgeoisie and that cultural tastes are created not given. However, these shifting politics of position – of culture, class, language, and lifestyle – temporarily solidified during the 1980s under Thatcherite rule and the next section shows how this 'right turn' impacted on drug-using 'Other' in Edinburgh.

**'Other' readings of Edinburgh**

> Ah jist go doon, git ma jellies fi the clinic, then look up some ay the
>
> boys thit git the cyclozine oan script. They gie it tae the perr cunts wi
>
> cancer, fi AIDS, likes. A wee swap, n every cunt's chuffed tae fuckin
>
> bits (Welsh, 1999: 310-311).[6]

One notable achievement of *Trainspotting* is that it makes legible a deep or contextually 'thick' version of the city. As a document of 'reality', it stands in testimony to the bleak lifeworlds of people who have been 'turned in', 'cheated on', 'lied to' and, in the case of

those infected with HIV and AIDS in Edinburgh, 'murdered'. As one of Welsh's characters explains, the closure of a local surgical suppliers effectively ended the source of needles and syringes, meaning that in the mid-eighties HIV flourished along with shooting galleries where large communal syringes were used (Welsh, 1999: 241). The number of deaths of young people was such that Renton comments that, 'if they gave oot qualifications in bereavement, ah'd be a fuckin Ph.D. by now' (Welsh, 1999: 299). Under Thatcherite policies intravenous drug users were rendered expendable and superfluous to economically functioning society. Yet, in order to finance drugs habits the lives of heroin-users are not marked by idleness but by rigorous time-space routines. In the ultra-pitch-black gallows humour that marks the topography of the novel, a rare point of commonality between Thatcherite fiscal policy and the 'lads' emerges when they argue that, 'on the issue of drugs, we wir classical liberals, vehemently opposed tae state intervention in any form' (Welsh, 1999: 53). However, life under Mrs Thatcher's rule extended well beyond economic governance.

Welsh's 'critical unmasking' of 'radiant surfaces' (Soja, 1996: 279) reveals a complex cultural landscape which makes available to scrutiny how lived space is 'physical extent infused with social intent' (Neil Smith, 1990 cited in Gregory, 1994: 3). Life, for Welsh's welfare-dependent 'dole-moles' (Welsh, 1999: 73) and illicit drug-using 'Other' in the city's peripheral housing estates, was austere under 'Thatcherism', which may be thought of as 'a defining totality of cultural, political, and economic life' (Mitchell, 2000: 54). 'Thatcherism' underpinned the British government's response to Edinburgh's transgressive 'junk zones' which further displaced the disaffected underclasses who were relocated to substandard outer-city 'schemes'. The crumbling inner-city tenements they evacuated, the 'sooty-black colour of a forty-a-day man's lungs' (Welsh, 1999: 262),

were then stone-cleaned to provide housing for wealthier classes (Welsh, 1999: 306). This process of gentrification, or, 'the conversion of previously working-class neighbourhoods for middle-class consumption' (Smith, 1993: 91), centred the already better off and removed the 'Other' from sight. Similarly, the pedestrianization, or moral cleansing, of the city centre's Rose Street meant that prostitutes and their kerb-crawling patrons were effectively removed from middle-class and tourist views. It can be argued that gentrification and pedestrianization, as manifestations of the 'restructuring of geographical space', are not reducible to economic imperatives, as this would be to present a view of society and social relations that is wholly 'de-cultured' (Jackson, 1989: 182).

Removal from specific neighbourhoods geographically distances those who contravene ideological and other boundaries, such as the economically inactive, the culturally offensive and the unlawful. Welsh's drug-using anti-heroes who meet these criteria are obliged to live improvidently in Edinburgh's dockside wastelands, in 'dumping grounds for surplus labour' which are divorced from 'particular local economies' and 'specific industries' (Maley, 2000: 70). In this desolate and disaffected environment many turn to drugs – to the extent that 'Embra's goat eight per cent o the Scottish population but over sixty per cent o the Scottish HIV infection, by far the highest rate in Britain' (Welsh, 1999: 193).[7] *Trainspotting* makes it clear that drugs problems do not occur in isolation. They are often attached to other social problems (Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs 1998). This view sits uncomfortably with mainstream discourses which insist that illicit drug-using is a pathological disease of the will. Framed by the structure versus agency debate, geography teachers can undertake a study of illicit drug-using that

contextualizes the relations between Edinburgh's planned dystopian borderlands and drug use.

So far, this paper has countered a unitary high cultural reading of Scotland's capital by mapping interlocking versions of Edinburgh which show the coexistence of a plurality of cities in a single space. Welsh's text has been drawn on not to offer a consensus-seeking negotiation of Edinburgh but a hybridity of realities, cultures, and spaces which register a more 'complex, heterogeneous, variegated and differentiated' city (Maley, 2000: 67). Specifically, an attempt has been made to plot the subtended strata below surface representations and explore the hidden geographies of drug-using underclasses. Further, it has been posited that subterranean cartographies such as these can be mobilized in geography lessons to pose questions about who has been included and who excluded, and what conflated, foreclosed, and displaced. Suggestions for lessons have been indicated throughout. The final section places discussions in a wider educational context.

**Cultural pedagogy and critical geography classrooms**

> Whose geography are we teaching? Does it encourage acquiescence
> or promote activity? Does it underpin some *status quo* or encourage
> personal involvement? Does it leave alone or have the potential to
> change lives? (original emphases, Lambert & Machon, 2001a: 7).

According to certain detractors, geography was not only 'a conservative discipline from its inception' but remains so (Dorling & Shaw, 2002: 637). The veracity of this

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observation is evidenced by the traditional nature of public examination and secondary school syllabuses. Conformism is buttressed by pedagogic practices which transmit predictable geographical knowledge and, for some students at least, geography education is a 'burden on the memory' not 'a light in the mind' (Lambert, 2003). In the name of democracy, surely it becomes the responsibility of teachers to consider the 'big questions' and 'cultural challenges' (Lambert & Machon, 2001b: 206-208) that confront contemporary schooling.

One such challenge relates to the purpose of school geography. Asserting that 'geography is on the curriculum (just)', the crucial question becomes, 'but what for?' (Lambert, 1999: 16). Implicit in this question are moral, ethical, and political issues concerning whose interests are privileged and whose devalued; whose cultures are promoted and whose relegated; and whose forms of citizenship are endorsed and whose denied. In examining geography's curriculum silences and pedagogical spaces reflexive educators might properly ask of themselves, and encourage students to inquire similarly, 'to which space do I belong? (Morgan, 2000a). By posing this question, a diversity of spaces relating to identity and (un)belonging can be explored. These include the alliances of culture, age, and religion; categories of class, race, and gender; and scaled spaces from the body to the world. Since these classifications are located in value systems and ideologies they interlock with the wider influences of social, economic, and political environments. As such, they are geohistorically context specific and open to contest. It is through deconstructing the often missed articulation between space and culture, the concern which lies at the core of this paper, that the dynamics of in/exclusion are rendered legible to students of geography.

What has been suggested is that teachers rethink their classroom practices premised on a grounded and affirmative 'cultural pedagogy' (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997: 7-8). Having elements and strategies in common with 'postmodern pedagogy' (Bale, 1996: 290), and critical geography education (Morgan, 2002), cultural pedagogy encourages the speaking-out of previously silenced cultural voices and the asking of precluded questions about potentially 'squeamish' topics.  Since cultural pedagogy also 'refers to the idea that education takes place and consciousness is constructed in a variety of social sites, including but not limited to schooling' (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997: 7-8), films, advertizing images, popular music, news reports, and novels all provide terrains ripe for interrogation (Bale, 1996: 291; Morgan, 2000b: 284-285).  At its broadest, geographical endeavours in schools might draw on these strategies and resources to examine the spectrum of in/exclusion and in doing so open new spaces of learning and hence new spaces of hope in education.  More specifically, cultural pedagogy can be used to facilitate interrogation of the (un)popular knowledges associated with the generationally young, for instance, illicit drug-using and other 'streetcorner' cultures hitherto considered 'too difficult to contemplate' (Morgan, 1997b: 14).  Progressive moves such as these hold open the potential of school geography to resonate with meaning and significance for a new generation of learners whose diverse literacies stretch across a range of youthful cultures.

**Spaced out – young people and (un)popular culture**

> Geography's success will depend on how successfully it speaks to
> young people and can entice them into a struggle with ideas, with
> argument, with uncertainty (Lambert & Machon, 2001b: 207).

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The often disaffecting landscape of geography classrooms is intensified by the increasing distance between school and university geography. The bypassing of developments in higher education deepens the irrelevance of much mainstream school geography just as it neutralizes the discipline's liberatory possibilities. Arguably, a commitment by geography educators to the 'new' cultural geography, understood 'as a series of intellectual – and, at core, politicized – engagements with the world' (Anderson et al., 2003: 2), reinvests geography with its radical potential. Knowledge is unexempt from this politicization and analysis reveals not one knowledge which is universal and absolute but a plurality of hierarchically arranged and competing knowledges. It is an uncovering which has implications for education. For if teachers of geography are no longer the 'guardians' of unchallengeable 'truth' and a fixed 'geographical canon', but 'directors of conversation' (McDowell, 1994: 242), there is not only a need to make clear that knowledge is contingent and contestable but also to ensure that those who were denied speech can enter discussions. The subaltern slogan, 'nothing about us without us', serves as a point of entry into the politics of recognition and hence the politics of possibility. It is a worthy watchphrase not only because of its orientation towards inclusivity but also for its critical stance-taking which highlights the obviousness that speaking for others is not a neutral process. By offering guidance on the political economy of speaking-positions cultural pedagogues can work with learners to rethink the axes of their own oppressions. These are amply illustrated by society's fear of 'youth' (Pain, 2003) and the 'illegal leisure' (Parker et al., 1998) of illicit drug-using.

The argument underpinning this geographical exploration of illicit drug-using is that 'a recognition of the geographies of difference begins to call forth different kinds of

geography' (Jackson, 2000: 55).   Since education serves a public purpose, the principle driving this 'new' school geography is that  teachers should take the relevancy debate seriously and enter into the contested cultural lifeworlds of young people.  This entails moving into unknown territories in terms of subject matter, resources, and pedagogic practices.   Popular cultural productions can raise worldly topics, such as the exclusionary practices affecting drugwise young people, and since reading texts is a schematic for critical thinking, or a journey with no end, films and novels provide ways of 'unknowing' what has been naturalized.  Rather than endorse the production of surface geographies, cultural pedagogy can be used to encourage critical rereadings, retellings, and rewritings because 'we must always be moving on to new possibilities and places' (Soja, 1996: 82).


**Notes**

[1] The *idiolect* spoken by Welsh's characters is used throughout this paper.  Meanings may become apparent if a phonetic approach is used when reading.  Longer and more obscure quotations have been translated in to standard English.

[2] The two sexually attractive young women are talking to us about how absolutely beautiful Edinburgh is, and how lovely the stupid castle is on the hill over the gardens and all that rubbish.  That's all that silly tourists know though, the castle and Princes Street, and the High Street.

[3] By the time I get to the Playhouse, the noise from the two obnoxious individuals has been replaced by the appreciative chattering of groups of middle-class people as they leave the opera:  *Carmen.*  Some of them are heading towards the restaurants at the top of the street, where reservations have been made.  I stroll on.  It's downhill all the way.

[4] The visitors are too darned lazy to walk a mere hundred yards from one dilapidated church hall to another for their pathetic show.

[5] We used to get pictures taken of our penises which we put down behind the glass panels in the old grey bus shelters for people to look at.  We used to call them our public art exhibitions.

[6] I just go down, get my Temazepam from the clinic, then look up some of the boys that get Cyclizine on prescription.  They give it to the poor people with cancer, for AIDS, and so on.  A small swap, and everyone's satisfied.

[7] Edinburgh's got eight per cent of the Scottish population but over sixty per cent of the Scottish HIV infection, by far the highest rate in Britain.

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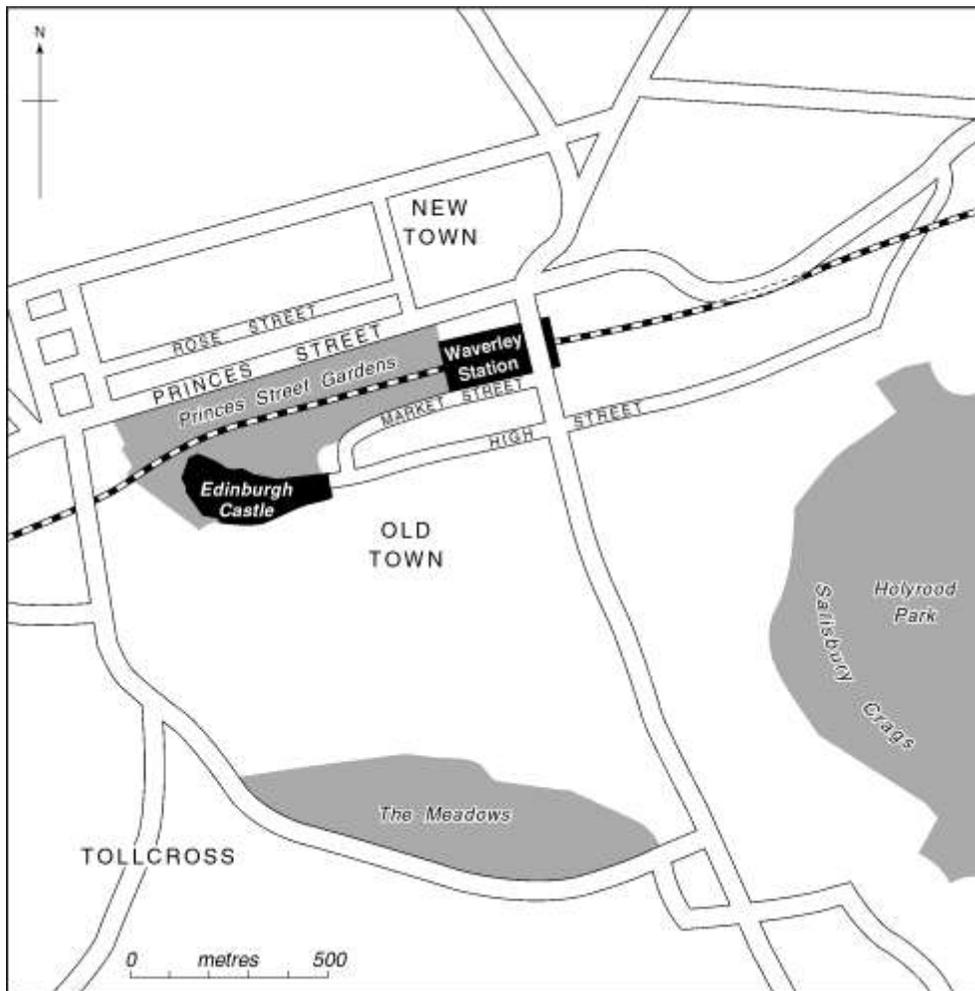
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**Figure 1** Central Edinburgh

**Captions for tables and figures**

**Table 1**  Young Britons and illicit drugs in North-West England

**Figure 1**  Central Edinburgh