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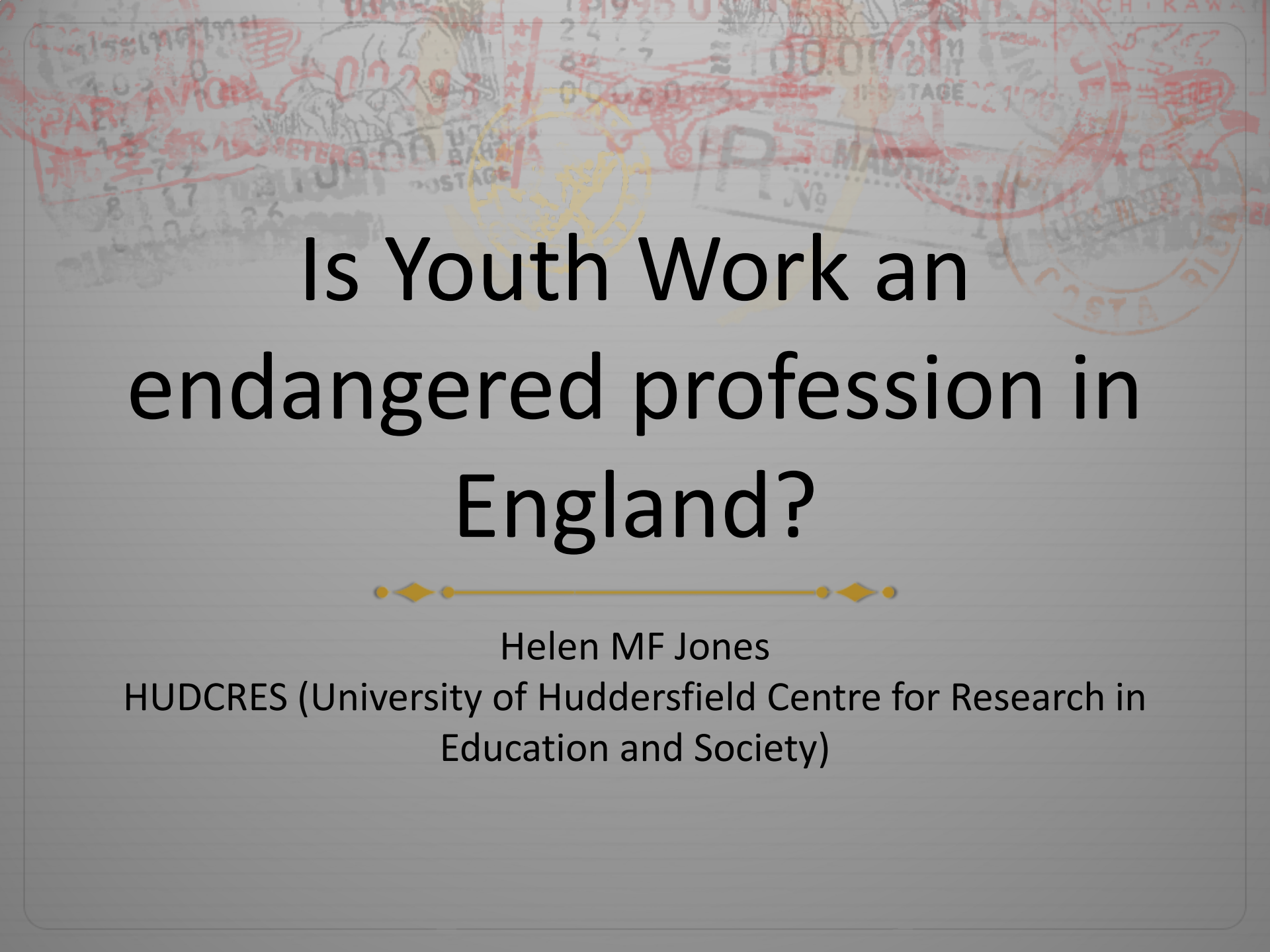
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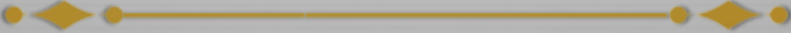
Is Youth Work an endangered profession in England?



Helen MF Jones

HUDCRES (University of Huddersfield Centre for Research in
Education and Society)

'Is youth work still needed?' (France and Wiles, 1997)



- ✦ 1997 was the first year of New Labour government (Blair);
- ✦ France and Wiles wrote 'Dangerous Futures: Social Exclusion and Youth Work in Late Modernity';
- ✦ They concluded that changes in late modern society necessitated new approaches to youth work in England's statutory sector;
- ✦ They proposed work tailored to 'market segments' – but has this happened? Does it remain an idea worth consideration? What might it look like?

Existing approaches



- ✦ Detached youth work;
- ✦ Youth workers in school settings: supplementary and complementary provision, pupil referral units and alternative education schemes;
- ✦ Youth workers in college settings: supporting specific groups of yp, working with elected student representatives in student unions, providing pastoral support.

New Approaches

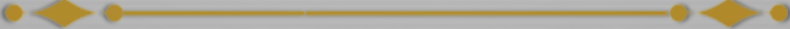


- ✦ National Citizenship Service (originally proposed 2011 and a statutory service since 2016);
- ✦ Setting focussed work (health / hospital settings, housing, drugs agencies etc.)

Potential areas for development

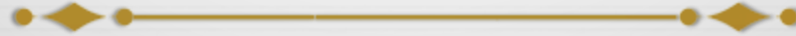
- ✦ Intergenerational work (see Tony Jeffs's recent writings);
- ✦ Drama, art and music (damage to school curriculum done by e-bacc and focus on 'academic' subjects);
- ✦ Entrepreneurial initiatives;
- ✦ Work with the 'digital generation' of young people where they're present (particularly YouTube).

Conclusion: Is youth work still needed – or not?



- ✦ Austerity combined with / resulting from governmental ideological opposition to public sector means scant ££ and nobody knows what impact Brexit will have;
- ✦ Young people still need access to professionals who aren't their parents / carers or teachers;
- ✦ Youth workers need to consider how they're using their skills, values and knowledge: do young people engage of their own volition? Does the work have an educational foundation?
- ✦ There are exciting new directions from specialist settings to You Tube that youth work might take in England.

References



✦ See notes box below