



<b>Provisional Mark</b>	<b>83</b>
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## School of Social and Political Science – PG Feedback Form

<b>Course Instance</b>	<b>February 2014</b>
<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Involving Children and Young People in Research &amp; Consultation CPD</b>
<b>Component Name</b>	<b>Blog 2</b>

Please note that both the comments and the grade remain provisional until ratified by the external Exam Board in May and will be subject to change, moderation and review by our external examiners. This includes whether or not any penalties imposed are upheld.

<b>Exam number</b>	<b>Student A</b>
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**Overview**

<b>Marking criterion</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Grade A-H (if appropriate)</b>
Critical/conceptual analysis	This is an exceptionally insightful critique of Kellett's publication, which would be worthy of publication (given current debates in the literature). Some further elements could be addressed, again recognising the broader discussions in the current literature.	A
Strength/cohesion of argument	The argument flows coherently and with very good use of sources and evidence to support this.	A
Use of sources/evidence	While Hart's ladder itself is subject to much critique, the use of it in comparison to Kellett was innovative and productive.	A
Structure & organisation	The blog is well structured, introducing the resource succinctly at the start, and having a distinct conclusion.	A
Breadth and relevance of reading	Very relevant.	A
Clarity of expression, presentation and referencing	The blog is very well written and referenced.	A
Suggestions for future work	This blog precisely meets the task, with innovation and flair. To take the argument further, I would suggest engagement with very current debates about agency and participation. These ideas are well worth developing for further publication.	A

Susan Elsley and Kay Tisdall, as course convenors, maintain a file of anonymised assessments with feedbacks for further students to consult. If you would prefer to have your assignment not included within this file, please inform Kay Tisdall [k.tisdall@ed.ac.uk](mailto:k.tisdall@ed.ac.uk).

The following publication explores children as active researchers and raises a number of issues around participation in research involving children and young people:

**Kellett, M. (2005) *Children as active researchers: a new research paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?* [online]. UK: ESRC. Available from: <<http://oro.open.ac.uk/7539/1/MethodsReviewPaperNCRM-003.pdf>>. [Accessed 30 March 2014].**

Kellett (2005) argues for research actively undertaken by children as an acknowledgement of 'the importance of affording children and young people a voice which is listened to and heard by adults' (Kellett, 2005: 6). Kellett (2005) argues that child researchers are able to provide a unique perspective inaccessible to adults: 'The research agendas children prioritise, the research questions they frame and the way in which they collect data are substantially different from adults and all of this can offer valuable insights and original contributions to knowledge' (Kellett, 2005: 9). Kellett (2005) holds that active child-led research deserves a place alongside traditional research and feels that the question that remains is whether there is room for this in existing parameters.

Kellett's (2005) exploration of child researchers provides an interesting perspective on participation in research and consultation with children and young people. Kellett (2005) views active child-led research on a continuum that reflects an increasing awareness of children's right to be heard: 'The journey from research *on*, through research *with* to research *by* children is a natural progression accompanying the shifting changes in adult-child power and participation agendas' (Kellett, 2005: 31). In this view, empowering children with appropriate skills and training is key to unlocking their potential as researchers (Kellett et al., 2004).

It is worthwhile comparing how this fits with other perspectives. In an exploration of engagement in participative research, Holland et al. (2010) lists active child-led research as one of four distinguishable participative forms. Holland et al. (2010) also problematizes assumptions that participative research necessarily equalizes power relations between adults and children. Although this discussion is largely applied to adult researcher contexts, it draws attention to 'a tendency to theorize agency and power almost as attributes that children can 'have' and that are enabled, promoted or 'given' (Holland et al., 2010: 362). Does this theorizing affect Kellett's (2005) context, in which adults are 'empowering' children with the tools they need to explore their own research aims?

In addition, it is interesting to compare Kellett's (2005) view to Hart's (1992) 'Ladder of Participation'. In Hart's (1992) ladder, the seventh rung is characterized by children and young people initiating participation with the guidance of adults who do not take charge, and the eighth rung is characterized by children and young people leading participation and initiating shared decisions with adults (Save the Children, 2009). Both of these levels entail children taking a lead and allow for adult involvement. However, in the latter level, children have the choice to include adults. Kellett (2005) does not make this distinction. Should child researchers have choices about adult involvement and how will this affect disseminating research skills to child researchers?

In conclusion, a critical assessment of Kellett (2005) illustrates discussion around participation in research involving children and young people and leads to interesting questions about empowerment and levels of participation.

## REFERENCES

Hart, R.A. (1992) *Children's Participation: From Tokenism To Citizenship* [online]. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre. Available from: < [http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens\\_participation.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf)>. [Accessed 30 March 2014].

Kay 9/7/14 14:00

**Comment [1]:** As you mention these, it would be helpful to outline what these forms are and weave them into your argument. If not, you might decide not to make this statement, as not relevant to your argument.

Kay 1/7/14 10:13

**Comment [2]:** Yes, a very current debate within childhood studies/ sociology. Oswell 2013 is currently much cited, as is Gallagher and Gallacher.

Kay 1/7/14 10:13

**Comment [3]:** End of quotation?

Kay 1/7/14 10:15

**Comment [4]:** A productive comparison. You may also want to note that Hart's ladder is much critiqued - in part because it suggests a hierarchy.

Kay 1/7/14 10:14

**Comment [5]:** Great question.

Holland, S., Renold, E., Ross, N.J., & Hillman, A. (2010) Power, agency and participatory agendas: A critical exploration of young people's engagement in participative qualitative research. *Childhood* 17(3) Sept 360–375.

Kellett, M., Forrest, R., Dent, N., & Ward, S. (2004) 'Just Teach Us The Skills Please We'll Do The Rest': Empowering Ten-Year-Olds as Active Researchers/ *Children & Society* 18(1) 329–343.

Kellett, M. (2005) *Children as active researchers: a new research paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?* [online]. UK: ESRC. Available from: <<http://oro.open.ac.uk/7539/1/MethodsReviewPaperNCRM-003.pdf>>. [Accessed 30 March 2014].

Save the Children (2009) *re:action Consultation Toolkit* [online]. London: Save the Children. Available from: <[http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Consultation\\_Toolkitpdf\\_1.pdf](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Consultation_Toolkitpdf_1.pdf)>. [Accessed 30 March 2014].