



Jugendbildungsstätte

Kurt Löwenstein

# Education for social change

*The political dimension of youth work*

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Webinar "Political dimension of youth work" 23.8.2019 Tim Scholz



## Key topics of the Webinar

- Introduction of Education Center Kurt Löwenstein and its work
- Different dimensions of democracy
- Polity – Policy - Politics – What's all this?
- And what has all this to do with youth work?
- Exploring the political dimension of youth work
- Questions and (hopefully) answers

## Education Center Kurt Löwenstein



- Education Center run by Socialist Youth of Germany – Die Falken in the suburbs of Berlin
- 120 Beds, 5 paid education officers + freelancers
- Non formal education in the field of EDC/HRE
- Target groups
  - Kids and youngster from less privileged neighbourhoods in the framework of cooperation with schools
  - International seminars and encounters
  - Seminars and trainings for multipliers

# Different dimensions of democracy

- **Democracy as a form of rule**
  - Traditional understanding - focussing on the state, its functioning and its tasks – „ the way to govern“
- **Democracy as a form of society**
  - Strong civil society – involvement of NGOs, autonomy, independent media, possibilities for active citizenship
- **Democracy as a way of life**
  - Strong democratic culture, democracy as a social idea, base for democratic political engagement, diversity, solidarity, self-organisation

# Clarifying terms...

**Polity**

Structures

Where?

**Policy**

Content and  
guidelines

What?

**Politics**

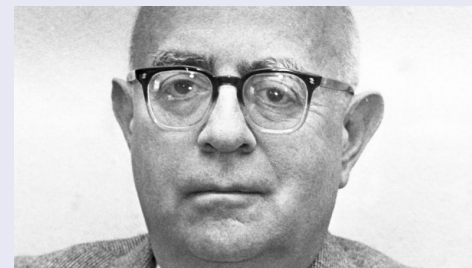
Processes

How?

## And what all this has to do with youth work?

*"The only true force against the principle of Auschwitz would be autonomy, if I may use the Kantian expression; the power to reflect, to self-determination, to not participate. [...] I'm afraid that even measures that are so wide-ranging will make it difficult to prevent the desk murderer from regrowing. There are people who do it, just as servants, perpetuating their own servitude and degrading themselves, [...] but a little can be done through education and enlightenment."*

**Theodor W. Adorno "Education after Auschwitz"**



# The Child and Youth Welfare Act, SGB VIII (Germany)

## § 1 right to education, parent responsibility, youth welfare

(1) Every young person has the right to **promote his or her development** and to **be educated to a responsible and sociable personality**.

## § 11 youth work

(1) Young people should be provided with the youth work services necessary to promote their development. They should build on the **interests of young people** and be **co-determined and shaped** by them, empowering them to **self-determination** and encouraging and leading them to **societal responsibility** and commitment.

(3) The priorities of youth work include:

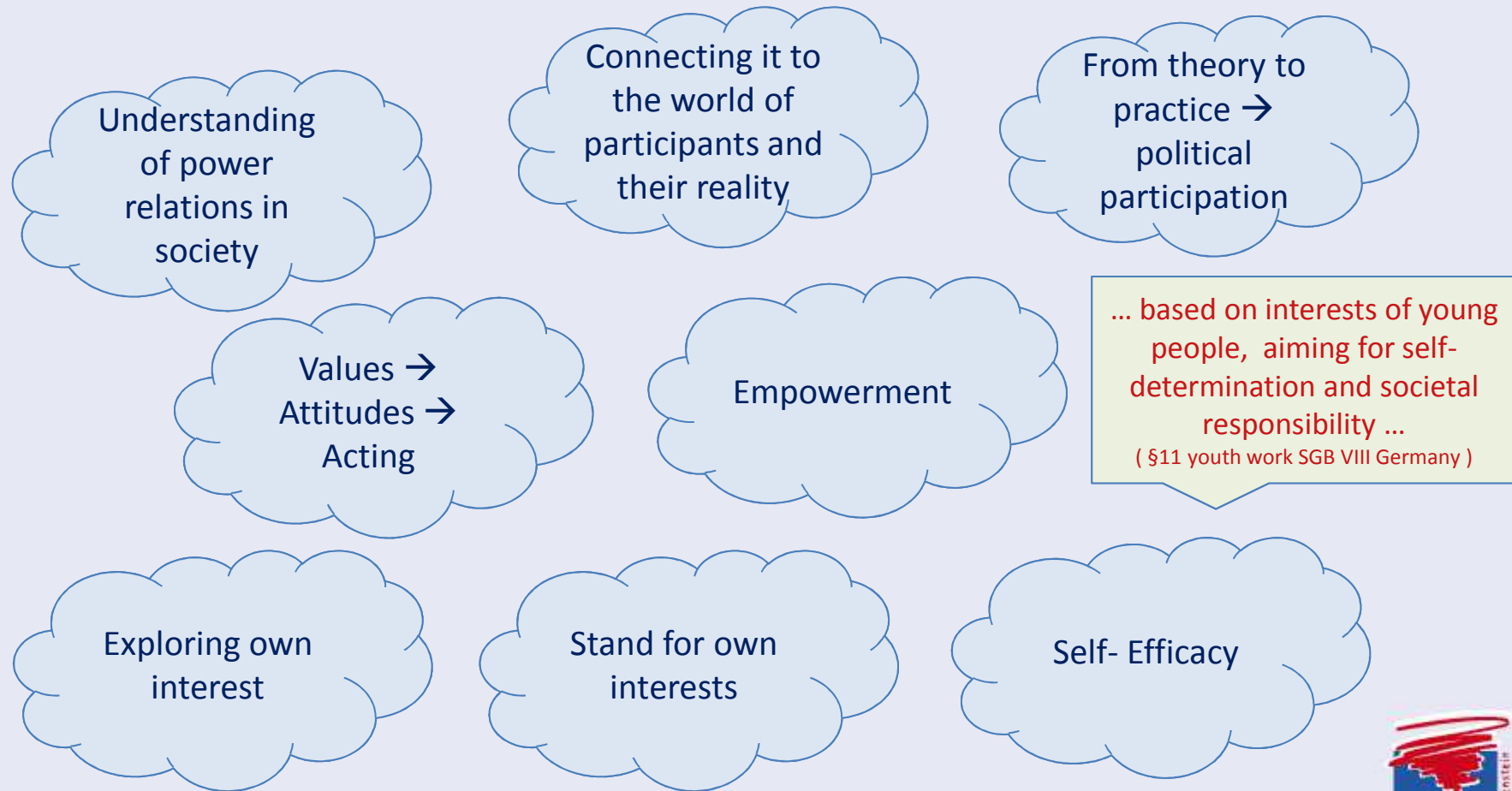
1. extracurricular youth education with general, **political**, social, health, cultural, natural and technical education

*...the power to reflect, to self-determination, to not participate.*

from: Adorno, *Education after Auschwitz*



# Exploring the political dimension of youth work

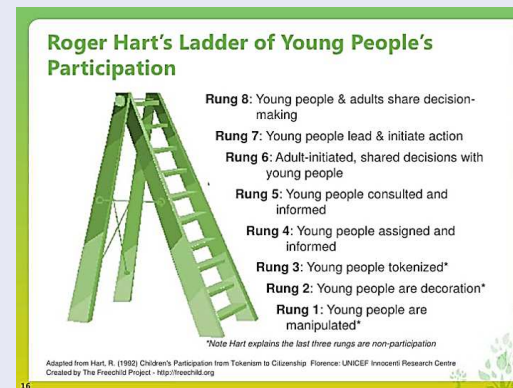




# What is needed?

→ Understanding of democracy as lifestyle – Broad understanding what is political!

→ Clarifying terms! – What is participation? What is co-determination? What is involvement? Mind the terms you use in your language! In German we have terms like „Beteiligung, Mitbestimmung Teilhabe“, which you all could easily translate to English as „participation“.



→ Participation is successful, when free spaces to create exist! Self-Efficacy!

**Thank you for listening!**

**Now the floor is yours...  
Looking forward to your questions and  
comments**

**Tim Scholz**

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